

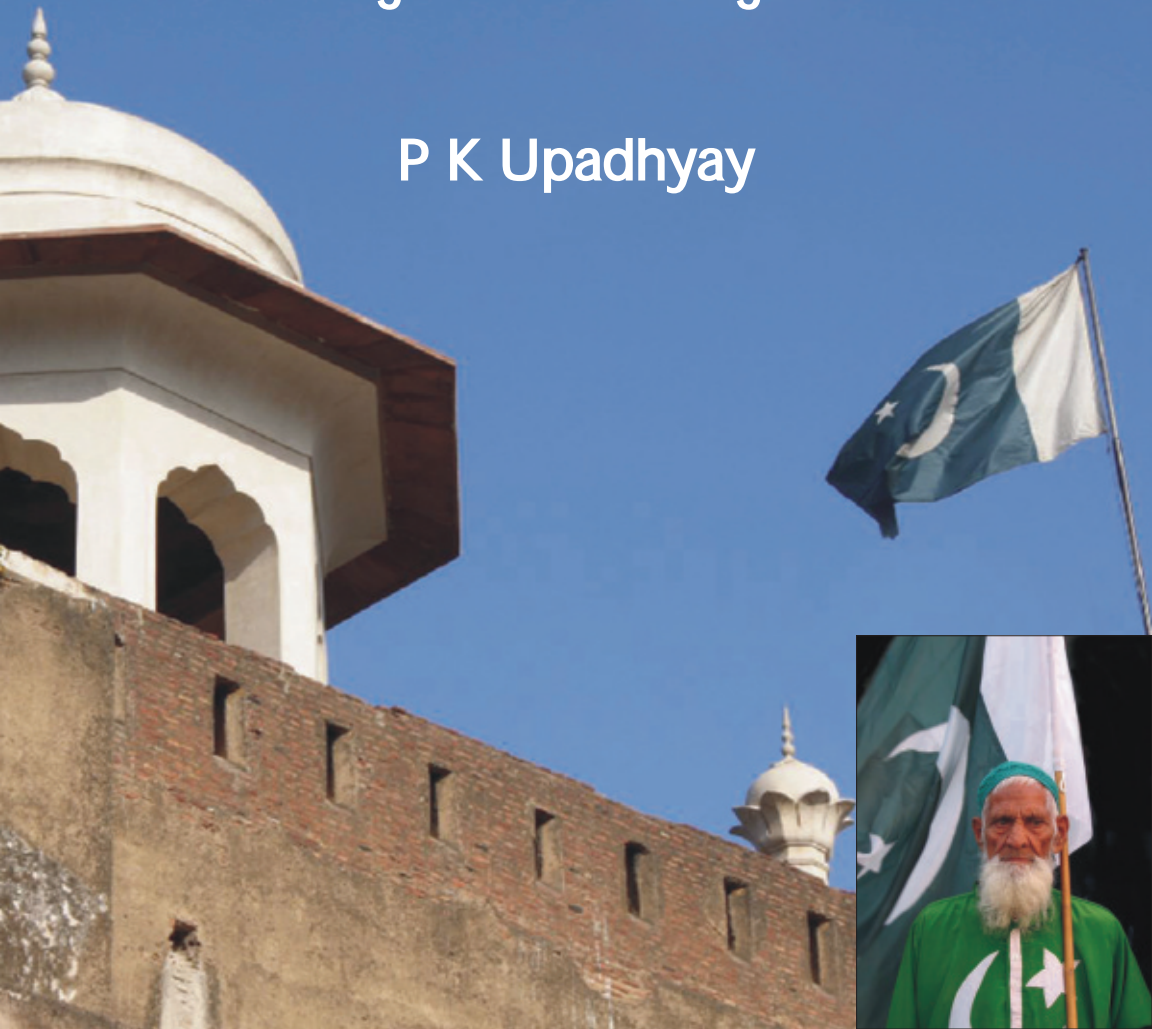
IDSA Monograph Series  
No. 36 May 2014

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# Religion as the Foundation of a Nation

## The Making and Unmaking of Pakistan

P K Upadhyay



**IDSA Monograph Series**

**No. 36 May 2014**

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**Religion as the  
Foundation of a Nation  
The Making and Unmaking of Pakistan**

**P K Upadhyay**

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# Foreword

Sectarian fault-lines in Pakistan are deepening. The country was founded on the basis of a flawed 'two-nation' theory - one nation for the Hindus and other for the Muslims, who, it was felt, could not live in a united country due to their religious and cultural differences. Behind this thought process religion was the prime driving force. However, religion itself has evolved as a major divisive factor in intra and inter-community relations in most Muslim societies due to its inherent sectarianism. The frenzy over 'struggle' for Pakistan, in which not all sections of Indian Muslims participated, momentarily blurred the existing sectarian fault-lines in South Asian Islam. However, these became a dominant phenomenon in the independent Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Various internal political and international issues and influences have widened these fault-lines and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that Pakistan as it exists at the moment, may be replaced by another Pakistan which may be totally different from what the founders of this nation wanted it to be, or its citizens aspire it to be. The present study - Religion as the Foundation of a Nation: The Making and Unmaking of Pakistan - is an effort to explore the genesis and accentuation of the sectarian divide in Pakistan, its present status, future prognosis and implications.

It is hoped that this study would start an enlightened debate in Indian strategic community on measures to deal with the fall-out of the looming crisis in Pakistan like the fate of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal should Radical Islamists (RIs) directly or indirectly takeover power; implications for India of a 'Lebanonised' Pakistan in which no body is in control; the impact of sectarian divide in Pakistan on Indian Muslims; the fate of Pakistan's western borders, etc.

New Delhi  
March, 2014

Arvind Gupta  
Director General, IDSA



# Acknowledgements

The idea to undertake this study on Pakistan came from Dr Arvind Gupta, the Director General Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses (IDSA), who while holding the Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair earlier, was very intimately involved with the Pakistan Centre of the Institute and its Pakistan Project. Under the project initially a study was made – *Whither Pakistan?* - examining the current crisis facing that nation and the prognosis about the direction events might take in that country by 2020. One of the chapters in that study was *From Islamisation to Talibanisation: Possible Lebanonisation*. Dr Gupta felt that the basic theme of this chapter deserved to be further examined in detail and the religious and sectarian fault-lines in Pakistan probed in depth to determine their impact on the future of Pakistan. The present study is the end product of that exercise. Throughout its gestation period Dr Gupta, despite his numerous commitments as the Director General, always spared time to discuss various ideas and theories connected with this project, went through draft of various chapters, made valuable suggestions, and remained a source of constant encouragement and support.

After the first draft of the study was ready, it was sent to a panel of eminent experts on Pakistan who are very knowledgeable about that country due to their long hands on experience, research and interactions. These included S/Shri Satish Chandra, former diplomat and High Commissioner to Pakistan and later the Deputy National Security Adviser, A.K. Verma, former Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat and Professor/s Satish Kumar and Kalim Bahadur. While Professor Kalim Bahadur could not devote as much time to the draft as he would have liked due to his health concerns, all the other experts provided extensive comments and suggestion which tremendously helped in the finalization of this study.



Internally, very special thanks are due to my senior IDSA colleague Lt. Gen. Satish Nambiar (Retd.) who very kindly went through the chapter on *Radicalisation of the Pakistan Army*, and provided some very rare and useful insights into the Pakistani Army's mindset. My dear friend, philosopher and guide Dr Ashok Behuria, Research Fellow, IDSA, also deserves a very special thanks for being always available to discuss various issues connected with this project in a logical and detailed manner, as also readily providing me the material which he had used for preparing his own papers on sectarianism in South Asian Islam and transmutation of Pakistani Islam into radicalism and terrorism that had been published in various Indian and foreign journals earlier. The chapter on *Radicalisation of Education* is very substantially based on inputs that he saw and passed them on to me.

My grateful thanks are also due to Dr Shamshad Ahmed Khan, Research Assistant (now Research Fellow ICWA), who not only corrected me on various Islamic theological issues, but also provided interesting and useful inputs from Pakistan's Urdu press. Similarly, I am also grateful to Shri Aditya Valiathan Pillai, Research Assistant, IDSA, whose weekly summaries of the English press of Pakistan helped me tremendously; to Shri S. Suresh, Librarian-cum-Information Officer, IDSA who provided some very useful inputs from the net; and to Shri Vivek Dhankar and his GIS Lab in IDSA for preparing the maps and charts that have been used.

Lastly, thanks are also due to Shri Vivek Kaushik and the Publications Division of the IDSA for arranging the copy-editing and publication of this study.

New Delhi  
March, 2014

P K Upadhyay  
Consultant, Pakistan Project  
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# Prologue

Creation of Pakistan, a concept that flourished in the wasteland of an inferiority complex according to M.J. Akbar<sup>1</sup>, was a unique human and political experiment. There are not many examples in the history of the mankind of attempts being made to create a nation by joining a vast multitude of people in the name of just the religion, disregarding the divisions among them due to ethnic, linguistic, regional, social and cultural factors, further accentuated by a total absence of any shared political ideology. The vision for the Islamic state of Pakistan tended to gloss over the fact that despite its fervent wish to be a strongly unitary and monolithic order, Islam had actually developed into a sharply divided philosophy under which the separating lines between the state, the society and the personal lives of the human beings were totally obliterated and sharp disagreements emerged over interpretation and implementation of socio-religious beliefs and practices. The polity of the South Asian sub-continent was entering into totally uncharted waters with the endeavour to create in such a divided society a religion-based but ‘sectarian-neutral’ state, in which the polity and the religion were supposed to coexist side-by-side and, yet, the differing sectarian identities and commitments of its subject would not seriously impact on the interaction among them.

This was clearly a utopian concept. There are many nations with strong sectarian identities and practices, particularly in West Asia, and in practically all of them sharp divisions have surfaced due to dogmatic differences, despite their being ethnically, culturally and linguistically

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<sup>1</sup> M.J. Akbar, *India and Pakistan: The great wall of silence*, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/india-today-editorial-director-m.j.-akbar-india-pakistan-65-years-of-independence/1/212768.html>

homogenous societies by and large. In the case of the proposed Pakistani state, apart from the fractured linguistic and ethno-regional landscape, there was a very confused sectarian scenario. Followers of practically all sects of Islam were, and still are, present in the nation, each totally and staunchly committed to its own version of Islamic ideology conditioned by its own dogma. How those sectarian identities were going to be reconciled and woven into the fabric of a new national identity, the protagonists of the Pakistan movement did not seem to have paused to ponder, or explain.

The Pakistan movement did not receive all-pervasive or uniform support either from the entire Muslim community in pre-partition India, or from the adherents of all Islamic sects and their followers. It was only a minority in the Muslim community, comprising the Barelvis of north, east and central India, who sustained the growth of the Muslim League. Joined by their cohorts in East Bengal and West Punjab and sections of the Shias and some other smaller Islamic sects in western India, they spearheaded the movement for creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent. The traditionalist Deobandis, whether belonging to the Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Hind or of the Tablighi Jamaat variety, did not wholeheartedly support the call for a separate nation for the Muslim, crystallized in the Pakistan (the 'Land of the Pure') Movement. According to them, as the inheritors of power from the last 'legal rulers' of India – the Mughals – the British should hand back the power to them and restore the political status quo ante by bringing back an undivided India under Islamic rule. Moreover, some of their ideologues entertained a global vision of establishing the supremacy of Islam by politically unifying the universal Muslim community – Ummah – under a united Muslim state - Khilafa. Creation of small Islamic states went against that grandiose theological dream.

However, once Pakistan's creation became a settled issue, the ultra-rightist Islamic forces unfolded their agenda of creating a truly Islamic Pakistan in which the Islamic Law – Shariat – should be supreme. They were aided in their mission by the national tendency to mobilise Islam as a substitute for the non-existent political legitimacy. This, in turn was a legacy of the Pakistan Movement and it defined the agenda of various civil and military governments since the inception of

Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> However, initially the call for setting up the Shariat-based order was a muted one. Instead, such issues as the ant-Ahmadiya tirade were resorted in order to galvanize the public sentiments for seemingly an Islamic cause. The Pakistani state and main-stream political outfits like the Muslim League also merged religion with the bogey of threat from 'Hindu-India' to overcome divisive and vexed problems of the struggling concept of Pakistani nationhood and identity. All Pakistani official dispensations, whether of 'socialistic' Z.A. Bhutto, or 'Islamic' Zia-ul Haq, used Islam in varying degrees to further their respective political agenda. However, it was Zia-ul Haq who unleashed the latent radicalism in the Pakistani version of Islam by trying to manipulate the Islamic genie to consolidate his power. Pretty soon it was the genie which was manipulating the Pakistani society, the state and its armed forces.

Zia's 'Islamisation' policies and the Afghanistan jihad allowed the politico-religious parties on the Deobandi spectrum to decisively nose ahead of their sectarian Shia and Barelvi rivals and gain ascendancy in political structures and state patronage. They felt that they could now pursue their sectarian agenda more vigorously and in course of time, helped by a benign and partisan state apparatus, sprouted their militant arms dedicated to the pursuit of their sectarian goals by resorting to violence against the followers of other sects and religions. Wittingly as well as unwittingly, the state acquiesced in this development all along, particularly after Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s. In the wake of US-led military operation in Afghanistan to sort out the Islamic radicals flourishing under the patronage of Deobandi Taliban, these radicals shifted base to various areas of Pakistan, particularly the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa (KPk) and south Punjab and now dominate the Islamist challenge to Pakistani state and its institutions, including the Army.

The looming dangers for Pakistan originating from its flawed foundations and the socio-religious fault lines they created, has been commented upon by many political analysts and thinkers of both the

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<sup>2</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.158

foreign and the Pakistani origin. It is, perhaps, now the time to take a look back and assess the challenge this Islamic genie is posing to the very foundation of Pakistan and the 'secularist-Islamic' order the country pretended to have embarked upon under Jinnah. Pakistan's Deobandi spectrum Islamists would have none of such ideas and now seem intent on altering the existing Pakistani edifice, which ironically the Pakistani Army has to preserve. This seems to have developed into a battle of nerves, commitment and resources, with clear ideological overtones. Clearly, this is not what the protagonists of the Pakistan movement had visualized. Which way is this battle going to turn? Would things remain the same, or sort themselves out, as many Pakistanis seem to think – or wish -, are the questions that need to be answered by revisiting 'The Issue of Pakistan'<sup>3</sup> once again. These are no small issues, since they are bound to have an impact on Pakistan as it exists, and have the potential to script a totally new geo-political scenario in the region. Yet, the country still does not seem be willing to countenance and confront the possibility of its foundations resting on a faulty vision that needs to be course-corrected.

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<sup>3</sup> The title of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's book on the demand for a separate Muslim Pakistan, written in 1940.

## Chapter I

# The Origins of Muslim Separatism and the Pakistan Movement

Islamic thought has moved in a cyclical pattern ever since the advent of the faith in the seventh century. Under this process, the legions of the faithful have been transmutating between a heightened state of religious fervour to an ebb and a deep introspection phase to come up again with a greater and more determined assertion of their commitments and convictions. With the ushering in of the eighteenth century, Islam appeared to have entered into a new cycle of introspection and reassertion. Some major events were taking place in the *Ummah* at the dawn of the new century. Muslim political power had become fragmented in India following the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 and the beginning of the decline of Mughal Empire. The Ottoman Empire in Asia Minor also began to shrink with the defeats in the battles of Chesma and Kagul (1770) that paved the way for separation of Balkans from the Ottoman control. In Saudi Arabia, where Makkah had grown into a major centre of *sufism*, mysticism and hereticism, *Wahabi* philosophy was emerging as the new creed rejecting all deviationist ideas and philosophies. Mohammad ibn Abd al-Wahab (born 1703) had begun to attract support for his Islamic convictions that sought to go back to the roots of the religion and reject everything considered as a deviation from its original pristine purity. He was being greatly helped in his mission of purging Islam of all variations by his alliance with Muhammad ibn Saud of the House of Saud who became the founder of the first Saudi State in 1744.

In the Indian sub-continent, gathering clouds signalling a looming loss of Muslim sovereignty triggered a renewed interest in concepts of Jihad<sup>4</sup> and an activist Islam. This trend is clearly discernible in the writings

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<sup>4</sup> *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* by Ayesha Jalal

of Shah Waliullah of Delhi (1703-62).<sup>5</sup> He opposed the divisions and deviations within Islam and its practices in India and hoped to “purify” the religion and unify all Indian Muslims under his “banner of truth”. He has been hailed as one of the pioneering Islamic thinkers who brought modern day thought processes and merged them with Sunni orthodoxy. It was Waliullah’s theory that Syed Ahmad of Rae Bareilly sought to implement between 1826 and 1831. However, through his struggle to free Muslims of the North-West Frontier region from Sikh domination, he managed to only dilute the high spiritual and ethical values of *jihad* by compounding the confusion between religious faith and religion as a demarcator of differences as well as of pragmatic compromise.<sup>6</sup> Islam became more a determinant of identity than a faith. Champions of the religion were ecstatic in praising the virtue of ‘classical’ jihad and the valour of Muslim rulers of the bygone era describing them as *ghazî* or *shahîd* and any cross-fertilization of ideas began to be rejected.

Syed Ahmed of Rae Bareilly’s namesake, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (October 17, 1817–March 27, 1898), however, propagated a break from “classical” Islamic traditions by seeking to distance religion from politics. His efforts gave rise to a new generation of Muslim entrepreneurs and politicians who comprised the nucleus of the ‘Aligarh Movement’ and wanted to secure the political future of Muslims of India. As a contrast to Syed Ahmad Khan’s India-centric views, Jamaluddin al-Afghani, who lived only for a brief period in India at the turn of the nineteenth century but greatly influenced Muslim thought, propagated his “strategy of defence” by the *ummah* against an encroaching and predatory West.<sup>7</sup>

This strain of thought was taken to the next level and Indian Muslims were strongly linked to an international Islamic consciousness by

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

**PS.** On 6 May 1831, during a fierce battle, Syed Ahmad and his associate Shah Ismail, along with hundreds of their followers were killed in Balakot in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa. Syed Ahmad and Balakot have remained a great source of inspiration for the Sunni Islamic radicals ever since. The central mosque in Balakot is named after Syed Ahmed.

<sup>7</sup> Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic culture in the Indian Environment*, (Delhi; Oxford University Press, 1999)

Mohammad Iqbal, who despite his exposure to western education and life, felt at one with the anxieties of Muslim anti-colonialists over western imperialism. He turned to the *Quran* for answers and advocated *jihad* as a legitimate struggle against attempts to dominate Islam. Although his thoughts reflected a strong influence of nationalist colossus like Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, he asserted his intellectual independence and rejected Indian National Congress's anti-colonial policies when it came to Indian politics. He traced his ideological moorings to Shah Waliullah and Jamaluddin Afghani, whom he hailed as "living links with the past and the future".<sup>8</sup> It was no surprise that Iqbal found no enthusiasm for the inclusive nationalism of Congress or other nationalists like Azad and Ghaffar Khan. He became an architect of the notion of a contemporary Muslim identity. This, coupled with his call for creation of a Muslim state in the north-west India moulded and nurtured subsequent ideas of Muslim separation in the sub-continent, including that of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Jinnah initially was for accommodation within a united India in which Muslims had guarantees against their exploitation by the Hindu majority. The demand for Pakistan<sup>9</sup> as a separate homeland was seriously taken up by him much later and that too more as a bargaining chip to secure the requisite guarantees for Muslims in post-British India.<sup>10</sup> The common thread running through the thoughts and deeds of these towering personalities of Muslim separatist movement was that, excepting Syed Ahmad Khan and to some extent Jinnah in his initial years, they all gave primacy to religion which became the defining object of a national identity. Their common vision was that Muslim society was under attack, it required some resolute and determined action to repeal that threat

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<sup>8</sup> Mohammad Iqbal: *The Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts in Islam* .

<sup>9</sup> It was Chaudhary Rahmat Ali who coined the term PAKISTAN in a pamphlet *Now or Never: Are we to Live or Perish Forever?* [published on January 28, 1933]. He explained that the new nation was to be the home of Punjabis, Afghans (Pashtuns), Kashmiris, Sindhis. Interestingly, this definition of the proposed Muslim state did not include the Bengalis, who were to be the most populous ethnic group in it. It, perhaps, also did not clearly include the Baluchis, who occupied the largest chunk of territory of the proposed state. He 'divided' India into a *Hindustan* and a *Pakistan* and launched the Pakistan Movement in 1933, according to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his *The Issue of Pakistan*., published in 1940.

<sup>10</sup> Hassan Abbas: *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror*.



and all strategies to defeat anti-Muslim conspiracies came from within the religion. Thus religion became the centre of one's existence and a panacea for all problems and, subsequently, the fundamental creed to treat Muslims as a separate nation from the non-Muslims of the sub-continent, who needed a separate Muslim homeland. Various leaders of the Muslim separatism played upon the religious sentiments and political anxieties (in post-British India) of the Muslim masses as tools to strengthen notions of a separate Muslim national identity.

Jinnah's recourse to religion was not ideologically inspired, it was simply a way of giving a semblance of unity and solidity to his divided Muslim constituents.<sup>11</sup> He managed to pull together various elements of Muslim leadership in India, creating some sort of communal unity through ambiguity about the final goal.<sup>12</sup> Jinnah could not afford to say precisely what demand for a 'Pakistan' intended to accomplish. If the demand was to enjoy support from Muslims in minority provinces, it had to be couched uncompromisingly in communal terms.<sup>13</sup> To shore up Muslim sentiments Muslim League and Jinnah appealed to religious and communal sentiments.<sup>14</sup> To counter this, the Indian National Congress secured the assistance of nationalist Muslims organised under the banner of Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Hind (JUH). The Muslim League responded by patronising its own group of theologians who helped bring about almost a total identification of Pakistan with Islam. The rural Muslim masses, as well as the urban poor, were encouraged to believe that they would become better Muslims once a Muslim state had been established.<sup>15</sup> In his communications to Muslim religious leaders, Jinnah spoke of enactment of laws in consonance with the Shariat in the proposed new state, thereby protecting Muslims from being governed by 'un-Islamic laws'. In his meetings, Islam with its slogans and symbols figured very promptly. Quite often his speeches in Muslim-dominated areas would follow a pattern in which at some stage he would ask,

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<sup>11</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*.

<sup>12</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*.

<sup>13</sup> Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*

<sup>14</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*

<sup>15</sup> Khalid ibn Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase*.

“Do you want Pakistan or not?” with the crowd responding with chants of “Allah-o-Akbar”. He would exhort people to support Muslim League, contending that if Muslims failed to exercise this duty they would be reduced to the status of shudras and Islam would be vanquished from India.<sup>16</sup>

In Punjab where Muslim upper classes were not much enamoured of Jinnah, he courted *pirs*, *ulamas* and *sajjadanashins* to mobilize mass support for his cause. Through speeches and interactions, Jinnah and his fellow Muslim League leaders created an atmosphere in which people began to talk of the new nation in the idiom of religion and for them it was going to be the “laboratory of Islam, the citadel of Islam”.<sup>17</sup> The entire argument for creation of Pakistan was reduced to a simple question of survival of Islam in South Asia. A speech by Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi has been quoted to demonstrate a similar strategy that was adopted among Pashtuns, many of whom were gravitating towards the nationalism of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan:

We have got two alternatives before us, whether to join or rather accept the slavery of the Bania Brahman Raj in Hindustan or join the Muslim fraternity, the federation of Muslim provinces. Every Pathan takes it as an insult for him to prostrate before Hindu Raj and gladly sit with his brethren in Islam in Pakistan’s Constituent Assembly. A Pathan is Muslim first and Muslim last.<sup>18</sup>

The elections to various Provincial Assemblies in 1937 and the indirect ones for the Constituent Assembly later, were used to create religious fervour and their results, though strongly underlining the sense of unhappiness in a wide section of Muslims over the prospect of living under Hindu majority rule, did not settle the question as to what they really wanted. According to Ayesha Jalal, even the limited Muslim vote had not “ratified a specific programme because no programme had actually been specified. No one was clear about the real meaning of

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<sup>16</sup> Khalid bin Sayeed, quoted by Hussein Haqqani in *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Afzal Iqbal, *Islamisation of Pakistan*.

<sup>18</sup> Khalid ibn Sayeed. *Pakistan: The Formative Phase*

‘Pakistan’ let alone its precise geographical boundaries”.<sup>19</sup> However, the Muslim League presented the election results as its anointment as the ‘sole representative of the Muslims’ and a mandate to Jinnah to negotiate on their behalf. The British willy-nilly conceded. The March 26, 1940 Resolution adopted at the Muslim League session in Lahore rejected the “Scheme of Federation” as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935 and spoke of “readjustments” In the “areas in which the Muslims are numerically in majority as in the North Western and Eastern Zones of India” which should be grouped to constitute ‘Independent States’ in which the Constituent Units would be “autonomous and sovereign”. According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar the resolution was “rather ambiguous if not self-contradictory” on the issue of the exact constitutional status of proposed Muslim Provinces. Would they “contemplate that these Muslim Provinces after being incorporated into states will remain each an independent state or will they be joined together into one constitution as members of a single state, federal or unitary?” Ambedkar asked.<sup>20</sup> The British to whom the proposal for a Pakistan was floated in the mid-30s, declined to consider it as they perceived it to be a plan for the “revival of the old Muslim Empire”.<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding such valid and prophetic arguments and the realities on the ground, in the face of an extremely hardened and uncompromising attitude of the Muslim League and its leaders led by Jinnah and the British resolve to quit India as soon as possible, the writing on the wall was clear. India had to be partitioned and a separate Muslim homeland – Pakistan – had to be created. However, along with that the dilemma of deciding whether Pakistan would be a State of the Muslims or an Islamic one could not be left unresolved through vague and fudgy arguments about Muslim nationhood.

Pakistan had come into being on the back of what its founders called the ‘Two-Nation Theory’, which had been culled from the 19<sup>th</sup> century Muslim reformists in India who after the collapse of the Muslim power in India began to explain the region’s Muslims as a separate political,

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<sup>19</sup> Ayesha Jalal. *The State of Martial Rule*

<sup>20</sup> Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, *The Issue of Pakistan*. p.17, published in 1940

<sup>21</sup> Ibid

cultural and religious entity, especially opposed to Hindu majority. This is what in due course of time, became the 'Pakistan Movement', fuelled to a great extent by the British colonialists, the emerging educated Muslim elite and the landed aristocracy.<sup>22</sup> The communal basis of partition, coupled with the religious frenzy generated by it made religion more central to the new state of Pakistan and the campaign for Pakistan had, in its final stages, become a religious movement even though its leaders wanted to use it as a panacea for solving post-independence constitutional problems. This created confusion about Pakistan's *raison d'être*, which Pakistan's leadership later attempted to resolve by adopting a state ideology.<sup>23</sup> However, the fact that in the Muslim majority Pakistan there were fewer Muslims than those who had chosen to stay behind in India further confused the issue of Pakistani identity.<sup>24</sup> The Muslim League did not retain mass support in vast areas of the proposed new State for long. Under the principle of universal adult suffrage the vague and fudgy vision of a Pakistan that would be Muslim but not necessarily Islamic in a religious sense was confronted with alternative blueprints of nationhood. The elite that had demanded an independent Pakistan did not constitute the majority of Muslims in undivided India, who stayed on in independent India. The elite rooting for Pakistan was challenged in the new nation by groups that appealed to the wider electorate, most of whom did not have a say in the indirect 1946 elections that led to partition. The religious elements that had been roped in belatedly for Muslim League's separatist movement were joined by other theologians who had never supported the call for partition, to unleash a popular movement for the Islamisation of Pakistan.<sup>25</sup> Religious radicalism had been provided a new justification in the 'Land of the Pure'.

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<sup>22</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>23</sup> Hussein Haqqani. *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*

<sup>24</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*

## Chapter II

# The Sectarian Divide in South Asian Islam

Despite their keen desire to create an Islamic nation to uphold the glory of the religion and prevent Muslims from having to live in a secular and free India as an outnumbered minority, most protagonists of the Pakistan movement did not want their nation to be a *Shariat* based theocratic state. However, the tendency to cling to religion as the *raison d'être* for a separate Muslim homeland was also very strong, in fact so strong that every body seemed to have pushed the daunting theological and ideological fissures in Islam to the background.

### The Demon of Sectarianism

Islam seeks to be a united, unitary and monolithic politico-social-religious order, centered on the concept of a single God and His injunctions contained in a single Holy Book, revealed to mankind through His Final Messenger. In practice, however, it evolved into a much divided house. The differing social evolutionary processes of its followers, their divergent geography and environment and the mindset and practices conditioned by those factors made different people interpret and apply Islamic commandments in different ways, leading to emergence of diverse interpretation of Islamic Law – *Shariat* or *Shariah* - and jurisprudence – *fiqh* – and disputes and discords in their wake. In South Asia, Islamic thought and belief had been fluctuating between assertions of exclusivist hardline orthodoxy to an assimilative moderation. These two profiles of Islamic assertion have often followed each other in a cyclical pattern. As a result, adherents of practically all major sects of Islam came to exist in India. *Shias* – *Ethna Asharis* (*Twelvers*), *Ismailis*, *Bobras* and other sub sects - and *Sunnis* - *Deobandis*, *Barelvis*, *Ahl-e-Hadith* and many other splinter sects including the *Qadianis* or the *Abmadiyahs*- they all exist in their respective pockets across the length and the breadth of the sub-continent. Many of them migrated to Pakistan on or before partition attracted by its projected image of being the 'Land of Islam'.

It has been assessed that presently around 97percent of Pakistan's population is Muslim. Of these 15-20% are *Shias*, 50% or a little more are *Barehvis*, including those who gravitate towards *Sufism*, 20% *Deobandis*, 4% *Ahl-e-Hadith*, 2% *Ismailis* and 2% of other sects.<sup>26</sup> It would not be too incorrect to assume that at the time of country's creation in 1947, the religious/sectarian composition of Pakistani population, at least in what was then known as the 'West Pakistan', would have been similar, if not exactly the same. All these sects have their own interpretation of Islamic practices and beliefs and, more importantly the *Shariat*, which they wanted to be paramount and the basis for a common Islamic order in the new country. Despite its majority, the fractured composition of Sunni Islam severely circumscribed its ability to evolve a consensus on the nature of Islamic state it would have liked to be ushered in Pakistan. These intra-sectarian differences among the Sunnis also effectively pluralised the dominant Islamic discourse in the new nation and tended to reduce the impact of the religion on the statecraft in years to come.<sup>27</sup> What is even more significant, these differences effectively made a consensus on the definition of a Muslim totally elusive.<sup>28</sup>

This sectarian dilemma was most forcefully underlined by the 1953 anti-Ahmadiya riots in Punjab in Pakistan following a speech by Sir Mohammad Zafarullah Khan in Karachi way back in May 1952, in

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<sup>26</sup> Pakistani Religious Groups: Muslim 95% (Sunni 75%, Shi'a 20%), other (includes Christian and Hindu) 5%". CIA. The World Factbook on Pakistan. 2010. [https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2122.html?countryName=Pakistan & countryCode = pk&regionCode=sas&#pk](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2122.html?countryName=Pakistan&countryCode=pk&regionCode=sas&#pk). Retrieved 2012-07-19.; Pakistan, Islam in.; Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies. Oxford University Press. [http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1809?\\_hi=1&\\_pos=1](http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1809?_hi=1&_pos=1). Retrieved 2012-07-19. "Approximately 97 % of Pakistanis are Muslim. The majority are Sunnis following the *Hanafi* School of Islamic law. Between 10 and 15 % are *Shias*, mostly *Twehvers*. International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore: *Have Pakistanis Forgotten Their Sufi Traditions?* by Rohan Bedi April 2006. *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future*. According to Vali Nasr, Joanne J. Myers, there are 30 million *Shias* in Pakistan. "Iran always had been a Shia country, the largest one, with about 60 million population. Pakistan is the second-largest *Shia* country in the world, with about 45 million population." (October 18, 2006. Retrieved 2010-08-24).

<sup>27</sup> Ashok Behuria, *Sects within Sects: The Case of Deobandi-Barehvi Encounter in Pakistan*, Strategic Analysis, Vol. 32, No.1, January 2008.

<sup>28</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, C. Hurst & Co, London, 2009

which even while emphasizing the finality of the Prophethood, he dubbed the founder of the Ahmadiya sect as a person commissioned by the God for revival of true religion and that it was God himself who had launched the Ahmadiya movement to preserve Islam and fulfil the promise contained in the *Quran*.<sup>29</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that the Ahmadiya Muslims were *en masse* strong supporters of Jinnah and the Pakistan Movement, the religious parties, mainly the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and *Deoband* oriented *Majlis-e-Abrar-ul-Islam*, pounced on this speech, twisted it to project as an assault on Islam and instigated large scale anti-Ahmadiya riots in various parts of Punjab. An enquiry commission was appointed in 1953 under Justice M. Munir to go into the genesis of the riots. The Ahmadiya agitation refreshed the important issue of who was a 'real Muslim' and what constitutional status a 'real' Muslim could claim.<sup>30</sup> The commission observed in its report that an agreement on the definition of a non-Muslim did not automatically translate into one on definition of Muslim. This conclusion followed interaction with groups of *ulama* who were asked to define for the commission who they considered to be Muslims. The commission observed rather sardonically, "Keeping in view several definitions given by the *ulama*, need we make any comment except that no two learned divines are agreed on this fundamental. If we attempt our own definition.....and that definition differs from that given by all others, we unanimously go out of fold of Islam. And if we adopt the definition given by any one of the *ulama*, we remain Muslims according to that *alim*, but *kafirs* according to the definition of everyone else".<sup>31</sup>

Justice Munir's enquiry report also underlined the substantial differences between the *Shias* and the *Sunnis* and rang the warning bell by saying

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<sup>29</sup> *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire Into The Punjab Disturbances of 1953*, Printed by the Superintendent, Government printing, Punjab, 1954, page 218. Zafarullah Khan had said, "Ahmadiyah was a plant implanted by Allah himself, that this plant had taken root to provide a guarantee for the preservation of Islam in fulfillment of the promise contained in *The Quran*, that if this plant were removed, Islam would no longer be a live religion but would be like a dried tree having no demonstrable superiority over other religions

<sup>30</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, C. Hurst & Co, London, 2009

<sup>31</sup> *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under Punjab Act II of 1954 To Enquire Into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953*, Printed by the Superintendent, Government printing, Punjab, 1954, page 218.

that the charges of apostasy being levelled against them by the *ulama* could lead people to “cutting each other’s throat”. This came true when the *Shias* began to assert the sanctity of their own *Fiqh Zafariyah* (Shia Jurisprudence) and took recourse to violently resisting the state sponsored Islamisation of the country as per Sunni beliefs during Zia-ul-Haq’s time. In the wake of anti-Soviet *jihad* in Afghanistan, the intra-sectarian differences assumed larger proportions and overshadowed the Islamic discourse. With passage of time these differences have widened so much now that they threaten the very foundation of the nation, making sectarian co-existence virtually impossible.

Perhaps, it would be worthwhile to study the evolution of these two schools of thought into rigid hidebound religious sects. The *Deobandi* and the *Barelvi* Schools of Islamic thought – named after the places where they crystallized as distinct religious philosophies at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> century - do not denote the emergence of any new, unique and innovative strands of Islam. They in fact were the names given to existing trends in the religion. Both these schools were influenced by the reformist school of thinking that emerged out of the concern for the future of *Debelvi Ulama* (scholars of Islam from Delhi) as well as Islam in India in the face of decline of the Mughal Empire. Shah Waliullah of Delhi (1702-63), a leading light of this school, propagated a revival of Islamic learning and reforming Islam by purging it of *bid’a* (innovations and eclectic influences) through his *Madrasa-e-Rahimyya*.

A contemporary of Mohammad ibn Abd al-Wahab of Saudi Arabia, Waliullah shared his concerns over *bid’a* in Islam, but unlike him was not critical of the *Sufis*. He also claimed divine inspiration to take upon himself the task of uniting different *fiqh* and emphasised the need for all Muslims to access the knowledge contained in the *Quran*. He held that it was the responsibility of the learned to interpret the *Quran* without the assistance of different schools of jurisprudence and opined that *ijtihad* – independent interpretation of Islam – was possible and one could on his own interpret *The Quran* on the basis of *Hadith*. In order to achieve this he tried translating *The Quran* into Persian – the *lingua franca* of the elite at that point of time – and faced tough resistance from the conservatives for that. He, however, advised Indian Muslims to follow the *Hanafi* School, as he had a divine revelation about that. Waliullah believed strongly in a powerful Islamic state and deplored



the decline and disintegration of the Mughal rule due to, what he believed to be their lackadaisical attitude towards religion. His traditions were carried forward by his progenies and disciples, but their inherent contradictions led to emergence of four separate schools of Islamic thought in India in course of time – the *Deobandis*, the *Ahl-e-Hadith*, the *Tablighis* and the *Barehvis*. Each of these schools borrowed from Waliullah's traditions as per its need and, with passage of time, adapted itself to the changing environment and tended to swing from one extreme to another.

There was another parallel stream of Islamic learning flowing from Maulana Qtubbudin Shahid Siharvi of the Siharvi family in Uttar Pradesh, which later shifted to Lucknow. Qtubbudin was assassinated during Aurangzeb's reign and his son Maulavi Nizamuddin Muhammad Siharvi founded the *Firangi Mahal Madrasa* in Lucknow, following the *Nizamia* Education System with its distinct curriculum known as *Dars-e-Nizami*.<sup>32</sup> This curriculum is still followed by practically all Sunni madrasas in the Indian sub-continent, notwithstanding their different sectarian persuasions.

The merging of the Waliullah and *Firangi Mahal* traditions of Islam led to the formation of the *Deobandi* School in 1866 at Deoband in Western Uttar Pradesh by Maulana Qasim Nanautwi and Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Gangohi. Their spiritual mentor was Imadullah Muhajir Makki, who had led the *ulama* in the 1857 uprising. The *Deobandis* felt the need to reform and revive the Islamic faith by upholding an unsullied and pure version of the religion and upholding the *Shariat*. They, however, accommodated *Sufism*. One section of the *Deobandis* was intensely reactive to the Western culture, whereas others tended to be more tolerant of the Western mores. While sharing the concerns of Muslim clerics over the state of Islam in India, they wanted power and influence by joining hands with the secularist British administration. These modernists approached Islam from an academic and scholastic view and they tried to interpret it according to the needs of the time. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was one such modernist. It was an irony that Sunni *ulama* declared him to be a *Kafir*.

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<sup>32</sup> Francis Robinson, *The Ulama of Firangi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia*,

Imam Ahmad Reza Khan of Bareilly, the founder of the *Barelvi* school of Indian *Sunnis*, countered the *Deobandi* approach. His approach to Islam was closer to the tolerant, sub-continental approach to religion and was received well among the lay and uninitiated common people. He challenged the contention of the *Deobandi ulama* that visiting shrines and graves of religious saints was *bid'a* and held that the institution of the *pirs*, *Sufis* and saints was in line with Islamic principles. He also stood by the *Sufi* tradition of intercession between man and God and playing of music and singing of devotional songs (*naat*, *qanwali*) to evoke a religious experience. He emphasised the infallibility of Prophet Muhammad, a superhuman entity who is always, present everywhere (*baẓir*), not as a *bashar*, material or flesh, but a mass of light (*noor*).<sup>33</sup> His *Barelvi* followers also believe in celebrating events linked with Prophet Muhammad, like his birth, revelation of the Quran and his death (*Mawlid/Mild-un Nabi, Barawaf*) which are believed to have happened on the same day at different stages of his life, as also venerating one's ancestors on 'The Night of Salvation' (*Shab-e-Barat*). The *Deobandis* look upon Prophet Muhammad as a perfect human being (*Insaan-e-kamil*), but a human being after all and, therefore, disapprove celebration of either his birth, death or any other event linked with his life (or veneration of one's ancestors.)<sup>34</sup> Like the Saudi *Wahabis* they also reject the cult of saints and *pirs*. Although not rejecting *Sufism* outright, they frown upon *Barelvi* practices of worship at the *mazar*'s of religious personalities and such acts of veneration as laying of *chadar* on their graves and distribution of *tabarrukh*.<sup>35</sup> Another matter of major difference between the

<sup>33</sup> GlobalSecurity.org; <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-barelvi.htm>, assessed on 19/7/2012

<sup>34</sup> These practices are common and widely prevalent among most Muslims in South Asia, South-East Asia, Africa and the Middle East and most *Shias* everywhere. Shias take remembrance of *Imam Ali* and his family members and close disciples to totally new heights by observing ceremonial *matam* during *Mubarram*. However, ultra orthodox Islamic sects like the Saudi *Wahabis*, the *Salafis* and *Deobandis* in South Asia do not observe these events, nor they believe in veneration of ancestors. They observe *Shab-e-Barat* only to the extent of praying and fasting in repentance for their sins committed in the course of the year and stop short of venerating their ancestor as part of the rituals. This information is based on inputs culled from websites of various Islamic sects and interaction with practicing Muslims. Their identities are not being mentioned to steer clear of controversies.

<sup>35</sup> Offerings of sweets etc. that are later shared by the devotees. Hindi word *prasad*.)

*Deobandis* and the *Barelvis* is over the issue of succession as Caliph after Prophet Mohammad. Unlike the *Deobandis* and closer to *Shia* beliefs, the *Barelvis* acknowledge not only the succession of Prophet by his three uncles and then by the fourth, *Haẓarat Ali*, but also believe in his martyrdom at Karbala. They observe *Muharram* and participate in *tazīa* processions, but don't perform *matam* and public flagellations.

These theological differences developed into hidebound beliefs and practices and with passage of time the two sects became as diverse as the *Shias* and the orthodox *Sunnis*. The *Deobandis* try to bring the *Barelvis* on the 'right path' through *tabligh* (religious propagation) and the *Barelvi ulama* have been ever ready to detoxify the minds of their flock, specially the young ones of *Deobandi* preaching.<sup>36</sup> The first *Barelvi* madrassa, *Manẓir-e-Islam*, was set-up in 1905 and it forcefully propagated *Barelvi* beliefs. These theological differences led to the disruption of social ties between the followers of two sects and inter-marriages and other social interaction between them dried up nearly totally.

Each of the two schools of South Asian Islam sought to spread its version of 'pure Islam' through a network of madrassas that proliferated rapidly and sought to teach their respective worldviews through the works of their advocates.<sup>37</sup> Despite their commonalities, they differed with each other in practice and tended to pursue different courses. Their battle for ideological supremacy continued through the colonial era and later into the present day Pakistan. The *Deobandis* captured the political space early by opposing colonial machinations in the Middle East. *Anjuman-e-Khuddam-e-Kaaba*, which headed the movement against British political moves in West Asia, was a *Deobandi* organisation, founded in 1913. Later, *Deobandi ulama* joined hands mostly with the Indian National Congress (INC) to launch the *Khilafat Movement* opposing British moves against the Ottoman Caliph and Empire. In a purely Indian political context it were again the *Deobandi ulama* who took the lead and formed *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind* (JUH – or Party of

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<sup>36</sup> Based on personal interaction with many *Barelvi* Muslims and their *ulama* over a period of time.

<sup>37</sup> Ashok Behuria, *Sects within Sects: The Case of Deobandi-Barelvi Encounter in Pakistan*, Strategic Analysis, Vol. 32, No.1, January 2008.

Indian *Ulama*) in 1919 that adopted a strong anti-colonial stand and developed a natural affinity with the INC on account of that.

As a contrast to the *Deobandis*, the response of the All India Muslim League to which the *ulama* of *Barelvi* persuasion gravitated, was very tepid to the *Khilafat Movement* and other nationalist causes. In fact the *Barelvi ulama* openly propagated that any tie-up with INC or its nationalist agenda was unnecessary, unprofitable and even un-Islamic. In course of time even some of the *Deobandi ulama* also began to veering around to the idea of a separatist Muslim movement, as they found the AIML's separatist plank becoming more and more attractive to Muslim masses, especially in the Muslim majority provinces. The Muslim League, which was initially cool to *Deobandi ulama*, warmed up to them following its set-backs in the 1937 elections and felt a need to consolidate the widest spectrum possible of Muslim opinion behind it. In this phase of its development, the League not only opened its doors to *Deobandi ulama*, but also to *Shias* and other smaller Islamic sects. However, it were mostly the *Barelvis* who provided the League with its street power. The first rival *Barelvi ulama* body seeking to counter the JUH politically was formed in Kanpur in 1921 under the banner of *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Kanpur*. It favoured joining hands with the Muslim League. Another *Barelvi* political outfit was floated in March 1925 at Moradabad in UP under the banner of *Jamiat-e-Aliyah al-Markaziyah* (or All India Sunni Conference). Various branches of AISC worked enthusiastically for furthering the Pakistan movement. AISC's weekly publication *Al-Fiqh* used to be brought out from Amritsar. From 1942 it started adding 'Pakistan' after Amritsar, implying as if the new state had already come into being. In 1945 the Pir of Manki Sharif convened a meeting of various *pirs* and *sajjadanashins* to enlist their support for the proposed Pakistani state. He even extracted an assurance from Jinnah that the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan would enact laws not inconsistent with the *Shariat*.<sup>38</sup> The dominance of *Barelvi ulama* in the Pakistan Movement was clear from the fact that out of 35 *ulama* members of the *Masaikh* Committee set-up by the ALML, 30 were *Barelvis*.

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<sup>38</sup> Khalid bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Years 1857-1948*.

Later, many dissident *Deobandi ulama* also jumped on this bandwagon and lent their voices for Muslim separatism, despite their aversion to joining hands with the *Shias*, the *Ahmadiyahs* and other Islamic sects. Such *Deobandi ulama* included Maulana Mir Ahmad Thanwi and Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani. The latter played a key role in mobilising the Bengali Muslim masses for the separatist cause. The efforts of these Deobandi ulama led to the formation of a pro-separatist body of ulama known as All India Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Islam (AIJUI). The new body attracted even larger number of *Deobandi ulama* to the separatist camp, with Maulana Mohammad Shafi, the then Chief Mufti of *Deoband*, ruling that the Muslim League's demand for a separate Pakistan was the only Islamic course open at that point of time. All these *Deobandi ulama* shifted base to what was to become, or had already become, Pakistan from other parts of the sub-continent. Other main-line *Deobandi* leaders like Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani did continue efforts to persuade these pro-separation *Deobandi ulama* to change tack, but to no avail. Political instability and divisions in the formative years of Pakistan, allowed different streams of *Sunni ulama* the space to manoeuvre and create a religious constituency, which became deeply etched in the socio-political consciousness of the new nation.

## Chapter III

# Sectarian Politics in Pakistan's Early Years

The 1940 Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League, later dubbed as 'Pakistan Resolution', demanded that the "geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted ... that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority... should be grouped to constitute 'Independent State'".<sup>39</sup> Earlier, preparing the background for this call for a separate nation for the Muslims, Jinnah declared in his presidential address that India should be free, but, "If the Hindus were to be free and the Muslims were to be their slaves, it was hardly a freedom for which Muslims could be asked to fight".<sup>40</sup> It was clear that Jinnah and his Muslim League were rooting for a separate state for political reasons and it was supposed to have a broad religious identity, but not a theocratic complexion. However, as the tendency to exploit the call to Islam to serve political ends was a constant unifying agent in the Pakistan Movement, it was going to remain the major tendency and cementing factor in the socio-political milieu of the new nation also. This was despite the elite in the embryonic nation - the feudal landowners, urban *petit bourgeois*, the Muslim bureaucrats belonging to the erstwhile British Indian Government and a large number of Muslim personnel of the British Indian Army, who were to shortly constitute the Pakistan Army – even while swearing by the name of Islam, had no desire to convert their nation into a *Shariat* based theocratic state and had 'secularist' tendencies. Perhaps, at the back of their consciousness lurked the realisation of the danger that since in a theocracy based Islamic state all aspects of life would be required to be governed by the injunctions of Islam, it would open the

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<sup>39</sup> I H Qureishi, (1992) *A Short History of Pakistan*. University of Karachi, Reprint of 1967 edition. ISBN 969-404-008-6

<sup>40</sup> <http://storyofpakistan.com/lahore-resolution/> accessed on July 19, 2012

Pandora's Box of accepting the *fiqh* (jurisprudence) of one particular sect over others'. Worse would be any attempt to rationalise contesting provisions of the *fiqh*<sup>41</sup> of different sects to create a uniform *Shariat* based order for the whole nation. Therefore, the questions that became unavoidable before the sprouting nation were: Was Pakistan going to be a nation of the Muslims or an Islamic State? And, if Pakistan was going to be a nation of practicing Muslims, what role Islamic law – the *Shariat* – going to play in the country's socio-political order? How a Muslim nation, as distinct from a *Shariat* based Islamic State, was going to separate religion from politics and statecraft?

Jinnah's own inclination was almost utopian in this regard. He was, perhaps, conscious of the fact that the religion which had successfully been exploited to galvanise the Muslims to carve out a new state, could become a divisive factor in it and might not be able to provide religious and ethno-linguistic harmony and cohesiveness to bridge the chasms separating its people. Nonetheless, as the question of the role of the religion in the polity of the nation had begun to manifest itself in all its severity, it was no surprise that on the eve of independence Jinnah spoke of setting up a secularist order in the country in his August 11, 1947 speech before Pakistan's Constituent Assembly:

I know there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. Much has been said against it, but now that it has been accepted, it is the duty of every one of us to loyally abide by it and honourably act according to the agreement which is now final and binding on all. But you must remember, as I have said, that this mighty resolution that has taken place is unprecedented. One can quite understand the feeling that exists between the two communities wherever one community is in majority and the other is in minority. But the question is, whether, it was possible or practicable to act otherwise than what has been done. A division had to take place. On both sides, in Hindustan and Pakistan, there are sections of people who may not agree with it, who may not like it, but in my

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<sup>41</sup> The two major sections of Islam – the Shias and Sunnis – follow different schools of Islamic law and jurisprudence. While Shias accept only their *Fiqh Zafariyah*, the Sunnis are divided into four major schools of Islamic law, namely the *Hambali*, *Maliki*, *Shafei* and *Hanafi*. South Asian Sunni Muslims follow the *Hanafi* School of Islamic law.

judgment there was no other solution and I am sure future history will record its verdict in favour of it. And what is more it will be proved by actual experience as we go on that that was the only solution of India's constitutional problem. Any idea of a United India could never have worked and in my judgment it would have led us to terrific disaster. Maybe that view is correct; maybe it is not; that remains to be seen. All the same, in this division it was impossible to avoid the question of minorities being in one Dominion or the other. Now that was unavoidable. There is no other solution. Now what shall we do? Now, if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

I cannot emphasize it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and minority communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community —because even as regards Muslims you have Pathans, Punjabis, Shias, Sunnis and so on and among the Hindus you have Brahmins, Vashnavas, Khattris, also Bengalis, Madrasis, and so on —will vanish. Indeed, if you ask me this has been the biggest hindrance in the way of India to attain the freedom and independence for this we would have been free people a long long ago. No power can hold another nation, and specially a nation of 400 million souls in subjection; nobody could have conquered you, and even if it had happened, nobody could have continued its hold on you for any length of time but for this. Therefore, we must learn a lesson from this. You are free; you are free to go to your temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other places of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any region or caste or creed —that has nothing to do with the business of the State. As you know, history shows that in England conditions, some time ago, were much worse



than those prevailing in India today. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some States in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God, we are not starting in those days. We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State. The people of England in course of time had to face the realities of the situation and had to discharge the responsibilities and burdens placed upon them by the government of their country and they went through that fire step by step. Today, you might say with justice that Roman Catholics and Protestants do not exist; what exists now is that every man is a citizen, an equal citizen of Great Britain and they are all members of the Nation.

Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as citizens of the state.<sup>42</sup>

It is obvious that Jinnah wanted Pakistan to be a Muslim, but a sectarian neutral<sup>7</sup> modern state. However, Jinnah's vision of Pakistan was not very clear and he continued to prevaricate over the role of religion in the new state<sup>43</sup>. Contrary to his vision of Pakistan and the secularist approach of some of his other Muslim League colleagues, the communal basis of partition, coupled with the religious frenzy generated by it, made religion more central to the new state of Pakistan. Jinnah now could not completely break from the communal rhetoric preceding independence even though he was concerned about aggravating the communal violence already stoked during partition.<sup>44</sup> In a speech to

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<sup>42</sup> Text of Jinnah's first Presidential speech in Pakistan's Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947. <http://www.quaid.gov.pk/>; accessed on July 31, 2012

<sup>43</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh,

<sup>44</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*.

the Sindh Bar Association (January 25, 1948), just a few months after his Constituent Assembly speech, he seemed ready to abandon his earlier vision of a secularist Pakistan and denounced as “mischief” attempts to ignore the *Shariat*, which should be the basis for the proposed constitution of the country.<sup>45</sup> Many used these inconsistencies in Jinnah’s statements to propagate their own positions and, in doing so, continued the legacy of a movement that under Jinnah himself had come to represent all things to all people.<sup>46</sup> His colleagues in the government even tried to censor the text of his August 11, 1947 speech before it could be carried by the newspapers. It was only when Altaf Hussain, the then editor of *The Dawn*, threatened to take up the issue with Jinnah himself that Muslim League leaders beat a retreat and the uncensored text of Jinnah speech could be printed.<sup>47</sup>

Jinnah’s vision of creating a secular Pakistan remained a romantic political dream and the multi-cultural and sectarian dimensions of the new nation that was at the back of his mind was not grasped by his Muslim League colleagues.<sup>48</sup> After Jinnah’s death, Liaqat Ali Khan and his successors promptly abandoned his watered down projection of the Pakistan Movement and decided to place Islam as the centrepiece of Pakistani identity. Liaqat Ali Khan, though a product of Aligarh Movement, was quite willing to continue to use Islam selectively to maintain the cherished unity of the Muslim majority of Pakistan. This issue did not matter during the Pakistan Movement as it was a struggle of a minority against the perceived domination by the majority. But when this minority became the majority in the new nation, the historical,

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<sup>45</sup> In this speech Jinnah strongly denounced those who were very passionately supporting his Constituent Assembly speech. “I can not understand why this feeling of nervousness that the future constitution of Pakistan is going to be in conflict with Shariah Law (sic). There is one section of the people who keep on impressing everybody that the future constitution of Pakistan should be based on shariah. The other section deliberately want (sic) to create mischief and agitate that Shariah Law must be scrapped”, he said. Quoted by Farzana Sheikh from Dawn, January 26, 1948.

<sup>46</sup> Making Sense of Pakistan, Farzana Sheikh,

<sup>47</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

political and theological/sectarian divisions and crevices in this majority began to look starker than before. Mohammad Iqbal and to some extent Jinnah had spoken about a Pakistani nationhood which would supplant these divisions. But what this nationhood would amount to was left unexplained.<sup>49</sup> Abu-ala Maududi, who was a Muslim thinker and journalist and not a cleric, who had opposed the call for Pakistan, denounced Jinnah as “infidel”, rejected *Deobandis* as ancient clerical traditionalists and *Barelhis* as unsavoury innovators, influenced the effort to search and create the concept of Pakistani nationhood.<sup>50</sup> To Maududi Muslims’ revival as a political and cultural force depended not on Muslim nationalism, but on an evolutionary process in which Muslim societies were to be ‘Islamised’ from below so that they could be prepared for Islamic Laws (*Shariat*) to be imposed from above (i.e. by the State). This approach was necessary as Pakistan was in the same state of *zabilyyat* (ignorance) in which Makkah existed before the arrival of Islam.<sup>51</sup> Even while speaking of setting up a democratic order in the country, the *Objective Resolution*, which Pakistan’s Constituent Assembly adopted on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1948, was clearly influenced by the thesis of Maududi and his fundamentalist cohorts. It sowed the seeds of religious fundamentalism and theocracy. The resolution, officially titled as *Resolution on the Aims and Objective of the Constitution*, declared:

“Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan, through its people for being exercised within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust; This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a Constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan; Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people; Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed; Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

Islam as set out in the Holy The Quran and the Sunnah; Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities to [freely] profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures; Wherein the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a Federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed;

Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality; Wherein adequate provisions shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes; Wherein the independence of the Judiciary shall be fully secured;

Wherein the integrity of the territories of the Federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, sea and air shall be safeguarded; So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the World and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity.<sup>52</sup>

It was no surprise that after the passing of the Resolution, Maududi's *Jamaat-e-Islami* decided to end its boycott of joining political process in the country. The All India Muslim League, now christened as Pakistan Muslim League, also tended to move along lines of the Pakistan Resolution rather than Jinnah's vision of Pakistan. However, the religious elements, who had joined the Pakistan bandwagon on visions of Islamic glory and bringing back the pre-British Islamic supremacy, were not satiated and began to groan and strain at the leash demanding introduction of the *Shariat*. The *Deobandis* and *Barelvis* of Pakistan shed their aversion to worldly pursuit of politics and started advocating the Islamic religious agenda to make their presence felt in the new country's

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<sup>52</sup> [www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/annex\\_objres.html](http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/annex_objres.html); accessed on August 30, 2012

corridors of power. However, the first to acquire a 'Pakistani identity' was the *All India Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Islam*, which transformed itself into *Markazi Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Islam* (MJUI). The *Barehvi* All India Sunni Conference became *Markazi Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Pakistan* (MJUP). Ironically despite their lukewarm attitude to Pakistan Movement, it is the *Deobandi ulama* who exercised greater influence in the corridors of power than the pro-Pakistan *Barehvis*. An important section of the Muslim League also gravitated towards the *Deobandis* and the Chief of MJUI, Maulana Usmani was selected as a Member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and his fellow *Deobandi ulama* took the credit for influencing the Objectives Resolution. In contrast, the MJUP had no representation in the Constituent Assembly despite the fact that it had even offered to merge itself with the Muslim League. The *Deobandi ulama* also took lead in bringing together such other like-minded Islamic groups and parties as the JI, JUI, *Jamaat-e-Ahl-e-Hadith* and others to act as a combined pressure group to demand conversion of Pakistan into an Islamic State. At a meeting in Karachi in January 1951 these parties even agreed to a set of 22-point fundamental principals on which the 'Islamic State of Pakistan' should be established. Subsequently, these principals remained the centrepiece of JUI's demand for Islamisation of Pakistan for a long time.<sup>53</sup> Clearly, the rift between orthodox revivalist Islam and a modernist Islam that the Pakistan Movement had sought to paper over in the run-up to the partitioning of the sub-continent had begun to unravel in the new nation.

The seeds of this potentially vicious conflict on the issue of religion and politics in a Muslim state had been sown even before the idea of a Pakistani state had fully crystallised. As mentioned earlier, Maulana Abu-ala Maududi was the fountain head of the idea of supremacy of Islam in a Muslim state. He argued that Islam was as much an ideology as a religion.<sup>54</sup> This Islamic ideology carried forward the mission of the Prophet:

- a) That a Muslim's way of thinking, ideals in life, and standards of values and behaviour become Islamic;

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<sup>53</sup> Ashok Behuria, *Sects within sects: The Case of Deobandi-Barehvi Encounter in Pakistan*, Strategic Analysis, Vol. 32, No.1, January 2008.

<sup>54</sup> Seyyed Veli Reza Nasr, *Maududi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*.

- b) To regiment all such people who have accepted Islamic ideals and moulded their lives after the Islamic pattern with a view to struggling for power and seizing it by the use of all available means and equipment;
- c) To establish Islamic rule and organise various aspects of social life on Islamic bases, to adopt such means as will widen the sphere of Islamic influence in the world; and
- d) To arrange for the moral and Intellectual training by contract and example, of all those people who enter the fold of Islam from time to time.<sup>55</sup>

Maududi was not part of the Pakistan Movement and had been critical of Muslim League's "un-Islamic" leadership, though through his writings he supported the idea of Muslim's being a separate nation. Once Pakistan had come into being, Maududi lost no time in directing his call for Islamic revival at the middle-class professionals and the state employees rather than the *mullahs*. His *Jamaat-e-Islami* (JI), founded in 1941 pretended to steer clear of sectarian *Deobandi-Barelvi* divide and wanted to project the supremacy of *Hadith* and the *Shariat* as per *Fiqh Hanafi*<sup>56</sup>. It sought

<sup>55</sup> Abu ala Maududi, *A Short History of Revivalist Movement in Islam*.

<sup>56</sup> "He may have a clear cut stance with regard to total surrender to God, upon which we want to raise the edifice of life and deferent people do not like it for deferent reasons. We do not think it permissible, that everyone should surrender to God in his own fashion on the contrary in our consider to opinion surrender to God is not possible unless the Sharia handed down to us by Muhammad (PBUH) is not put in to action, we do not think anyone justified in partial acceptance or rejection thereof. In our view Islam means surrender to God and strict adherence to Sharia as bequeathed to us by Muhammad (PBUH). We think that The Quran is not solitary source of the knowledge of Islam and Sunnah of the Prophet is equally valid source of Islam. Right method of construction of the The Quranic and sayings of the Prophet is not that one should twist these commandment according to his own whims on the other hand is to change one's whims in accordance to The Quran and Sunnah. We do not believe in rigid *Taklid* (the authenticity of precedent) wherein, there is no room for analogy (*Ijtihad*) nor is such analogy which is set a site by every succeeding generation, discarding the whole effort in this behalf every part of this outlook is frowned upon by one group of people or the other. One does not believe in surrender to God in the first place and the wants to do it subjectively i.e. independent of Sharia. There are still people would fallow Sharia as long as it would suites them and shun it where it does not. Some hold their own self coined principles to be Islam and others would like to fallow only The *Quran* and not *Sunnah*. There is no dearth of those people who want The *Quran* and *Sunnah* to go by their wishes and others regard the precedent not to be over ruled are adjusted under no circumstance and there are those who want to have no nexus with the past juristic exposition (*Siä*)." <http://jamaat.org/beta/site/page/8>, accessed on 09/08/2012

to become a sectarian-secular Islamic party similar to the Arab Muslim Brotherhood and aspired to create a large cadre of pious Muslims who would not crave for power but lead by example. However, in independent Pakistan, Maududi changed his theories and began to reason that there was scope for a body of practicing Islamists to take over the new state. The *Jamaat* saw an opportunity to further Maududi's agenda by working with the new state's elite, gradually expanding its Islamic agenda while providing the theological rationale to them for their plans for nation building on the basis of religion.

The Pakistani establishment was, however, wary of Maududi and his *Jamaat-e-Islami*. Some saw in them the rudiments of totalitarianism, while others felt that *Jamaat's* revolutionary rhetoric was dangerous. Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan, advised civil servants and military officers not to join JI and clamped down on it in 1948, banning its newspapers and arresting its leaders. Yet, Pakistan's ruling apparatus could not keep itself immune from Maududi's concepts. His idea of "regimenting Muslims and instilling a belief system in their thinking" was not very different from the objectives of Pakistan's top-down nation builders<sup>57</sup>. Maududi and his *Jamaat* were also wooed by a section of Pakistani Punjab's politicians due to the dynamics of the internal inter and intra-party relations.

Maududi outlined a 9-point agenda for Islamic revival, which not only underlined the need to break the power of "un-Islam" and enable Islam to take hold of life "as a whole", but also an intellectual revolution and defence of Islam. While initially his objectives were not very appealing to the political elite in the country, however, later it found Maududi's concepts useful in building a national identity for Pakistan.<sup>58</sup> Maududi's this blue-print for moulding thoughts and beliefs, later on, became the foundations for efforts to create a distinctive national culture and history that traced Pakistan's origins to the arrival of Islam in South Asia.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, the Pakistani state also accepted Maududi's concepts of defending Islam against its enemies by portraying opposing political

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<sup>57</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan Between Mosque and Military*

<sup>58</sup> Maududi, *Short History of the revivalist Movement*

<sup>59</sup> Haqqani, *Ibid*

and ethnic forces as enemies of Islam, trying to destroy it and, therefore, they needed to be crushed to bring about the supremacy of Islam. To ensure achieving this goal Pakistan had to be developed into a bastion of Islam and a truly Islamic state, he argued.

Maududi's influence grew and now he had become a regular speaker on Radio Pakistan, propagating his vision of the Islamic state. Country's leading second rung leaders consulted him over the contours of the proposed constitution. His *Jamaat-e-Islami* assumed the role of unifier of the country's theologians, most of whom happened to be from the *Deobandi* spectrum. "Since the modernists – if not secularists – among the Muslim elite dominated the politics of the immediate post-partition period" says Ashok Behuria, "*Deobandis* and various other religious parties came together and started their campaign for an Islamic state in Pakistan"<sup>60</sup>. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the *Deobandis* were first in starting the anti-*Qadiani* movement also in the wake of one of the speeches of Sir Zafarullah Khan in Karachi in May 1952. An estimated 200 Ahmadiya Muslims were killed in those riots and extensive destruction of their properties took place. There were large-scale attacks on Ahmadiyas in the form of street protests, political rallies and inflammatory articles. Consequently, martial law was imposed in many parts of Punjab and the Pakistan's Federal Cabinet was dismissed by Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad. Although the *Deobandis* had taken a lead in launching this agitation and the *Barehvi* had initially stayed aloof, later on they also joined in and made a major impact. However, the *Barehvi* reaction to the anti-Ahmadiya agitation was divided. While the *Barehvi* masses joined the street demonstrations against Ahmadiyas, their leaders like Maulana Abdul Hasnat Qadri, still opposed any direct action against them.<sup>61</sup>

The *Barehvi Ulama* were not very happy with the *Deobandi* presence in the Constituent Assembly also and their influence on the constitution-making. Their political grouping, the MJUP, which had earlier been demanding official recognition of the socio-religious role of the *Ulama*,

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<sup>60</sup> Ashok Behuria, *Sects within sects: The Case of Deobandi-Barehvi Encounter in Pakistan*, Strategic Analysis, Vol. 32, No.1, January 2008

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*



now begun to demand their membership of different organs of administration and the judiciary. Therefore, when the Constituent Assembly was dissolved in October 1954, the *Barehis* hailed the move. However, to their chagrin they had hardly any presence or influence in the reconstituted Constituent Assembly. It was, therefore, no surprise if they hailed the imposition of the Martial Law in the country following Ayub Khan's military coup.

### **The Ayub Khan Era:**

Ayub Khan in his personal life was a practising Muslim, but almost completely secular in his outlook and social attitudes. He wanted to be viewed in the mould of Kemal Ataturk and a Muslim de Gaulle, who shared Jinnah's vision of Pakistan as a Muslim majority state. He wanted Pakistan to be a strong heavy industry-based economy and with a sturdy military capable of protecting not just the country's territorial borders, but its ideology also. He wasted no time in exhibiting his disgust at what had happened in the country's politics in post-Jinnah years and changing whatever had emerged as Pakistani nationhood in the preceding decade, tried to give a definite shape to Pakistani nationalism as per his vision.<sup>62</sup> Yet, even though his constituency consisted of the Army and the expanding Pakistani industrialist class, General Ayub Khan still had to pander to the Islamists and their sentiments. He also tried to show a preference for *Sunni* leaders, mostly of the *Barehvi* hue, who had been demanding enforcement of the Constitution and restrictions on *Shia* activities, as those were viewed as violative of the rights of the *Sunni* majority.<sup>63</sup> Although Ayub did not succumb to those demands, his partisan disposition towards the *Sunnis* did accentuate the *Shia-Sunni* differences, something Munir Commission had warned against in its 1953 report on anti-Ahmadiya riots.

The new Constitution prepared under Ayub had initially renamed Pakistan as "Republic of Pakistan". It, however, reverted back to being the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan" when the National Assembly formed

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<sup>62</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>63</sup> *The politics of the Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Pakistan, 1971-77*, A.S. Pirzada, p2.

under the new Constitution carried out the First Amendment to it (December 1962) and inserted some more Islamic measures in the statute book like the setting up of an Advisory Council on Islamic Ideology and Islamic Research Institute. Ayub Khan was not enamoured of the *Deobandis* and he began to cultivate the *Barelvi ulama*. Despite many of the cadres harbouring critical views towards Ayub Khan's policies, WPJUP's central leadership adopted a pro-Ayub stance and supported him, particularly during the 1965 presidential elections. They viewed Ayub's stint in office as an opportunity to regain the ground lost to the *Deobandis* in pre-Ayub era and build up their political and social power through official patronage.

Religious parties opposed to Ayub Khan, particularly the JI, largely focused their opposition to him for his secular policies and trying to mould a Pakistani ideology – *Nazariyah-e-Pakistan* – something that had not been mentioned anywhere by Jinnah and others and was not a matter for discussion until the 1960s.<sup>64</sup> The term's emergence can be traced to one of the most captivating debates that took place between the Islamists and the country's then burgeoning leftist intelligentsia between the years 1967 and 1969 during the students' and workers' movement against Ayub's dictatorship, and at a time when Sindhi, Baloch, Pashtun and Bengali nationalists were moving closer to the radical doctrines of separatism.<sup>65</sup> Perturbed by the autonomists' rejection of a 'Punjab-driven' and *Islam-pasand* West Pakistan's claim to power, and by the students' and the Pakistan People's Party's socialistic overtones during the anti-Ayub movement, Maududi, the JI chief, formulated the scholarly/propagandist foundations of what he called the 'Pakistan ideology' (though the term was for the first time used by another JI ideologue Professor Khurshid Ahmed). In his writings of that period (1960s), Maududi revised Pakistan's *raison d'être* claiming that Pakistan did not come into being as a nation-state (for a Muslim majority) but as an 'ideological state' (i.e. an 'Islamic state'). He also felt that liberal and secularist Pakistani political and cultural outfits were the "Trojan Horses" through which they had infiltrated into Pakistani society and the government to erode Pakistan's Islamic character. The JI

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<sup>64</sup> Nadeem Paracha, *Ibid*

<sup>65</sup> *Dragged down by the stone*, Nadeem F. Paracha, The Dawn, April 19, 2012

enthusiastically published Maududi's new thesis along with his earlier writings, but omitted republishing the essays he had written before Pakistan's creation in which he had lambasted Pakistan as being "Na-Pakistan" (Land of the Impure), because it was being conceived by a "flawed Muslim" (Jinnah).<sup>66</sup>

### **The Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto years:**

In the post-Ayub Khan period, the *Deobandi* JUI and the JI quickly became allies of the new military dispensation of Yahya Khan, who exploited the influence of Maududi and the pro-regime Islamic parties to blunt the leftist influence, riding on Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's socialistic band-wagon. However, the JUI made early alignment with Bhutto and his PPP also, as they appeared to be the force replacing military regime. The party readily extended support to Bhutto's idea of 'Islamic Socialism', something which the *Barelvi* JUP and Maududi's *Jamaat-e-Islami* opposed as inherently contradictory to Islam. Even though Maududi's thesis was blown away by the triumph of leftist/secular parties in the 1970 elections, Pakistan Army's defeat at the hands of the Indian military and the consequent separation of East Pakistan in 1971, saw the elected and left-leaning regime of Bhutto's PPP, set-up an elaborate project to actually fuse Maududi's thesis with the secular nationalist narratives emerging from the progressives and the autonomists.<sup>67</sup> When Bhutto was propelled into power, Pakistan found itself reeling under the combined impact of a lost war, demoralised Army and fears of a perceived Indo-Soviet encouragement to nationalist stirrings in NWFP, Balochistan and even in Sindh. Internally, the JI and other Islamic parties were propagating that the break-up of Pakistan in 1971 was a consequence of its rulers' refusal to turn the country into an Islamic state and, thereby, giving leftists and secularists the space to dictate terms and harm the unity of the country. In order to counter such arguments Bhutto convened a meeting of leading intellectuals, historians and scholars in which, however, the views of conservative scholar, I.H. Qureishi that "Pakistani way of life" and the "Islamic way

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

of life” were identical, prevailed. His writings on the Pakistan Movement found a major place in the new ideological narrative being prepared by the regime to strengthen notions of a ‘United Pakistan’. By late 1972, this narrative found its way into school text-books under ‘Pakistan Studies’ and was made a compulsory part of the curricula even in colleges. The narrative went something like this: West Pakistan was always the real Pakistan and Muslim. Its various ethnicities had a similar view on Islam. Pakistan’s historical roots lay in Arab lands from where brave conquerors started coming from the 8<sup>th</sup> century onwards to set-up Islamic rule in India.<sup>68</sup> From 1976 the official Pakistan TV started telecasting a historical series titled *Tabeer* that projected the 1857 Indian Mutiny as an Islamic jihad against the British and their Hindu allies, but also as the beginning of the Pakistan Movement.

The early days of the Bhutto era not only saw a cultural spring of folk music, art, cinema and festivities, and symbolic socialist paraphernalia, it, also witnessed the emergence of an aggressive brand of nationalism based on a scornful rhetoric against India, the moving closer of Pakistan towards puritanical (but oil-rich) Arab monarchies, the outlawing of the Ahmadiyahs (as a Muslim sect), and a constitution that (at least in theory) claimed to be working towards achieving an Islamic state through democracy.<sup>69</sup> However, instead of taking a principled stand against the obscurantist challenge, Bhutto preferred to hunt with the hound and built up a constitutional consensus in 1973 that kept his New Pakistan an ‘Islamic Republic’, Islam as the state religion and reaffirmed the commitment to bring all laws in the country under the injunctions of the *Quran* and the *Sunnah*.

Bhutto allowed for fresh affirmation of Pakistan’s Islamic credentials, as is reflected in the 1973 constitution. It strengthened the Islamic complexion of the state by requiring both the President and the Prime Minister to be Muslims, who must publically declare their acceptance of the finality of the Prophethood, thereby implicitly defining the

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<sup>68</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>69</sup> Ibid

conservative Muslim identity.<sup>70</sup> It may also be noted that the earlier constitutions did not require such a declaration from the President of the Republic, who had to be just a Muslim. Theoretically, under the 1956 constitution the office of Prime Minister could be occupied by even a non-Muslim. Nonetheless, there was no attempt to include specific Islamic laws in the legal system until it became politically expedient to do so towards the beginning of 1977.<sup>71</sup> Significantly, no Pakistani, particularly the self-styled secularists and leftists raised their voices against the silently creeping Islamisation of Pakistan, including such retrograde steps as the declaration of the *Ahmadiyahs* as non-Muslims, or requiring President and the Prime Ministers to be Muslims.

The notions of Pakistan's religious identity were further strengthened by reviving the old mission of pan-Islamism. Soon after the 'Objectives Resolution' was adopted by the Constituent Assembly, the then President of the Muslim League, Chaudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman, declared that Pakistan would bring all Muslim countries together in the form of an "Islamistan" that would be a pan-Islamic entity.<sup>72</sup> The Pakistan Government also convened an international Muslim conference in Karachi that led to the formation of the *Motamar al-Alam al-Islami* (*Motamar* – The World Muslim Congress), seeking to project an activist image of Pakistan in the Muslim world by picking up cudgels on behalf of 'oppressed' Muslim communities. The Pakistani Government, which had also toyed with the idea of floating an organisation of Islamic countries in the form of an Islamic conference to pursue "a system of collective bargaining and collective security",<sup>73</sup> however received only a limited response with Saudi Arabia and Egypt showing some interest. These efforts, though, did open gates of the country to Islamic radicals

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<sup>70</sup> Acting under this provision, through the Second Amendment (September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1974), the *Ahmadiyahs* were declared as non-Muslims and a long-standing demand of the Islamic lobby was conceded.

<sup>71</sup> Anita M. Weiss, *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan*, Paper on *Historical Debate on Islam and the State in South Asia*. Vanguard Books, Pakistan.

<sup>72</sup> Aslam Siddiqi, *Pakistan seeks security*.

<sup>73</sup> Views of Ghulam Mohammad, Pakistan's Finance Minister in early 50s and the Governor General subsequently, as quoted by Hussein Haqqani in his *Pakistan Between Mosque and Military*.

of the era like the Egyptian *Muslim Brotherhood*, or the Grand mufti of Palestine Al-Haj Amin al-Husseini, who frequently visited Pakistan.

The pan-Islamic wind that was blowing across the Muslim world following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war and the discovery of the power of oil-money by conservative Muslim countries, encouraged Bhutto to tap into those sentiments to strengthen his nation's Islamic identity and sentiments, besides giving it a mission in the international arena. The Islamic countries had come together at Rabat in Morocco in September 1969 on the issue of Israel's aggression against the Arabs, but had done very little since then to organise themselves into a well-knit body. Bhutto seized the opportunity and brought Heads of Islamic States to Lahore for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Islamic Summit in February 1974, to not only launch the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), but also to define its structure, organs and agenda. For a period of time, the Lahore OIC Summit gave the defeated Pakistanis some solace in visions of pan-Islamic grandeur. They felt certain that the Summit had sown the seeds of a 'United States of Islam', with themselves at its centre, having access to its vast oil resources and riches, substantial strategic assets and even military muscle. Close relations between Pakistan and a fast militarising Iran and secondment of Pakistani defence personnel to a number of Gulf countries during this period strengthened those notions.

While these efforts to gain the leadership of the Muslim world by Pakistan did not go far, they did open up the country to various Islamic radical groups based in other Muslim countries. The country's forays in the pan-Islamic field not only strengthened Pakistani Islamists of different hues, but also laid the foundations of international networking between official and non-official Islamic bodies. This general pan-Islamic drift of official policies strengthened similar tendencies in the non-official circles. The Karachi based *Motamar* that had practically been dormant for past so many years, got a new lease of life and with official, as well as private support, organised Islamic activities in various Muslim countries. There was increased interaction between various other Pakistani Muslim NGOs and groups with their counterparts in other Muslim countries and communities. This increased networking among them had major implications for growth of radical Islam in Pakistan in particular and the entire region as a whole in the next decade.

The myth of a united *Ummah* also strengthened the bonds between Pakistan's *Deobandi* radical Islamists and similarly oriented *Wahabi-Salafi* Saudis. The latter were already on the ascendancy because of the clout they enjoyed in the OIC due to their oil-wealth and the massive *Zakat* money they could dole out to Islamic communities in lesser-developed Arab, Asian and African Muslim countries and communities. At the official levels, the Saudi monarchy was not averse to doling out money to cash-starved Pakistani Government, but along with that came the former's religious agenda of propagating the supremacy of *Wahabi* Islam.<sup>74</sup> This association boosted the simmering sectarian tensions in Pakistan (*Deobandi* versus *Barelvis*, *Shias* versus *Sunnis*) on the one hand, and stoked *Wahabi* inspired radicalism internationally on the other.

Bhutto's policies that rode roughshod over notions of provincial autonomy made JUI drift away from Bhutto and the PPP, particularly as the federal policies tended to undermine JUI-led governments in Baluchistan and the NWFP. The powerful anti-Ahmadiya agitation in 1974 and the *Nizam-e-Mustafa* (*The order of the Prophet*) movement in 1977 brought *Deobandi* JUI and the *Barelvi* JUP on a common platform along with the sectarian neutral *Jamaat-e-Islami*. Yet, their influence remained confined to specific pockets in the country. While JUI had consolidated its strength in NWFP and the Baluchistan, the JUP, along with its *Barelvi* ally the *Jamaat Abl-e-Sunnat* had developed a strong base in rural Punjab and Sind. However, up to this point of time the, Pakistani Islamic movement did not have an overtly radical agenda. Though attempts were constantly being made by various Islamic parties to keep the followers of their theological sects together, there was no attempt to take proselytising activities to followers of other sects or religion in a forceful manner. There was also no pan-Islamic inspiration to push for sectarian identities and supremacy. The 'petro-dollar Islam' was still in the process of unfolding and Islam and Islamic parties did not have, as yet, that place in Islamic Republic of Pakistan which they were set to acquire from mid-70s under General Zia-ul Haq's rule.

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<sup>74</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

## Chapter IV

# The Era of Islamisation and Afghan Jihad

Radicalisation of Pakistani Islam under *Deobandi/Wahabi* influence commenced with gusto during General Zia-ul Haq's period. Islamic political parties constituted a major bloc in the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) that spearheaded the anti-Bhutto agitation in the second half of the 70s over the issue of rigging of the 1977 elections. Introduction of an Islamic order – *Nizam-e-Mustafa* - was one of the major election planks of the PNA. As the confrontation between the PNA and the Bhutto regime continued to paralyse the country, the Army Chief General Zia-ul Haq moved in by deposing Bhutto on July 5, 1977 with a clear promise of holding fresh election within 90 days. However, as the political situation became more vexed, elections were postponed and Zia continued to hold power. He needed a political slogan and a constituency outside the army to counter Bhutto and his PPP. To create both, he grabbed the PNA's agenda of Islamisation. Like many political leaders in Pakistan since independence, including Jinnah, Zia's need for political legitimacy fuelled his desire to tap the repertory of Islam. He, however, was exceptional in declaring from the outset that he intended to ride the Islamist wave rather than stamp on it.<sup>75</sup> He contended that it was the "spirit of Islam" that had forced out Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and also proved that "Pakistan, which was created in the name of Islam, will continue to survive if it sticks to Islam. That is why I consider the introduction of an Islamic system as an essential prerequisite for the country".<sup>76</sup> He even banned the mention of Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech in the media and the school text-books. The Pakistan's official electronic media was directed to use only those of Jinnah's

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<sup>75</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.98

<sup>76</sup> Report on Zia's address to the nation, *Dawn* July 8, 1977



utterances that referred to Islam and Pakistan.<sup>77</sup> This suited the Islamic parties in the PNA, (the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, *Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Islam*, the *Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Pakistan*, and the *Khaksar Tehriq*) who welcomed Zia's Islamisation call, as it allowed them to ascend to power without winning any election.<sup>78</sup>

Zia's religious agenda appeared, at one plane, to be clearly a typical cosmetic exercise to maintain power. His Islamisation programme covered just four broad areas: economic matters, judicial reforms, introduction of Islamic penal code and a new 'Islamic' educational policy. However, even in these areas, at no stage Zia-ul Haq sought to introduce *Shariat* provisions in their totality that would have supplanted the existing systems. He merely removed those sections of existing concerned laws that were felt to be repugnant to the general principles of Islam. The overall state order, i.e. the pre-independence western-oriented secularist system created by the British, and his own Martial Law Administration, were allowed to continue as they were.<sup>79</sup> Limits were imposed on *Shariat* benches of the four provincial High Courts as their rulings to bring laws in line with Islam were made subject to appeal to the *Shariat* Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court. The Federal *Shariat* Court, established in 1980 with much fanfare, was barred from reviewing Ayub's Family Law Ordinance, despite its widespread condemnation by *ulama* as a blatant violation of the *Shariat*.<sup>80</sup> These created fissures in Zia's relations with his erstwhile Islamic allies. The *ulama* and their political compositions which had moved from the fringes of the political activity to centre-stage under Zia-ul Haq and had further consolidated their positions through their control of *madrassas* and entry of their students into the official structures, now felt bold enough to challenge state's right to control policy-making (with an Islamic alibi), interpret Islam (with political motives) and define

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<sup>77</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed August 30, 2013

<sup>78</sup> Anita M. Weiss, *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan*, Paper on *Historical Debate on Islam and the State in South Asia*. Vanguard Books, Pakistan.

<sup>79</sup> Anita M. Weiss, *Ibid*

<sup>80</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p. 103

the parameters of Pakistani nationalism. It was, therefore, no surprise that by mid-1980s the new Islamic intelligentsia belonging to the JI fold, began to distance itself from the Zia government and by 1988 the party had entered into an anti-Zia alliance with the PPP.

Nonetheless, Zia's policies and actions strengthened the *Deobandi* Islamic fundamentalist lobby in the country, which had an opportunity to gain entry and find acceptance in those sections of the society where it was treated with disdain until then.<sup>81</sup> As the Islamist political parties and forces on the *Deobandi* spectrum (the JI, notwithstanding its 'neutralistic' pretensions, the JUI factions and groups like *Jamaat Ahl-e-Hadis*) gathered strength, they fostered fresh interest in defining the Pakistani identity as synonymous with a Muslim. According to Farzana Sheikh, in a state still beset by the lack of consensus over Islam, earlier differences resurfaced over the proper way to be a Muslim to qualify as a real Pakistani and their attempts to impose a particular type of sectarian Islam as a necessary prerequisite to be a universal or sovereign Pakistani. They also lent momentum to calls to widen the scope of constitutional definitions of the Muslim that would disenfranchise minority Muslim sects, notably the *Shias*, who failed to conform to sectarian construction of the Muslims.<sup>82</sup> Zia's Islamisation process also allowed the Islamist politico-social configurations to get better organised, widen their organisational networks and gain more popular acceptance, which played a crucial role in the next phase of Islamic developments in the country. A programme, with clear Saudi *Wahabi* patronage, to convert Pakistan into a theocracy as per *Deobandi* precepts commenced. Saudi *Wahabis* had earlier viewed South Asian *Deobandis* with latent hostility because of their differing perspective on the place of the monarchy in political Islam and the place of *Sufism* in theological practices. However, Zia-ul Haq's rise, the personal affinity he had developed with the Saudi Royalty, most significantly on religious issues, and the impetus he gave to the furthering of the Islamic agenda in Pakistan, brought about reconciliation between the *Wahabis* and the *Deobandis* at large. The anti-Soviet *jihad* in Afghanistan took this rapprochement to an even higher

<sup>81</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*

<sup>82</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.57

pan-Islamic plane, a process that was to be further boosted to unprecedented heights by the emergence of radical *Wahabism* of Osama bin-Laden, the *Al-Qaeda* and *Taliban*.

This rise of an activist Islam and the encouragement that it received from Zia-ul Haq's Islamic policies, accentuated not only the existing *Shia-Sunni* differences, but even intra-*Sunni* differences between *Deobandis* and the *Barelvis*. It made the hard line *Deobandis* even less tolerant of the non-Muslim minorities and there were many attacks on the Christians on flimsy allegations of blasphemy against Islam. It is also interesting to note that it was during Zia's rule that Pakistan Army's transformation into a more religiously oriented force commenced and under new *jibadi* concepts Pakistan's official agencies began to officially export and sponsor armed-insurrection in Jammu & Kashmir in close association with *Jamaat-e-Islami* and others.<sup>83</sup> Thus, Zia's Islamisation programme, billed as an attempt to enforce the universalist prescription of Islam, was in reality engaged in nothing less than laying the foundation for an essentially *Sunni* (read *Deobandi*) interpretation of Islamic law. This engagement with sectarianism was, apparently, a part of the legacy of the Pakistan movement that had sought to employ the language of Islamic universalism to lend substance to the national project.<sup>84</sup>

### **Rise of Shiite activism:**

Two events in the late 70s, namely, Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet entry into Afghanistan, ensured that Pakistan could no longer cloak its 'radical' Islamic sensibilities under the veneer of 'Islamic democracy' and ruling elite could try and politically control Pakistan under the garb of 'Islamisation of the country'. The era of political exploitation of Islam had come to an end and the one in which a radicalized Islam began to call the shots had begun. Khomeini's revolution had unleashed an 'activist Islam' that did not accept the status quo. The *Shiite* identity of the Iranian revolution not only encouraged *Shiite* minorities in other countries to become bolder and more assertive, it also created and encouraged *Sunni* activist backlash.

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<sup>83</sup> This is discussed in greater details in the chapter on *Radicalisation of the Pakistan Army*.

<sup>84</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p. 65

Pakistani *Shias*, estimated to be 15-20 %, or 30 million of the country's population<sup>85</sup>, and the second largest *Shiite* community outside Iran, became the first target of this Sunni sectarian zeal and backlash.

Although the *Shias* and the *Sunnis* adhere to the same fundamentals of the religion, given to the mankind by the same *Allah* through his same ultimate Prophet and enshrined in the same holy book, the *Quran*, yet they have evolved into two distinct and separate philosophies and ways of life due to their different sociological evolutionary processes and environment. In course of time these two major sects of Islam have drifted so far apart from each other that they have found coexistence somewhat impossible anywhere. The broad *Shia-Sunni* identities mask more complex sectarian structures. Both the sects have many sub-sects, cults and rival religious traditions. Most Pakistani *Shias* are *Twelvers* or *Ithna Ashari Shias* (also known as *Imami Shias*). They believe in the institution of twelve *Imams*, the last of whom – *Imam Mehdi* – has gone into hiding and is supposed to emerge one day to lead *Shias* to religious glory. A smaller group, known as *Seveners*, more popularly known as *Ismailis*, or *Agha Khanis*, differs sharply from the *Twelvers* after the seventh *Imam* and has its own interpretation of the faith, its traditions and practices. The majority *Twelvers* have their own Islamic jurisprudence – *Fiqh Jafaria* - and look to Iran for spiritual leadership.

Zia's Islamisation policies that sought to strengthen the state's monopoly over religion by enforcing a narrow *Sunni* interpretation of Islamic law triggered a robust *Shia* backlash which clearly received moral and, may be, material support from the revolutionized Iran. By equating Sunnism with Islam, the dominant *Sunnis* sought to deny *Shias* their identity and voice as Muslims. They even began to assert that those who did not subscribe to their version of Islam and its laws, i.e. the *Shias*, were outside the pale of Islam and, therefore, deserved to be re-designated as minorities.<sup>86</sup> Shiite protest against *Sunni* efforts to impose their dictate gained strength in the 1980 under the banner of *Tebrik-e-Nifaj-e-Fiqh-e-Ja'fariyya* (Movement for the Implementation of Shiite - *Ja'fari* - Law). The movement had a major success when in the early

<sup>85</sup> The size of *Shia* population in Pakistan has been discussed in detail in Chapter-II.

<sup>86</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.64

80s it succeeded in forcing the Zia regime to exempt *Shias* from paying *zakat* under the recently promulgated *Zakat & Ushr Ordinance* that seemed to follow *Hanafi* laws. This sharpened the *Sunni* profile of the Islamisation efforts in the country and brought a *Sunni* backlash against the *Shias*.

By the early 80s, *Sunni Deobandi* organisations like *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* had emerged with the express agenda of quelling *Shiite* activism through violence. Although the Pakistani state seemingly tried to restrain the radical *Deobandi* outfits, the impunity with which they carried out their pogrom against *Shias*, clearly hinted at patronage to their cause by some sections of the establishment, particularly the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).<sup>87</sup> The ISI, through political parties like the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, had already launched a project to subvert Kashmiris' emotional links with India by exploiting religious sensibilities. The era of involvement of 'non-state players' in Pakistan's policy of propping up *jihadist* movements in other countries to serve their own national interests had dawned.

### **The Afghanistan Jihad and Creation of Taliban:**

The Soviet entry into Afghanistan enabled Zia to play, albeit with US assistance and active collaboration with Pakistan's Islamic political parties, the great game of espionage and subversion that had been played by Russia and Britain in that country in the nineteenth century. The *Afghan Jihad* marked the beginning of a wider plan for launching global Islamic activism under Pakistani leadership that continued well after Zia<sup>88</sup>. By the end of 1980 not only was massive US military and economic aid flowing into Pakistan for the Pakistanis as well as the *mujahideen*, over 1 million Afghan refugees who had fled to Pakistan became the recruiting grounds for the Afghan Islamic *mujahideen* groups and their Pakistani *Deobandi/Wahabi* sponsors. One of the first Pakistani Refugee Commissioners was one Abdullah, who was closely linked with Pakistani *Jamaat-e-Islami*.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism*

<sup>88</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*

As the *Afghan Jihad* expanded, so did the influence of ‘radical’ and activist Islamic ideology in Pakistan. The *Barehvi* oriented JUP was pushed out of the picture and parties on the *Deobandi* spectrum – the *JI* and the *JUI* - were encouraged by the *Zia* regime to get closely involved with *mujahideen* activities not only to cover the tracks of the *ISI* and the *Pakistan Army*, but also to counter-balance each other.<sup>90</sup> Soon, they became the major conduits for funnelling aid in men and material to *mujahideen* groups that was coming through various pan-Islamic bodies, like the Saudi Arabia based *Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami (Rabita)*, *The World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY)* and other international Islamic groups<sup>91</sup>. It is interesting to note that most non-State Pakistani and foreign players collaborating in propping up *Afghan Jihad* belonged to the *Salafi-Wahabi/Deobandi* spectrum and had close links with Saudi official and non-official Islamic bodies. Initially the *JI* was as close a part of this operation as any other Islamic group. However, the growing rift between the *JI* and *Zia-ul Haq* in the early 80s afforded space to *JUI* to gain ascendancy and morph into a politically radical group with an Islamic agenda to change the society, from being a religious conservative body<sup>92</sup>. Other Pakistani Islamic sects like the *Shias*, *Barehvis*, *Ismailis*, etc and their religious-political structures had virtually no, or very marginal role to play in the *Afghan Jihad*.

The Geneva Accords signed on April 18, 1988 paved the way for ending the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It also marked the turning point in the development of Islamic movement and its transformation from an activist-radical Islam into a *jihadist* Islam, out to pursue a global agenda of *jihad* and setting up of puritanical theocracies in Islamic states. Despite the Geneva Accords, Afghan peace was still a mirage. The formerly allied Afghan *mujahideen* groups fell out with each other over sharing the spoils of power and plunged the just freed Afghanistan into a devastating civil war. Before *Taliban* (literally-the students) emerged on the Afghan scene towards the end of 1994, the country was in a state of disintegration. Along with that Pakistan’s hopes of creating an Afghan client state, providing it ‘strategic depth’ against India, as also

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>92</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p. 113

access to the markets and fossil fuel resources of the newly emerged Central Asian Republics (CAR) were also fast evaporating. Therefore, Pakistan had to act fast. Benazir Bhutto, who once again became the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1993, was especially keen to contain the damage and open a land-link with the CARs.<sup>93</sup> Under her directions, her Pashtun Interior Minister, Naseerullah Babar, initially explored the possibility of opening a shorter route to Uzbekistan and other Republics through Khyber Pass-Kabul-across Hindukush ranges to Tashkent. However, fierce fighting between contending *mujahideen* groups in Northern Afghanistan made that plan a non-starter. An alternative route was sought from Quetta –Kandhar-Heart to Ashkabad in Turkmenistan, as there was less fighting in that area. Although Babar led a delegation of some Islamabad-based diplomats and Pakistani technocrats in October 1994 to Kandahar and Heat to demonstrate the viability of that route, the Kandahar based *mujahideen* commanders remained suspicious of the Pakistani plan and did not extend it the desired cooperation. They felt that through their plan to open this route, the Pakistanis were planning to intervene in the Afghan civil war on behalf of their opponents.<sup>94</sup>

It was at this point that a group of 200 theological students from Pakistani *Deobandi* Islamic seminaries - the *Taliban* – mysteriously emerged and entered Kandahar from Pakistan. These first group of Islamic cadres and their leaders, as also those who followed them subsequently, were the products of *Jamia Asharfia* (Lahore), *Jamia Arabia* (Raiwind), *Jamia Uloom al-Islamia* (Binnauri Town, Karachi) and *Dar-ul Uloom Haqqania* (Akhora Khattak). They attacked Gulbudin Hikmetyar's local garrison and overran it with just one casualty. With clear Pakistani official directions and open and covert assistance, they took over arms and other local assets of Hekmatyar and other Afghan warlords in the area. Soon their numbers swelled and they began to fan out to other areas of Afghanistan. Although initially Benazir Bhutto denied any Pakistani hand behind the rise of *Taliban*, later she conceded that her government was in no position to stop volunteers from going across

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<sup>93</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*

<sup>94</sup> Ahmad Rashid, *Ibid*; *The Al-Qaeda Connection*, Imtiaz Gul

the border and joining the *Taliban*. The Pakistan Government and the *JUI* celebrated the fall of Kandahar and Babar credited himself with the successes of Taliban, calling them in private as “our Boys”.<sup>95</sup>

Soon, the Taliban were in control of almost entire Afghanistan, with the exception of the northern parts of the country. Their *Wahabi/Deobandi* theological orientation and commitment began to manifest immediately. They did not need any façade of *Islamic Democracy* like their Pakistani masters and began to implement strictest *Shariat* as per their *Deobandi* interpretation in areas under their control. Afghanistan was declared as “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” in 1996 after the capture of Kabul.<sup>96</sup> The *Taliban* regime’s harsher Islamic measures like floggings, public executions of ‘criminals’ and the demolition of Bamiyan Buddhas soon began to invite strong international opprobrium. The links between *Al-Qaeda* and its Osama bin-Laden and the *Taliban* regime had alarmed the west, particularly the USA, which carried out missile strikes against *Al-Qaeda* training bases in Afghanistan after attacks on its embassies in Nairobi and Dar as-Salaam in August 1998. Pressure began to mount on Pakistan to reign in its former protégés. However, *Al-Qaeda* and *Taliban* had grown beyond Pakistan and were pursuing their own global Islamic agenda that brought about 9/11.

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*



## Chapter V

# ‘War on Terror’ and Strains in Pak-Taliban Nexus

The immediate price Pakistan had to pay for 9/11 was to end its open support for the *Taliban* regime in Afghanistan and join the US-led ‘War on Terror’. According to Hassan Abbas, the noted Pakistani author and political commentator, on September 14, 2001 Pakistan Army’s top Commanders, including all the Corps Commanders, met to decide on a response to the US ultimatum to Pakistan to join its ‘War on Terror’ by ditching the *Taliban*. Most Corps Commanders agreed with Gen. Musharraf’s assessment that Pakistan had to stand with the US in accordance with the UN Security Council resolution, or be declared a ‘terrorist state’, leading to economic sanctions. However, Lt. Generals Mohammad Aziz Khan, Jamshed Gulzar and Muzaffar Usmani differed and wanted the country to stand with *Taliban* and Afghanistan.<sup>97</sup> Even though Musharraf’s views prevailed and all Generals eventually ‘agreed’ with him, strong support for *Taliban* manifested itself later in lukewarm Pakistani response to transformation of the *Afghan Taliban* into *Pakistani Taliban* and their increasing assertiveness in the Tribal Areas on the Durand Line.<sup>98</sup> However, covertly links with *Taliban* continued and Pakistani supporters of the *Taliban*, the Pashtun tribes, the *JUI* and the ISI continued to be in contact with them. Apparently, Pakistan was working on a strategy to simultaneously keep the US happy and generous over its commitment to deal with *Taliban* terror and also maintain links with the latter through Islamic political parties like the *JUI* so as not to lose them altogether.<sup>99</sup> This duplicity in Pakistani actions and policies continued throughout the decade and its pinnacle was the US commando raid in Abbottabad in 2011 to take-out Osama

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<sup>97</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism*

<sup>98</sup> Imtiaz Gul, *The Al-Qaeda Connection*.

<sup>99</sup> Dexter Filkins, *New York Times*, Published September 5, 2008;

bin-Laden.<sup>100</sup> This ‘hunting with hound and running with hare’ approach was clearly a result of the fundamental dichotomy over the role and use of Islam in the State policies in Pakistan. Pakistan sought to justify this duplicity in its policies as “major strategic reorientation”.<sup>101</sup> Many Taliban cadres, along with *Al-Qaeda* cadres found refuge in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan, other areas of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and in northern Baluchistan.<sup>102</sup> Most of these activities were taking place with the knowledge and benign indulgence of the Pakistani establishment.

As time passed, Musharraf, who had publically adopted an agenda of supporting religious moderation, was forced to get more deeply involved with US operations against *Taliban/Al-Qaeda* in return for easing of the US sanctions and receiving massive economic and military assistance from it. What was initially limited to intelligence sharing, led to operations against *Al-Qaeda* fugitives in Pakistan and eventually military operations against their pockets of presence in the country, particularly if they or their local allies threatened to supplant the Pak Government’s writ anywhere with one of their own. Under US pressure top leaders of many religious parties like Fazal-ur Rehman (JUI), Qazi Hussein Ahmed (JI), etc. were arrested in January 2002 and a ban was announced on *Jaisb-e-Muhammad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Sipah-e-Sahaba, Tebriq-e-Zafariyah* and *Tanzim Nijaz-e-Shariat Mohammadi*.<sup>103</sup> Many *Al-Qaeda* and *Taliban* cadres returning from Afghanistan to their sanctuaries in Tribal Areas were arrested. A military operation by the South Waziristan Scouts at Landi Dok in Kaloosha district in March 2004 to eliminate one of these *Al-Qaeda* leaders, Tahir Yuldashev, locally known as ‘Tahir Jan’, the charismatic leader of Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), led to first major encounter between Pakistani Pashtun tribals and the

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<sup>100</sup> Interviews given by Bruce Riedel, other US Commanders, diplomats and CIA operatives and former *Taliban* and Northern Alliance commanders in Afghanistan to BBC in its 2011 documentary ‘Secret Pakistan’, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSinK-dVrig>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5-lSSC9dSE>; *Obama’s War* by Bob Woodward.

<sup>101</sup> Speech given by General Jehangir Karamat, Pak Ambassador to USA, Brookings Institution, Dec 14, 2004

<sup>102</sup> Imtiaz Gul *The Al-Qaeda Connection*

<sup>103</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*

Pakistan security forces. Following this incident, a continuous process of desertion by Pashtun elements from the Pakistani Frontier Force started and continued for a long time to come.<sup>104</sup>

However, these measures were either mostly cosmetic, or were not taken to their logical end and remained half-hearted, designed to please the western audiences.<sup>105</sup> Most arrested religious leaders, extremists and militants were released within a few months, as the Government declared that there was ‘insufficient evidence’ implicating them with plots to harm the country.<sup>106</sup> There were apparently strong lobbies in Pakistan, including in the military establishment that were strongly opposed to totally decimating the *jibadi* groups that had so painstakingly been nurtured over the years as ‘Strategic Assets’ of the country, as part of a national policy in tune with its Islamic ethos. Even while appearing to be acting against them, the Pak establishment wanted to maintain surreptitious links with them as an insurance policy for the future.

The seemingly final break with Islamic radicals appeared to have come with December 2003 attacks on Musharraf, and those on Prime Minister designate Shaukat Aziz and the Karachi Corps Commander (middle of 2004). The *Taliban* and their Pakistani associates and sympathisers appeared to have finally lost faith in the commitment of the Pakistani dispensation towards their cause and were not willing to accommodate with it any more. Pakistan’s continuing failure to either come out of US-led ‘War on Terror’, or at least prevent drone attacks from its soil, convinced the *Taliban* – Afghani as well as Pakistani ones – that whether under a military regime like Musharraf’s, or a civilian one, Pakistan had no desire to give-up the American financial and military goodies for *jihad* to usher in *Shariat-e-Mohammadi* (The Islamic Law as laid down by Prophet). *Jihad*, they seem to have concluded, had become an expendable commodity for the Pakistani establishment. It was, therefore, no surprise that *Mustafa Abu al-Yazid*, alias *Abu Saeed al-Masari*, *Al-Qaeda* Commander in Afghanistan, once publically spoke of his hope

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<sup>104</sup> Imtiaz Gul *The Al-Qaeda Connection*

<sup>105</sup> Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*

that “Pakistan Army would be defeated (in Swat) and that would be its end everywhere”.<sup>107</sup>

The Pakistani Taliban and their allied Pakistani Islamic radicals subscribe to a clear Islamic agenda to introduce a strict *Shariat*-based Islamic order (*Nizam-e-Adal*) for the Muslims as per their *Deobandi/Wahabi-Salafi* interpretation. It spares no quarters for such hybrid Pakistani ideas as ‘Islamic democracy’ and *Nizam-e-Mustafa*. This Islamic ideology of the *Taliban* and their other cohorts, active under different nomenclature in various countries, do not want to make any compromises. They want to bring the Muslim societies totally under *Shariat*, as per their theological interpretations and beliefs. This Islamic system would encompass all aspects of human life, personal, societal, political, domestic, international, *et all*. Their ultimate goal is to recreate the Islamic Caliphate that would closely follow the model of the First Islamic Caliphate set-up by Prophet Mohammad himself in Medina in the early years of Islam. Many Islamic activist and thinkers, including *Osama bin-Laden* and *Ayman al-Zawahiri*, have spoken from time to time of establishment of “the righteous Caliphate of our *Ummah*”, beginning with Afghanistan.<sup>108</sup> Jordanian journalist Fouad Hussein quotes ‘*Al-Qaeda* leadership’ to outline a ‘seven-step’ plan to firmly establish such a Caliphate by 2020. The formation of the ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’ was the middle point of that plan, which now seeks to harvest socio-political churning in Middle Eastern countries. The conflicts in Yemen, Libya and Syria, along with the one in Pakistan’s Tribal Areas are the next phases in the chase of the worldwide dream of Islamic zealots.<sup>109</sup> The Islamic order they visualise, if enforced in Pakistan, which is clearly their current agenda, would mean an end to the existing Pakistani civilian, military and social order and establishments, and make it look like a modernised version of Afghanistan under *Taliban*.

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<sup>107</sup> Reuters India, July 1, 2009

<sup>108</sup> Interview Oct 21, 2001, from bin Laden *Message to the World*, Verso, 2005, p.121

<sup>109</sup> Fouad Hussein, *Al-Zarqawi - Al-Qaeda's Second Generation*, as quoted in *Der Spiegel Online*, accessed 21/9/12

## The beginning of conflict in Swat and FATA:

Swat and various areas of FATA saw the first manifestation of the transformation of the jihad into a conflict with Pakistan's *Barelvi* dominated establishment. Islamists like Sufi Muhammad, leader of *Tebrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mubammadi* (TNSM) had started imposing *Shariat* as per strict *Deobandi* interpretation on the people of Swat as far back as 1992, even before Taliban had emerged as a political force in Afghanistan. He had under his sway the tribal districts of Swat, Malakand and Bajaur. In 1995, TNSM followers occupied government offices in Swat and demanded imposition of *Shariat* in the area. On September 6, 1998, in reaction to the August 1998 American missile attacks on *Al-Qaeda* camps in Afghanistan, the TNSM threatened to attack American citizens and properties in Pakistan, unless the USA apologised to the Muslim world for the missile strikes. Later on October 27, 2001, in the wake of 9/11, about 10,000 heavily armed TNSM cadres from Bajaur, led by Maulana Sufi Mohammed crossed the Pak-Afghan border to join the *Taliban* to fight the US-led forces. After the fall of *Taliban* in Afghanistan in late 2001, these Pakistani militants came back home and despite severe punitive action from the Musharraf regime, they began to experiment with the *Deobandi/Wahabi* precepts in the tribal hinterland where they had strong affinities. They managed to make their writ run in local pockets in Waziristan, Bajaur, Malakand, Swat and even in Khyber. All this coincided with the resurgence of *Taliban* in Afghanistan in 2004–2005 and militant assertions of local Pakistani *Taliban* like the one in Miranshah.

The influence of pro-*Al-Qaeda/Taliban* radicals, practically all of whom are of *Deobandi/Salafi Ahl-e-Hadis* persuasion, was so extensive and intense in the country that the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif introduced the Fifteenth Amendment to the Pakistani constitution in 1998. Clause 2 of the proposed Bill stated:

The Federal Government shall be under an obligation to take steps to enforce the *Shariat*, to establish *salat*, to administer *zakat*, to promote *amr bil ma'roof* and *nahi anil munkar* (to prescribe what is right and to forbid what is wrong), to eradicate corruption at all levels and to provide substantial socio-economic justice, in accordance with the principles of Islam, as laid down in the Holy *The Quran* and *Sunnah*.

The Bill was passed by the Lower House of the Parliament on October 8, 1998, but was not presented to the Upper House because Nawaz Sharif's government did not have the required majority there and the moderate Pakistani lobbies had raised a storm over it.<sup>110</sup>

It was very clear by the end of the 1990s that Islamic radicals of the *Deobandi* and *Wababi/Salafi* variety had become so strong in Pakistan that the state was nervous in taking them on politically and preferred to appease their Islamic agenda, rather than confront them. Pakistan's law enforcement agencies had lost their nerves to deal with them through normal policing activity or through determined para-military action, therefore, the ominous signs were that now it would be the Army which would have to take the jihadis head on and destroy their military capabilities, something it had itself help built-up over the years in accordance with its newer military doctrines. The key uncertainties of the situation were: would the Army have any clear strategy to take the radical Islamists through the force of arms, or would it be reluctant to do so and devise back-hand dealings to persuade them not to wage their jihad against the Pakistani Army? How did the Army plan to undertake a successful but prolonged internal counter insurgency operation in the light of US experience in Vietnam, Soviet experience in Afghanistan and Israeli experience in West Bank and Gaza? \_\_\_ The answers to these questions came thick and fast in the next few months.

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<sup>110</sup> Ashok K. Behuria, *Fighting the Taliban: Pakistan at war with itself*, Australian Journal of International Affairs. Australian Journal of International Affairs

## Chapter VI

# The Uncontrollable Islamic Militancy

While the Pakistani state did not have a clear political and administrative strategy to deal with the burgeoning Islamic radicalism and, on the contrary, was wittingly or unwittingly pandering to radicalism, the Army, which on its part has been using the jihadists as a force multiplier, was also at a total loss to devise a clear military plan to tackle the Taliban militancy and prevent that conflict from mutating into a prolonged internal security operation. Anti-militancy operations of the Pakistan Army started with a routine deployment of troops in 2001-02 and since then it has conducted at least five major and many smaller anti-insurgency military operations:<sup>111</sup>

Operation *Enduring Freedom* (2001–02);

Operation *Al-Mizan* (2002–06),

Operation *Zalzala* (2008);

Operations *Sher Dil*, *Rab-e-Haq*, and *Rab-e-Rast* (2007–09); and

Operation *Rab-e-Nijat* (2009–10).

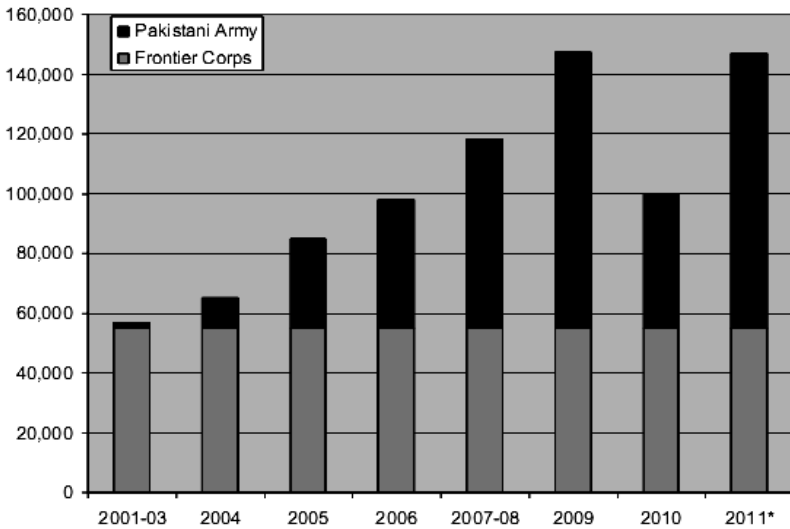
After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the U.S led *Operation Enduring Freedom* aimed at overthrowing the *Taliban* regime in Afghanistan and capturing its and *Al-Qaeda's* top leaders commenced.

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<sup>111</sup> *Military operations in FATA and PATA: implications for Pakistan*, Zahid Ali Khan, [www.isi.org.pk/publication-files/1339999992\\_58398784.pdf](http://www.isi.org.pk/publication-files/1339999992_58398784.pdf), accessed on 28.8.2012; Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (: Simon & Schuster, New York, 2002), p. 59. Rahimullah Yusufzai, *Fall of the Last Frontier?* News line (Pakistan), June 2002; Zaffar Abbas, *Operation Eye wash*, Herald, August 2005, p. 64; Ashley J. Tellis, *Pakistan and the War on Terror: Conflicted Goals, Compromised Performance* (: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington DC, 2008), p. 7; *Descent into Anarchy*, Herald, March 2004, p. 62.

Because of Pakistan's strategic location and its involvement in Afghanistan, Washington pressured Islamabad into assisting its war effort. Pakistan seemingly made two contributions to the US operation. Firstly, it offered U.S. logistic and military support by providing ports and bases, together with sharing intelligence and immigration information, and capturing key *Al Qaeda* leaders. Secondly, Pakistan deployed units from the regular Army, Special Services Group, the Frontier Corps and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate along its border with Afghanistan ostensibly to block infiltration routes between the two countries. These deployments soon went up sharply and it was claimed in 2005 that Army had deployed 80,000 troops in FATA and taken 700 casualties in its fight against the *Al-Qaeda*.

**Graph I: Pakistani forces deployed at the Pak-Afghan border 2001-11**

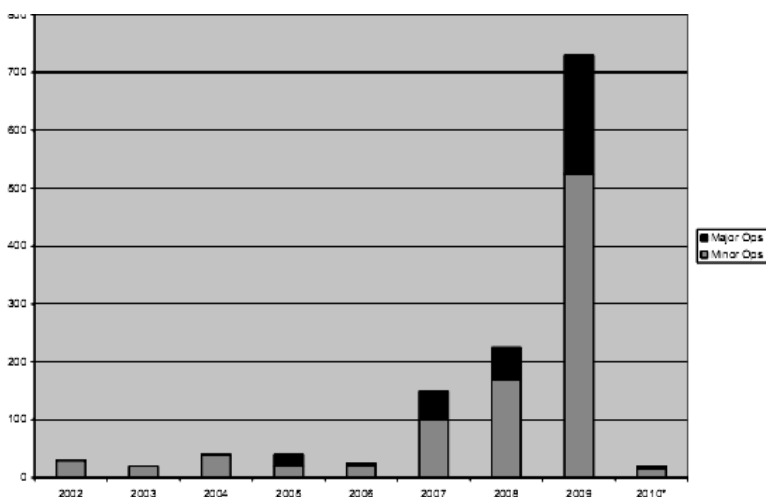


In December 2001, Pakistan employed a mixture of forces in Khyber and Kurram tribal agencies to support U.S. operations in Tora Bora. Pakistan was also forced into capturing many prominent *Al Qaeda* leaders and foreigners, including Abu Zubaydah, Ramzi bin al-Shibh and Sharib Ahmad. It is, however, claimed by the Pakistanis that the US did not ask Islamabad to target all, or even most, militant groups and leaders operating in and from Pakistan, including the important leaders of Afghan *Taliban* and its allies such as Jalaluddin Haqqani and



Gulbudin Hekmatyar. America sought, instead, Pakistani assistance primarily in capturing or killing *Al Qaeda* leaders and the foreigners associated with its network. *Operation Enduring Freedom* was partially successful in its prime objectives of overthrowing the *Taliban* regime and capturing some supporters of *Al Qaeda*. But, key *Al Qaeda* leaders, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri escaped from the US dragnet, thanks mainly due to Pakistani support and found sanctuaries in Pakistan's Tribal Areas.<sup>112</sup>

### Graph II: Operations conducted by Pakistani Army 2001-11



TE: Roughly 89% of all operations during the period were conducted from 2007-2009. \*2010 numbers are through -February.

The Pakistani Army was, however, never serious about its fight with the local or Pakistani *Taliban*, who in course of time coalesced into the *Tebrik-e-Taliban Pakistan* (ITP) and begun their armed movement for uprooting the existing political and administrative structures in Swat and the FATA and supplanting it with a *Shariat*-based order as per their *Deobandi* interpretation. The Army was always mindful of its

<sup>112</sup> DEXTER FILKINS, *New York Times*, Published September 5, 2008; <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/07/magazine/07pakistan>; Interviews given by Bruce Ridel, other US Commanders, diplomats and CIA operatives and former *Taliban* and Northern Alliance commanders in Afghanistan to BBC in its 2011 documentary "Secret Pakistan", <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qSinK-dVrig>; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5-ISSC9dSE>; *Obama's War*, Bob Woodward.

strategic relationship with Pakistani Islamic radicals, as also afraid of adverse security and political fallout of a crushing operation against them in the rest of the country. Therefore, its forays into the Tribal Areas were more like knee-jerk responses to local crises and were largely ineffective. On October 24, 2007, more than 3,000 Pakistani troops were sent to Swat to confront the *Taliban*. By October 31, the Army claimed that up to 130 militants had been killed. However, the very next day nearly 700 militants overran a military post on a hill in Khwajakhel, forcing nearly 50 soldiers to desert their positions and 48 others to be taken as prisoners. On November 3, police and paramilitary forces in nearby Matta also surrendered after being surrounded by the militants. On November 12, more troops were sent to Swat to bolster Army positions and by December 5, the Pakistani Army claimed to have regained most key areas. However, the *Taliban* had not been overwhelmed, they began to creep back into the area and continued to engage the Army in skirmishes throughout 2008. Finally on February 16, 2009, the NWFP Government was forced to announce that it had abolished all “un-Islamic” laws in the Malakand division and put security forces engaged in the military operation in Swat in ‘reactive mode’ after reaching an understanding with Radical Islamists forces (RIs) on enforcement of *Nizam-e-Adal Regulation* in seven districts of the Malakand division and Kohistan district of the Hazara division.<sup>113</sup> Later, on April 13, 2009, President Asif Ali Zardari sanctified the agreement through an ordinance imposing *Shariat* in the Swat Valley and its surrounding areas, effectively empowering the *Taliban* and other groups. This followed the passage of a unanimous resolution on the subject by the Pakistani Parliament.

The deal invited a huge international outcry, particularly when the *Taliban* began to administer Islamic justice and punishment to men and women alike (March 2009) and seemed to be within striking distance of Islamabad. Under tremendous US pressure, the Pakistan Government was forced to move against the *Taliban* despite the Swat deal. On April 23, 2009 Pakistani troops were moved into the area to “protect Government buildings in Buner”<sup>114</sup>, triggering the large-scale military

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<sup>113</sup> *The News*, February 17, 2009

<sup>114</sup> BBC News, Thursday, 23 April 2009 15:27 UK

operations that have still not concluded and now cover all the districts of FATA and beyond. The Islamic radicals responded by carrying out terror strikes in many Pakistani major cities, as also in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Pakistan's Islamic birds had finally come home to roost.

In pretty much the same way, events have unfolded in North and South Waziristans. In July 2002, Pakistani troops entered into the Tirah Valley in Khyber Agency for the first time since 1947 and proceeded to the Shawal Valley of North Waziristan and later to South Waziristan. The Waziris responded to this attack on their 'pride' by targeting Musharraf twice in a span of two weeks in Rawalpindi in December 2003. Since then the Swat experience of repeated deals and broken accords, interspersed with intermittent warfare has been repeated in the two Waziristans also. From April 2010 the Pakistan Army had been dropping hints that it would take on the *Taliban* in the Waziristan areas, in addition to those in Bajur, Buner and Lower Dir after consolidating its hold on Swat. In the second half of June 2009, the Pakistan Army claimed to have begun a massive troops' build-up for an imminent offensive in South Waziristan. However, this offensive never came on the ground. Clearly, the Pakistan Army does not want to expand the area of its operations against *Taliban*, as it is not sure of its chances of success and, secondly, wants to preserve its "Strategic Assets" like the Haqqanis for dealing with the Afghanistan situation in the aftermath of planned US withdrawal from there in 2014.<sup>115</sup>

### **The growing power and the reach of *Jihadi* groups**

The domination of the *Deobandis* in Pakistan started from the time of Zia-ul Ha. Although initially it was the supposedly non-sectarian JI which tried to maximize its advantages by closely aligning with Zia, the anti-Soviet Afghan Jihad and the subsequent emergence of the *Taliban* made the *Deobandis*, particularly the JUI, the dominant Islamic force in Pakistan. The emergence of Osama bin-Laden and his *Al-Qaeda* brought about a networking between the *Deobandis* and such other orthodox and traditionalist groups as the *Salafis*, *Ahl-e-Hadis*, etc. in the Middle

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<sup>115</sup> Najam Sethi: *Terrorism And National Consensus*, <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20121221&page=1>

East and Central Asia. The rise of Islamic groups on this orthodox spectrum has spelt serious trouble for *Barelvis*, *Shias* and other non-conformist Islamic theological groups, who have lost ground. Taliban leaders and most of their cadres are products of Pakistani *Deobandi* Islamic seminaries like the *Binnauri Town Madrassa* in Karachi, where a large number of Pakistanis have also been indoctrinated (incidentally, Maulana Masood Azhar was a contemporary of Mullah Omar of *Taliban* at the madrassa). Organizations like JI, JUI, JAeH, the *Markaz-ud Dawaa* (MD – later renamed as *Jamaat-ud Dam'ah*) and its militant arm the *Lashkar-e-Tayyiba* (LeT) which follow the *Ahl-e-Hadis* school of Islam, close to Middle Eastern *Salafis*; the *Jaish-e-Mohammad* (JeM), the *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi*, the *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan*, (all linked with the JUI and following *Deobandi* ideology); and even the JP's Kashmir specific *Hizb-ul Mujabideen* (HM) (also *Deobandi*), have all been preaching an orthodox, uncompromising and militant version of Islam. There have also been splits in them over the issue of their attitude towards the establishment and in many cases, as in the case of *Lashkar-e-Tayyiba*, the radical cadres have split from the main body and joined hands with other radicals under the patronage of *Al-Qaeda*.<sup>116</sup> Their attitude towards the Pakistani establishment differs depending on their desire or belief in having an accommodation with it. Indications have emerged of operational cooperation among them, or sections of their cadres. Perhaps, it would be better to refer them as a loose conglomerate of Pakistan's Radical Islamists (RIs).<sup>117</sup>

Interestingly, all these groups including *Taliban*, have had, and still seem to have, close nexus with Pakistan Army and the ISI, or some powerful elements in them. The *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* (SSP), an offshoot of the JUI that had earlier created *Harkat-ul Jibad-e-Islami* (HuJI) and *Harkat-ul Mujabideen* (HuM) and later on merged into *Harkat-ul Ansar* (HuA), in the context of Afghan jihad, came into existence in 1985 to quell Shi'ite opposition to the *Deobandi* inspired Islamisation measures of Zia-ul Haq. The SSP, and later its militant arm *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi*

<sup>116</sup> Late Salim Sehzaad in an interaction at IDSA shortly before his assassination in May 2011.

<sup>117</sup> A list of all Radical Islamist groups supporting *Deobandi/Salaf/Wahabi* Islam is attached as Appendix.

(LeJ) were responsible for a large number of attacks on Shias and Christians, including lawyers, doctors and government officials. Yet, none of the perpetrators of those crimes was ever arrested. In many cases lower-level ISI functionaries helped those attackers or even accompanied them on their missions. Shocking still, if some upright and honest police investigator ever reached anywhere near cracking those crimes, he was mysteriously killed despite official protection to him.<sup>118</sup> There has been copious evidence in Pakistani writings of close association and active operational cooperation between *SSP* and *LeJ* and the *Taliban* in Afghanistan, in both pre and post 9/11 periods.

Similarly, the *Salafist* oriented 1985-origin *Markaj Dawaa wal-Irshad* (MDI-Centre for Religious Learning and Propagation) - renamed as *Jamaat-ud Dawaa* (JuD) in the early 2002 after its militant wing *Lashkar-e-Tayyeba*<sup>119</sup> (LeT) was declared a terrorist organization by the USA - owes a lot for its origin to ISI's plan to indirectly intervene militarily in Kashmir. The top leaders of the organisation, including its Chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, are hardline *Salafists* who have readily expanded their organisation's Islamist agenda from Kashmir to the rest of India. However, they also speak of their pan-Islamic vision of creating a pious and correct international Islamic order by Pakistan by strengthening its ties with the Islamic countries (read radical Islamic forces) and reducing dependence on United States.<sup>120</sup> Significantly, they have also worked in close cooperation with the *Taliban* in Afghanistan and have vowed to launch jihad to turn Pakistan into a pure Islamic state.<sup>121</sup>

The *Lal Masjid* incident in 2007 in Islamabad clearly demonstrated the reach and the impact of the Pakistani *jihadi* groups and the chasm that has come to separate them from the Pakistani establishment. No doubt,

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<sup>118</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism*.

<sup>119</sup> *Lashkar-e-Tayyeba* (In Persian: The Army of the Close Associate of the Prophet), becomes *Lashkar-e-Taiba* in Arabic. The *Lashkar-e-Taiba* is neither Arabic, nor Persian. It is the English distortion of the Arabic/Persian terminology by the British media and mindlessly aped by many other people.

<sup>120</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Ibid*; Mona Kanwal Sheikh, *Disaggregating the Pakistani Taliban*; DIIS Brief, September 2009.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*

Pakistani Government agencies created and nurtured these groups as per their national agenda in Afghanistan and India and for a considerable period of time these groups cooperated to the fullest in pursuit of those agendas. However, whenever a clash developed between their Islamic jihadi goals and the policy objectives of the Pakistan Government, the *Deoband* oriented RIs have not shied away from going their own way, even if that meant a violent confrontation with their patron regime. To that extent, these groups have grown beyond Pakistani control and have acquired independent muscle, which they have not been averse from flexing.

The worsening of the situation in Swat and other areas of FATA could be directly traced to the Pakistan Government's crackdown on the Islamic activists located in *Lal Masjid* and its attached madrassas *Jamia Hafsa* and *Jamia Faridia*. These institutions had become a base for the allied cadres—mostly Pashtuns from the FATA and adjoining areas, but also included a fair number of non-Pashtun—of *LeT*, *LeJ*, *JeM*, *Harkatul Jihad-e-Islami* and other groups gravitating towards the Al-Qaeda and stockpiled a huge amount of arsenal inside the mosque and madrassa to carry out militant activities in support of their *Deobandi/Salafi* Islamic agenda.<sup>122</sup> Mullah Fazlullah of the *Tebriq-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi* (TNSM) who was spearheading the *Nizam-e-Adal* movement in Swat, declared war against Pakistan Government on his FM radio station in the wake of the attack on *Lal Masjid*. One of the two *Imams* of the *Masjid*, Mohammad Abdul Aziz, who had been arrested during his attempted escape in a *burqa* from the siege, declared in his very first sermon after his release from detention in April 2009 that implementation of *Shariat* in Swat and other areas of FATA was a direct result of the attack on *Lal Masjid*.<sup>123</sup> Many terrorist incidents were staged by supporters of the *Lal Masjid* radicals in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, including the suicide attack on soldiers of the *Zarrar Company* of the Pakistan Army's SSG (Special Services Group) commandos at their home base for having carried out the *Lal Masjid* operation.<sup>124</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Khalid Ahmed: *What actually happened at Lal Masjid*; <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20121221&page=3>

<sup>123</sup> Mona Kanwal Sheikh, *Disaggregating the Pakistani Taliban*, DIIS Brief, September 2009.

<sup>124</sup> Khalid Ahmed: *What actually happened at Lal Masjid*; <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20121221&page=3>

Despite tall claims by the Pakistani establishment of successes being scored by its military in war against Taliban in FATA and normalcy being fast restored in the troubled Swat and Waziristan regions, the situation in various areas of the tribal belt has remained out of complete control.<sup>125</sup> No foreign media sources have been allowed entry into the area. A few hand-picked Pakistani journalists have, however, been apparently carefully manipulated to report on the fast-normalizing situation on the basis of Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) briefings. Swat operations that started in April 2010, have not been able to restore civilian administration and despite massive presence of the Army, sporadic acts of violence continue.<sup>126</sup> As was feared, the Army has just been able to drive the *Taliban* underground, or even make them flee from the FATA to the adjoining Afghan/Pakistani areas from where they keep on returning to strike through sporadic hit-and-run raids to harass the government forces. According to Dr. Hassan Askari Rizvi, the noted Pakistani expert on strategic affairs, indications are that the military is likely to stay put in Swat and adjoining areas permanently, with plans to set-up permanent Military Cantonment and posts.<sup>127</sup>

A similar scenario exists about the military operations in South Waziristan and the situation there. Notwithstanding the claims by the Pakistani establishment, it is clear that the Army is bogged down in large-scale counter-insurgency operations in FATA. There were nearly 80,000 army troops involved in FATA operations since 2004 under *Operation Al-Mijan*. Their numbers was boosted by nearly 120,000 more troops before operations in Swat and Malakand were launched in April 2009 and by additional 50,000 - 60,000 troops before the preparations for the yet to take place South Waziristan operations. According to tit-bits appearing in the media, local commanders in FATA were stated to be asking for deployment of an additional 70,000 troops to fully control and sanitise the area. Thus, the Pakistan Army has already committed, or needs to commit a total of around 350,000 troops for combat duty in FATA and other areas of Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa, out of the total Army strength of 800,000. Despite this, the situation remains

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<sup>125</sup> *The News*, June 21, 2011, May 22, 2012; *The Dawn*, Aug 8, 2012

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>127</sup> *The Daily Times*, June 21, 2009; *The Dawn*, Aug \*, 2012

disturbed enough to force even the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan, Martin Mogwanja to call on November 6, 2010 for safety and security to aid workers engaged in aid operations among Pakistani Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Swat and South Waziristan.<sup>128</sup> Similar is the fate of the campaign to administer anti-polio drops in FATA, Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa (KPk) and Karachi in 2012-13, with para-medical staff being attacked and forced to move with strong para-military protection.

As anticipated, another aspect of the situation is that as the military operations have intensified in FATA, terror strikes by *Taliban* and their local allied groups (RIs) have also gone up at various places in KPk, Punjab and Karachi. Even the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters (GHQ) has been attacked in the heart of Rawalpindi Cantonment and the main mosque in the cantonment, used by Army personnel including senior officers, bombed. Other senior officers, including the Corps Commander based in Karachi have been ambushed in broad daylight in the centre of high security areas in various parts of the country. The Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) offices have been attacked in Peshawar and other places including Lahore and Islamabad; Pakistan Navy aviation base at Mehran in Karachi; Pakistan Air force base at Kamra; The Pakistan Military Academy at Kakul in Abbottabad and many other military establishments and installations have also been attacked during the past couple of years. A number of ISI out-posts have also been attacked and destroyed in Punjab and KPk. There have been regular suicide bombings taking a huge toll of lives in various parts of Pakistan, particularly KPk, Punjab, Federal Capital area and Karachi. In Baluchistan the RIs are extensively targeting the Shia minorities, thereby adding another complication to the very tense ethnic situation there. The situation in Peshawar is also grim. According to Rahimullah Yusufzai, the noted Pak journalist, "No place is safe in Peshawar...not even the military, police and government installations that are supposed to protect the people".<sup>129</sup> Except Qatar Airways, all other Gulf based airlines had stopped flying to Peshawar for quite some time, despite it being a very lucrative destination for them.<sup>130</sup> The attack on Peshawar airport-

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<sup>128</sup> *The Dawn*, Nov 6, 2009

<sup>129</sup> *The News International*, November 17, 2009

<sup>130</sup> *The News International*, Sep. 7, 2009



cum-PAF Base on December 15, 2012 and the major encounter between TTP elements responsible for the attack and the security forces for better part of the next day once again underscored the *Taliban* threat to Peshawar.<sup>131</sup> A similar situation prevails in Karachi where the police and para-military forces are not being able to manage the situation, leading to calls being made to handover Karachi law & order to the Army.

## South Punjab

The expansion of the TTP into a larger group of Pakistani radical RIs manifested itself with the expansion of their activity in South Punjab over the past couple of years. More and more terrorist acts in various parts of Pakistan outside FATA and KP are now being increasingly staged not by ethnic Pashtun elements, but by their local Punjabi cohorts, mostly based in South Punjab, which is increasingly being compared with South Waziristan in terms of Islamic radicalism and militancy.<sup>132</sup> In fact, there are claims that many militants fighting along Taliban in Afghanistan and the FATA hail from seminaries in South Punjab being run by *Jaiش-e-Mohammad (JeM)* and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ)*. They were recruited and trained in the past in militant training facilities of these organisations in the area in connivance with the Army, primarily for militant operations against India, but have since turned against their erstwhile masters. They are stated to be operating from South Punjab and have regularly been returning to their home bases after carrying out some terrorist mission against the Pakistani or American Army. According to Ayesha Siddiqa, the noted Pakistani political analyst, South Punjab, described as an area comprising 13 districts of Bahawalnagar, Bahawalpur, Bhakkar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhang, Khanewal, Layyah, Lodhran, Multan, Muzaffargarh, Rahimyar Khan, Rajanpur and Vehari, with an estimated population of 27 million has become a hub of jihadism.<sup>133</sup> As compared to the rest of Punjab, this area has remained

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<sup>131</sup> Imtiaz Gul: *Peshawar on the brink*; <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta3/tft/article.php?issue=20121221&page=4>

<sup>132</sup> *Is South Punjab A Hub of Terrorism?*, Khaled Ahmed, The Friday Times, Accessed Nov 3, 2009

<sup>133</sup> <http://watandost.blogspot.com>, accessed on Oct. 9, 2010



there were 185 registered madrassas, of which 90 were *Deobandi*, 84 *Barehvi*, 6 *Ahl-e-Hadis* and five belonged to *Fiqh Jafaria* of the *Shias*.<sup>135</sup> Most of them received foreign funding. The total number of students in *Deobandi* madrassas alone was 11,535. Similarly, in Bahawalpur, there were estimated to be 1000 madrassas, most of them controlled by JeM. Jaish had acquired a huge plot of land outside Bahawalpur town, which was believed to be its new centre for arms training to its cadres.<sup>136</sup> However, the concerned Pakistani officials dismiss the suggestion.

In the past the agendas of Pashtun *Taliban* and the (South) Punjab based Islamic radical organisations differed in focus. However, the 2007 *Lal Masjid* incident in Islamabad made South Punjab groups change direction and develop a joint mission with Pashtun *Taliban* to vanquish the current Pakistani Government, which was now being seen as their enemy, and usher in a *Shariat*-based order. A great deal of operational synergy developed between the two sides and South Punjab groups began to send volunteers to fight along with the *Taliban* in Afghanistan and FATA. As the fighting in FATA intensified, they started to carry out terrorist attacks against government targets in Punjab. In 2008, there were 78 terrorist attacks in Punjab in which 257 security personnel and 34 civilians were killed. Almost all these incidents were reported to have been carried out by South Punjab-based militants. The attack earlier in 2009 on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore and the attack on GHQ in Rawalpindi were also attributed to cadres from South Punjab.

Pakistani security forces lack the will and the capability to deal with the terrorist infrastructure in South Punjab. Pakistan Army and the ISI, that had patronized the South Punjab groups, had never thought until the middle of the last decade (i.e. 2004-05) that their own protégés would turn against them and, therefore, no self-defence mechanism were put in place to reign in these groups if ever a need arose. It was hoped even in the post 2004-05 period that even if these groups had begun to strain at the leash, they could be tamed through the good offices of their patron political parties, particularly the JUI. However, these groups

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<sup>135</sup> *The Friday Times*, Accessed Nov 3, 2009

<sup>136</sup> *The Daily Times*, Internet Edition, accessed on Sep 14, 2009

have built up a lot of strength and developed reach among a substantial section of the population based on religious and sectarian affinities and their mosque-madrassa network has been far more effective in creating mass support for them than the institutions of the official and political agencies. Local police is totally ineffective in dealing with these RIs, or worse, is sympathetic to them. The only other force present in the area, the Punjab Rangers, is not only poorly trained, but also under influence of local sardars, who have chosen not to confront the local radicals. In an interview to a TV channel in October 2009, Maj. Gen. Yaqub Khan of the Punjab Rangers admitted that there was free movement of militants between South Waziristan and Dera Ghazi Khan, which his force was not in a position to check. Its charter and deployment were limited to securing a gas pipeline passing through the area. Therefore, despite confirmed knowledge of arms training being imparted to militants in the area and their linkages with Pakistani Taliban, there was no mechanism to deal with them.<sup>137</sup>

### **The cauldron of Karachi**

Karachi is an ethnic tinderbox and radical Islamism and sectarianism have made it even more explosive over the past couple of years with a very bleak law and order situation. Perhaps, a pointer to the state of affairs in Karachi is the bombing of the Rangers Headquarters by a truck-bomb on November 7, 2012. Such attacks have been the hallmark of *Taliban* attacks in Islamabad and Kabul in the past and in the instant case also Mullah Fazalullah's faction of the TTP claimed responsibility for the attack. The activities of *Taliban* and their other RI associates have increased manifold in Karachi and they have an invariable link with criminal activities also. According to Sindh Police and CID, the *Taliban* have been responsible for 131 of the 134 instances of bank robberies in Karachi since 2008. Police has arrested 721 *Taliban* cadres in the city and smashed 143 gangs owing allegiance to *Taliban* leadership. They have also attacked and bombed policemen conducting operations against them. According to Farhat Parveen, the Director of Pakistan's National Organisation of Working Communities, on an average 13 people are being killed in Karachi every day. Proliferation of illegal as

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<sup>137</sup> L A Times, Internet edition, accessed on Nov 17, 2009

well as legal firearms is a major source fuelling this burgeoning violence. According to a 2009 survey, 1,80 lakh pieces of fire-arms ranging from pistols to AK-47s, LMGs and rocket launchers were held by private citizens in Pakistan. The number of such arms in Karachi was nearly 20 lakhs. Since such arms are freely available in the black market, even if the government tries to de-weaponize the country, particularly Karachi, within six months the city would be re-weaponised.

From dominating the transport and the drug-trade through Karachi and using the city as a sanctuary for its cadres and activists trying to flee from the security drag-net or rival groups, the *Taliban* and their radical cohorts have graduated to targeting socio-political institutions of their sectarian rivals like the MQM (*Muttahida Qaumi Movement*) and the ANP (Awami National Party) as they have taken a strong and active stand against the former. They seek to drive away ANP from the Pashtun areas of Karachi by targeting its local leaders and cadres and force MQM to lie low. Most of these attacks come from TTP and most victims are now the *Barehvi/Shia* elements. Against the MQM the fury of the radical Islamists is particularly because of the former's strong stand against their atrocities, particularly the targeting of schools and their students. In early 2012 the MQM had announced its plans to hold a referendum across Pakistan to let the people choose between a Pakistan as per Jinnah's vision, or a Talibanised Pakistan. Though the proposed referendum was postponed ostensibly because of IDEAS 2012 Defence Exhibition in Karachi, MQM cadres did take to the streets after the shooting of Malala Yusufzai to protest against religious extremism.<sup>138</sup> The *Taliban* did not take it lying down and their spokesman in Karachi, Umar Farooq, a former *Jamaat-e-Islami* functionary, declared "We are a group of Islamic warriors fighting against infidels" and that "Karachi is our base and we will target anyone our leader Hakimullah Mehsud tells us to". TTP's surrogate body of madrassas in Karachi, *Wifaqul Madaris*, has on its part warned MQM, whose cadres are predominantly *Barehvi*, to desist from prying into the functioning and affairs of its affiliates. Many MQM cadres had been

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<sup>138</sup> Malala Yusufzai, the Swati school going girl who was shot at and almost killed by Taliban for having defied their dictate against continuing girls' education in March 2012. Malala had publically declared her resolve to study to become a doctor.

alleging that an overwhelming number of inmates of those madrassas were Pashtun and Afghans and some of them were being trained into handling IEDs inside them.

The violence in Karachi is driven by a clear *Deobandi/Salafi* Islamic agenda to subdue, if not 'ethnically cleanse', the city of followers of rival Islamic sects. It has the potential to 'Beirutise' the city and totally disrupt its normal functioning. If the existing level of violence is not considered as major threat and life goes on for everyone including the state, the Army and the politicians as usual, it indicates the extent of Pakistani society's indifference towards and acceptance of belief-related violence. Many political leaders from MQM and ANP openly talk of Karachi's law and order responsibility to be handed over to the Army as it is beyond the capabilities of local law-enforcement agencies. This is buttressed by a statement made by the Police Chief of Sindh in a court that while Rangers could only arrest people and hand them over to the police for prosecution, the police force itself had many personnel with dubious political patronage who felt powerful enough to disobey orders. It is not difficult to comprehend that such persons may have easily been subverting efforts to fight sectarian violence-related crimes. The traders in the city are stated to be arming themselves as neither the security agencies nor the protection money being paid by them is buying them security and they have been proving to be easy game for the extortionists. They assess the losses suffered by them to be around Rs. 20 billion and those by the industrialists around Rs. 45 billion in the current wave of violence in Karachi.

Karachi, being the main port city in Pakistan, is crucial for the country as the Karachi Port and its satellite Port Qasim handle practically all foreign trade of Pakistan, including the crucial oil imports. If the city is thrown in turmoil, causing port operations to be severely crippled, Pakistani state could be forced to its knees. This is more so as the alternative Port Gwadar is still largely non-functional due to absence of communication links between it and the rest of the country and its hinterland still being a wilderness and a separatist battle-field. Therefore, if Karachi is forced to a prolonged and near total shutdown, *Taliban's* opponents in Afghanistan - the US and ISAF - would be adversely affected on the one hand, and so would be the Pakistan Army, on the other, against which the current TTP *jihad* is being waged. With the

*Taliban* and their *Deobandi* cohorts already dominating FATA, many areas of Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa, North Baluchistan and parts of Punjab, the Islamic radicals now want to gain dominance in some of the remaining pockets of anti-*Deobandi* sentiments in the country. They seek to cow-down the inconvenient media, weaken, or even confine the area of influence of their rivals like the MQM and further push their influence in the rest of the country. For this they are exploiting such emotive Islamicist causes as anti-Americanism, the west's perceived cultural aggression against Islam and secular and modern education.

Apart from the almost catastrophic impact of the current disturbances on Pakistan's economy, particularly foreign investments and tourism, educational institutions in most parts of Pakistan have also borne the brunt of radical violence. Most educational institutions are now functioning not as schools but as fortresses after the bombing of the International Islamic University in Islamabad in 2010<sup>139</sup>. This was a significant incident with clear ideological overtones. The Islamic University, set-up with official Saudi patronage, supports and propagates the traditional 'status-quoist' Islam that suits Saudi establishment (i.e. a 'Court Islam' to quote Khomeinists) and the British-oriented ruling set-up in countries like Pakistan. It also supports and encourages education for women. All these the *Salafi* oriented *Al-Qaeda* and *Deobandi* Taliban oppose. Therefore, the attack on this institution, particularly its women's wing conveyed an important and bloody message. It is interesting to note that the first move by Taliban and their other Islamic radical cohorts in launching their *jihad* in a new area has always been to systematically attack and destroy various centres of 'un-Islamic western oriented' education in them at the very first instance.

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<sup>139</sup> *The Dawn*, Oct. 20, 2009; [www.indian.com](http://www.indian.com), Accessed Nov 17, 2009

## Chapter VII

# Radicalisation of the Pakistan Army

The partitioning of British India necessitated the division of its armed forces between the two dominions and creation of a separate military establishment for the newborn Pakistani nation. The process gained impetus in the aftermath of explosion in communal violence, triggered and later further fuelled by the impending partition and the ethnic cleansing of the Hindus and Sikhs that preceded it in West Punjab, mass migration of a very large number of population from and to Pakistan, the outbreak of war with India over Kashmir and the subsequent 'Crush-India' campaigns. These developments also allowed the military to occupy the centre stage in affairs of the new nation. It was, however, the Pakistan Army that acquired a high political profile and greater relevance as compared to the other two Services..

However, despite obvious religious (read *Jihad* against India) connotations, unlike the new nation, the leaders of the newborn Pakistan did not want its Army to be overly influenced by religious dogma. Instead, in its initial years, country's leaders and military commanders wanted to preserve the Sandhurst traditions in the Army and expected it to strictly follow the British pattern, ethos and practices. In many cases, particularly where only a small Muslim portion of an old British Indian Army Regiment had come out to join the new nation, new Regimental identities had to be created but the model remained the secularist British Army system. Senior generals like Ayub Khan not only appeared to behave like the erstwhile British *Sahibs*, they wanted others also to follow suit. Sectarian neutrality and not the Islamic zeal seemed to be the guiding spirit in the Army of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Pakistan's close alignment with the USA and membership of western military alliances further strengthened the secularist western military culture in its armed forces.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> Brian Cloughley, *A History of The Pakistan Army: Wars And Insurrections*, Oxford University Press, 1999; pp.27-30



According to Farzana Sheikh, until the late 1970s there was little discernible interest among the officer corps on the question of Army's precise relationship with Islam, or an Islamic state.<sup>141</sup>

Yet, there were aberrations also. Pakistan's military was conscious of the rhetorical power of Islam as a mobilising force. Events like defeat at the hands of India in Kashmir as far back as 1947 triggered a debate, though a subdued one, in the Officers' Messes over role of religion in the nation and its institutions, including the Army. It is this debate that led to the aborted military coup and the 1951 Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case.<sup>142</sup> As far as India was concerned, religion and *jihad* became intermixed with state policies and functions. The new nation needed a strong diversionary factor to overcome serious and fundamental flaws in its political foundations. Its vexed regional, sectarian and developmental problems were sought to be overcome by generating a thinly veiled religious frenzy over Kashmir and India. The Pakistan Army did not remain immune from this phenomenon. While being secularist to an extent in its intent and behaviour, it did not clearly disown the idea of *jihad* in the context of its role in the 'Crush India' like campaigns. While religion was not allowed to affect Army's day-to-day functioning as an institution, it was invoked to motivate the soldiers to train and fight the *Kafirs*.

Notwithstanding their secularist style of functioning, many Army units adopted Islamic verses as their heraldic slogans and regimental war cries. For example, the battle cry of Pakistan Frontier Force (PFF) was *Nadar Hazarat Ali* (I am present before the Noble Ali). Most Army units prominently displayed quotation from religious texts, such as, "Fighting in the name of Allah, [and] fighting in the name of truth, is the supreme type of worship, anybody who does service in the armed forces with the intention of accomplishing this objective is in worship, and his life is worship".<sup>143</sup> The tendency to exploit religion to motivate soldiers in an anticipated war with India was not limited just to unit-

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<sup>141</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p. 150

<sup>142</sup> *Military Islamisation in Pakistan and the Specter of colonial perception*, Markus Daechsel, Contemporary South Asia, Vol.6 p.150; *A History of Pakistan Army: Wars and Insurrections*, Brian Coughley, p.29

<sup>143</sup> Stephen Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*

level formations, it went right to the top. A letter sent by General Ayub Khan from the GHQ to General Mohammad Musa on August 29, 1965 (GHQ NO. 4050/5/MO-I), on the eve of launching of *Operation Gibraltar* followed by *Operation Grand Slam* against India, noted, “As a general rule Hindu morale would not stand more than a couple of hard blows delivered at the right time and place. Such opportunities should therefore be sought and exploited”.<sup>144</sup> In his public broadcasts Ayub used Islamic rhetoric even more forcefully. In his address to the nation after a full-blown war had started with India, he alleged that Indian rulers were never reconciled to the creation of Pakistan and wanted to destroy it. However, their defeat was imminent because “100 million people of Pakistan whose hearts beat with sound of *La Illahailallah, Muhammad- ur Rasoolullah* would not rest till Indian guns are silenced”, he added.<sup>145</sup>

This strategy to exploit the call of Islam was freely resorted to by General Tikka Khan during his command of the Pakistani troops in erstwhile East Pakistan, when he quoted in an unrestrained manner from *The Quran* and the *Sunnah* to motivate his beleaguered garrison. “As Muslims, we have always fought against an enemy who was numerically and materially superior. [However,] It was through spirit of *jihad* and dedication to Islam that the strongest adversaries were mauled and defeated by a handful of Muslims”, he declared. Or that, “Allah exalts the *mujahid* whether he lives or dies. He is a *Ghazi* if he lives and a *Shahid* if he dies.”<sup>146</sup>

Similarly, Pakistan’s President and Commander-in-Chief General Yahya Khan exhorted his soldiers during the East Pakistan crisis that in *Mukti Bahini* they confronted an anti-Islamic *kafir* army. Pakistan Army’s alliance with the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and *Al-Badr* cadres during the East Pakistan crisis also rested on Islamic sentiments. Phrases like ‘ideology of Pakistan’ and ‘glory of Islam’, once banished from army’s lexicon, were repeatedly being used as stock phrases and expressions to boost the morale of demoralised forces by invoking religious frenzy.

<sup>144</sup> S. Wolpert (1993), *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan: His Life and Times*, quoted by Brian Coughley in his book on Pakistani Army.

<sup>145</sup> *The Dawn*, September 7, 1965.

<sup>146</sup> Cohen, *Ibid*

Notwithstanding this India-specific exploitation of religious sentiments, there was a conscious effort not to overplay religion in the Army, at least not than what the British had been doing earlier. Religion was used to bind fresh recruits to their units through oaths and to indoctrinate them in virtuosity and religion, supposed to be helpful in maintaining disciplined and cohesive military behaviour. However, this use of religion was never encouraged to go beyond this restricted parameter for fear that any over-emphasis on it as a motivation to fight and maintain group cohesion, could make troops more receptive to outside religious sentiments and movements. In fact, within a unit the unit *Maulavi* used to be more of a comical figure than the one who inspired awe and respect.<sup>147</sup> At their Regimental Centres, the new recruits were taught a brief and doctored history of Pakistan, which sought to hammer home the idea that they were a part of the Pakistan Army and not an Islamic Army. At the same time, however, Islamic and The Quranic injunctions were regularly used to train and motivate them and inculcate a sense of pride in the country's pan-Islamic links.<sup>148</sup> Models of Muslim soldiery were discussed in military journals in tandem with other changes taking place in the society at large to increase Islamic consciousness. It heightened awareness about the need to forge a national military, independent of both the British and the American models and finally breaking with the pre-partition Indian military ethos.<sup>149</sup>

The officers of the young Pakistani Army were better educated and more westernised. They were also more competitive and contemptuous of India. This went well with the prevailing political ethos. The country's politicians, in any case, hardly had anytime to consider the issue of *Pakistanization* of the officers' corps. However, due to their better educational standards young Pakistani officers were more aware of their country's affairs. This encouraged introspection, particularly in the aftermath of their repeated failures to defeat India in numerous wars since independence (1947 Kashmir invasion, 1965 Runn of Kutch skirmish, 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak war). Many young officers found an explanation for this in their blindly following western military

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid

<sup>148</sup> Ibid

<sup>149</sup> Farzana Sheikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan*, p. 151

models and moving away from their own religious roots. Many of them found themselves in total agreement with Mohammad Iqbal that the problem with the West was that it had lost touch with its spiritual Christian moorings and in a future Muslim state in South Asia, such trends could not be allowed to manifest.<sup>150</sup> Reflecting this process of introspection, the authors of the Hamoodur Rehman Report (investigating the 1971 debacle) stated, “The belief appears to be universally entertained by all sections of our people that one of the major causes of our disgrace was the moral degradation, which had set in among senior army commanders that included among others ‘lust for wine and women.’” It was felt that the worst example of this degradation was General Yahya Khan himself whose conduct was seen as indisputable evidence that “secularism” corroded the moral fabric of leadership and hastened the disintegration of the nation.<sup>151</sup>

This process acted as catalyst for some changes to give Pakistan a distinct Islamic orientation under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Rightist political parties were quick to utilise these strains of thought and forced Bhutto to acquiesce in ushering some Islamic provisions in the country, which had their reverberations in the Army also.<sup>152</sup> The first visible impact of this creeping Islamic ethos was in the Officers’ Messes where public consumption of alcohol began to be frowned upon despite the fact that there were many military officers who never hid their liking for a few drinks in their messes. The new anti-alcoholic environment in unit-lines was in consonance with Bhutto’s official policy to strictly regulate the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages. The mass compulsory prayers in a unit on Fridays, a practice inherited from the British era, acquired more importance and became almost compelling events. At the same time, young officers began to question the established practices and policies of the military institutions. Stephen Cohen in his book on the Pakistan Army, quotes an instance in which an officer at Staff College Quetta, criticised the college and the entire Pak Army as having a

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<sup>150</sup> Mohammad Iqbal, *Islamic Modernism*

<sup>151</sup> *The Report of the Hamoodur Rehman Commission of Enquiry into the 1971 War* (As declassified by the Government of Pakistan), Lahore, Vanguard, p 285; *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p. 94

<sup>152</sup> Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*

“distinct aroma of subjugation suited to a colonial power”, as reflected in the College’s emblem of the Owl, restriction on officers wearing Pakistan’s ethnic attire of *sberwani* in public and insistence on western formal dinner dress at ceremonial dinners. The officer faced no action for openly expressing such views. Along with these open manifestations of swing to the rightist Islamic influences, there were some more subtle changes - the most important being the decline in military bonhomie and interaction between western (read American) and Pakistani military establishments and consequently a lessening in cultural western inspiration.

The creeping process of Islamisation became a raging torrent after Zia- ul Haq’s advent on the national political scene. Many have argued that Zia’s Islamisation drive was perhaps as much inspired by his personal religious convictions, as by the political compulsion to create for himself a civilian constituency that could match that of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. His Islamisation programme brought him closer to rightist *Islam Pasand* political parties like the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and turned their cadres into his storm troopers on the streets and campuses to keep PPP supporters somewhat countered and balanced. His Islamisation of the armed forces could also have been a means to tighten his control over the Army and keep any lurking sympathies for Bhutto under check. There were a number of botched up violent attempts to dislodge Zia from power by sections of the Army, or inspired and encouraged by it, during his 10-years’ plus rule.

Zia’s Islamisation programme took shelter behind Mohammad Iqbal’s concept of “the religious ideal of Islam”<sup>153</sup> and prima-facie sought to rebuild national policies in accordance with that concept. Under the ambit of this larger policy, religiously inclined measures in the armed forces were made more strict and enforced vigorously. These measures were inspired by the orthodox *Deobandi* Islam and tended to undermine the largely *Barehvi* ethos of the Pakistan Army that had been the dominant religious spirit ever since the nation was created. Prohibition became more complete and officious. Apart from the usual Friday *namaz*, offering of regular daily *namaz* became the favoured practice. It was loudly proclaimed that Pakistan was being converted into a pure Islamic

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<sup>153</sup> *Sources of Indian Tradition*, compilation of essays by Theodore de Bary, New York, Columbia University Press

nation in accordance with the ethos of the Pakistan Movement and its Army had become the “guardians of its ideological frontiers”. In this capacity identification of ‘external and internal ‘enemies of Islam’ and liquidating them without remorse became the prime missions of the Pakistan Army. The heraldic slogan of Pakistan Army from Jinnah’s days - “Unity, Faith and Discipline” - was changed to “*Iman, Taqwa, Jihad fi Sabeelillah*” (Faith, Obedience of God and Struggle for the path of Allah).<sup>154</sup> For the first time the Army began to recruit madrassa products as officers and soldiers. According to a senior Indian defence expert nearly 35% to 40% recruitments at soldiers and officer’s levels during the Zia years went to madrassa pass-outs.<sup>155</sup> Not only were visits by Deoband-oriented *Tabligh Jamaats* to Army Units allowed for the first time, no adverse notice began to be taken of rank and file requesting for leave to go for *tabligh* and such requests were entertained without even an eyebrow being raised. Zia-ul Haq initially leaned on *Jamaat-e-Islami* to inculcate a strong Islamic ideology in the Army. However, as he became wary of JI’s strident politics and impatience over the pace of his Islamisation drive without presenting a comprehensive blueprint of its own, he allowed space to groups like *Tabligh Jamaat* which were not as politically active as the JI. However, this also opened the Army ranks to the trans-national Islamic agenda and preaching of the TJ.<sup>156</sup>

Another subtle but significant change started manifesting itself around the same time in the demographic profile of the Pakistan Army. There were many more recruits who started entering into the privileged portals of the Army training institutions from poorer districts of Punjab. Many of these recruits had strong social grievances and soon they began to outnumber recruits from wealthy landed families. They often also had a soft corner for *Jamaat-e-Islami* and its fundamentalism.<sup>157</sup> With Zia’s accession to power, Islamic training and thought were introduced as part of the training courses for the new officer recruits at various Regimental Centres, as well as the Pakistan Military Academy, The

<sup>154</sup> Shuza Nawaz , Crossed Swords

<sup>155</sup> Lt. Gen. (Retired) Shankar Prasad in a TV interview on Times Now on March 2, 2011

<sup>156</sup> *Islamic Leviathan*, Vali Nasr, p.136

<sup>157</sup> *Making Sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.152

Command & Staff College and other training establishments. These, however, were in addition to the western-oriented training courses and programmes and did not totally replace them. The attempt now was to create an army with western operating procedures but with an Islamic mind and heart.<sup>158</sup> Observance of religious practices and beliefs became an important part of Annual Confidential Reports of the rank and file and became a major determining factor in career progression. The old and often ridiculed office of *Maulavi* in a unit acquired greater significance and relevance with possibly his recommendations becoming a major source of input for determining the religious conduct of the personnel of the unit. Since *Jamaat-e-Islami* and the *Tabligh Jamaat* were key allies of the regime on the one hand and of the Saudis on the other, they could successfully make inroads in the Army ranks and became medium for spreading radical Saudi *Wahabi* influence in it through the institution of Unit *Maulavis*.

The issues of *jihad* and adoption of an 'Islamic Pakistani strategy' that had not been focused upon earlier, became more clearly defined and integrated with the country's military strategies. Such strategies did not require western military concepts and technologies to be completely abandoned, but to develop a synthesis of Islamic and western theories of warfare by rejecting, or radically interpreting, basic tenets of western military thoughts. Some attempts were made to interpret the *Quran* and *Sunnah* to develop Islamic doctrines of war and strategy. A number of serving and retired military officers emerged who regularly wrote on tactical and strategic aspects of famous Islamic battles and relationship between Islam and Pakistan's evolving strategic doctrines. The best example of the impact of new Islamic concepts of warfare on the evolving Pakistani military doctrine and strategies comes from the book *The Quranic Concepts of War* by Brig. (then serving) S.K. Malik. The significance of this book and its theories should be obvious from the fact that it had a foreword by Gen. Zia-ul Haq and a preface by Zia's chief legal adviser A.K. Brohi. According to Malik, Islam divided the world into two camps – the *Dar-ul Islam* (the world of Islam in which the people had submitted to *Allah* and his commandments) and the *Dar-ul Harb* (in which people were still defiant of *Allah* and the *Quran*).

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<sup>158</sup> Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*

As a result, repeated conflicts between the believers and the non-believers became inevitable, until the latter were made subservient to *Allah*. The author contended that this was a duty and obligation of the believers according to *The Quran*. According to him a Muslim's cause of war was just, noble, righteous and humanitarian. Humanitarianism lay at the heart of Islamic approach to war, he opined, adding that while Islam placed certain restrictions on use of force in a war, it did not visualise a war being prosecuted with half-hearted efforts. While initially Muslims were granted the permission to fight in self-defence, but with passage of time they were ordained to fight in support of *jihad* which had become a religious duty and obligation, he contended.

One of the most crucial aspects of Malik's work was the emphasis he laid on the requisite preparation before a military conflict began. In this aspect of *jihad*, non-military section of the Muslim society had an important role to play and make any war against the *kafirs* a total war. It was in the ambit of this idea of total war that use of "terror" was integrated with the new military doctrine.<sup>159</sup> "Terror struck into the hearts of the enemies is not only a means to an end, it is the end in itself", Malik contended with quotations from the *Quran*.<sup>160</sup> He repeatedly emphasised the place "terror" occupied in military strategy and suggested that terror should be instilled in the heart of the enemy to such an extent that it psychologically weakened him so much that no military conflict might be necessary. Naturally enough, Malik never missed an opportunity to cite India as an example in propounding his treatise. The 1971 war and the detentions of Pakistani PoWs in India were painful sore-points with him. In his foreword to the book, Zia recommended a serious study of the work by soldiers and civilians alike. According to him, *jihad* did not concern just an Islamic army, citizens of an Islamic state too had an equally important role to play in it. He hoped that Malik's book would go a long way towards making everybody, particularly civilians, understand the importance of their contributions. A.K. Brohi, in his preface, stated that the book made it

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<sup>159</sup> *Misinterpreting The Quran to justify Jihad*, Gurmeet Kanwal and Samarjit Ghosh, CLAWS Issue Brief No. 13, December 2009

<sup>160</sup> Malik, S.K., *The The Quranic Concepts of War*, Himalayan Books, New Delhi, 1986



clear that the unbeliever – the “cancerous malformation” – must be removed from the world through “surgical means”, if necessary.

The integration of “terror” into military concepts of war and strategy and involvement of civilians in a total holy war naturally led to evolution of the idea of non-state players who could be acting in concert with the military as part of their pre-action preparations, including striking “terror” in the hearts of the enemy. The launching of various civilian militant groups during Zia-ul Haq’s time could be traced to the evolution of this military doctrine. *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* (SSP) and its militant wing the *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* were floated to quell Shiite and Christian opposition to pro-Sunni Islamisation measures and the promulgation of Blasphemy Law, respectively. Pretty soon this doctrine of “terror” was married to the 1976 White Paper on Kashmir,<sup>161</sup> brought out by Z.A. Bhutto regime and Kashmir specific terror groups were launched, beginning with JKLF and then JI floated *Hizb-ul Mujahideen* and others.

The integration of terrorist operations by civilian participants in a total war gained pan-Islamic and even western acceptance and support during the Afghan *Jihad* against the Soviets. Pakistan’s political parties and NGOs with pan-Islamic links, particularly the *Jamaat-e-Islami* became important cogs in the wheel of pan-Islamic effort to bring in volunteers and resources to sustain the *jihad* against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. They developed strong links with hard-line and radical Islamic groups from Morocco to Philippines and acted in close concert with Saudi pan-Islamic groups like the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY). Since they were acting under overall direction of the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence and the GHQ, they also developed important linkages with radical Islamic groups active in different parts of the world. The US and other western countries, seeking to ‘bleed Soviet Union white’ in Afghanistan, acquiesced with the Pakistani approach

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<sup>161</sup> The 1976 White Paper on Kashmir set out future Kashmir policy in the light of an analysis of the past events. It propounded the thesis that Pakistan’s efforts should primarily focus on encouraging notions of Kashmiri separatism on the basis of religion, nurture a feeling of alienation and resentment against India in Kashmiri masses, which should lead to a homegrown separatist movement. This movement should be militarised and when the internal conflict in Kashmir intensified, draw international attention to it and prepare a ground for ‘legitimate’ Pakistani intervention into the turmoil. [http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/shabir/shabir\\_1998\\_10\\_1.html](http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/shabir/shabir_1998_10_1.html)

and gave a modicum of international acceptability and recognition to concepts of total war and the involvement of non-state players with it. This continued even after the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan until the first attack on the World Trade Centre in the early 1990s. The emergence of *Taliban* regime in Kabul and the close association with *Al-Qaeda* further alarmed the west and many began to question Pakistani military concepts and strategies.

In the immediate post-Zia period there appeared to be not much change in the process of Islamisation of the armed forces. However, the new model Army Zia-ul-Haq built, principally remained concerned not with defending the state's frontiers against its adversaries, but with reinventing Pakistan itself. Commodore Tariq Majid laid out a road map for this new model army in the '1991 Green Book'.<sup>162</sup> He wrote: "the Islamic state, apart from the standing forces, keeps a volunteer force of the people and employs the other lot of able-bodied manpower to strengthen the other elements of the military system during wartime." His "volunteer force of the people" would, in time, evolve into the ISI-backed jihadist networks Pakistan now sponsored. Brigadier Saifi Ahmad Naqvi, writing in the '1994 Green Book', provided doctrinal flesh to this project. He began on the premise that "Pakistan is an ideological state, based on the ideology of Islam." Therefore, "the existence and survival of Pakistan depend upon complete implementation of Islamic ideology in true sense. If the ideology is not preserved then the very existence of Pakistan becomes doubtful." This, in his view, made the Army "responsible for the defence of the country, to safeguard [its] integrity [and] territorial boundaries, and the ideological frontiers to which the country owes its existence." Brigadier Muneer Mahmood explained in the '2002 Green Book', why Pakistan needed to patronise jihadist groups. Pakistan was being cast as the "torch-bearer of the Muslim *ummah* by the biased western media and Jewish lobby." In time, it was "likely to be the target of these forces." Even though the prospect of a "conventional war between India and Pakistan appears remote, the environment [therefore] looks

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<sup>162</sup> *Green Book* is an Army Publication brought out by the GHQ roughly at yearly intervals. It was regarded as the Strategic Manual of the Pakistan Army. However, in 2013 it was clarified that it was merely a publication providing forum for airing of individual views and not necessarily the official views of the Army.

ripe for a LIC [low-intensity conflict] confrontation.” Even as Pakistan became increasingly mired in counter-insurgency operations in the northwest after 2002, elements within its officer corps harboured substantial misgivings about the project. In 2008, for example, Brigadier Waqar Hassan Khan argued in his article in a subsequent edition of the ‘Green Book’ that “the superpower’s entry into [the] Middle-East and West Asia [sic] was not possible without a Pearl Harbour; 9/11 was either created or supported to be labelled as the second Pearl Harbour.”<sup>163</sup>

There is nothing much to suggest that Zia’s successor as the COAS, Mirza Aslam Beg did anything to reverse the Islamisation process in the Army or evolution of its new concepts of warfare in the context of either Afghanistan, India or Islam. In fact he appeared to be taking the theory of total war to new heights by adding the concept of “Strategic Depth” in Afghanistan and the *Zerb-e-Momin* like exercises. According to Pakistani author Hassan Abbas, Beg did make a presentation to Benazir Bhutto (who had become the Prime minister of Pakistan through the post-Zia 1988 elections) on a military plan to attack Kashmir through a combined and concerted operation of the *jibadi* groups and the Pakistan Army. The *jibadi* groups were supposed to sufficiently disrupt Indian Army’s deployment and supply lines and demoralise the normal administrative machinery through terrorist incidents before the Pakistan Army launched its massive blow (*Zerb*) to settle the Kashmir issue. Benazir Bhutto vetoed the plan out of fear that this would trigger an all-out Indo-Pak war.<sup>164</sup>

In the subsequent period, there appeared to be a lessening in Islamic ardour in regulating life in the army garrisons. According to a knowledgeable observer of the Pakistani scene,<sup>165</sup> by the time General Jehangir Karamat took-over as the COAS, many of the Islamic measures

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<sup>163</sup> *God’s Soldier: Pakistan Army’s Ideology*, Praveen Swami, *The Hindu*, October 7, 2011

<sup>164</sup> Shuja Nawaz, *Crossed Swords*. According to Hassan Abbas also (*Pakistan’s Drift into Terrorism*), this plan was once initially floated during Zia-ul Haq’s period. Zia rejected it outright as it would have led to a full-scale war with India. The plan however continued to resurface time and again until General Musharraf gave it the go-ahead and the Kargil war ensued. Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan’s Drift Into Extremism: Allah, The Army And America’s War On Terror*.

<sup>165</sup> As revealed in a closed door interaction at the IDSA in 2011.

had been watered down in the Army. The column on religious practices of rank and file had been reduced in importance and was no longer a key criterion to decide career progression. Similarly, according to another knowledgeable observer of Pakistani scene,<sup>166</sup> the emphasis on offering regular *namaḥ* in a unit had come down to the level of personal predilection of a unit CO. If the CO was very religious-minded, *namaḥ* congregations under his command continued to be compelling events. However, if the CO was not very particular, attendance in *namaḥ* congregations had become a matter of choice. A conscious effort had commenced much before General Musharraf became COAS and took over power in Pakistan, to reduce the influence of religious organisations in Pakistani armed forces. Practices like soldiers going for *tabligh* were no longer being encouraged. Officers and rank recruited during Islamisation years were being carefully examined before being given key postings.

Yet, the policy of marrying *jihadi* activities of non-state players with the operational doctrine of the military continued and did have its impact on religious and jihadist orientation of the rank and file. There were many instances of middle-level officers being penalised for openly propagating their religious beliefs even indirectly. Yet, despite attempts to weed out or segregate religious hard-liners, there were many officers who secretly colluded with Islamist elements. In 2010 a few retired and serving military officers were arrested and court martialled for passing on information relating to Shamsi airbase in Baluchistan from where US drone flights were being launched against targets in FATA and adjoining areas of Afghanistan.<sup>167</sup> It may also be noted that despite efforts to screen out Islamic radicals from the ranks of the Pakistani armed forces, at least one of the attempts on Musharraf's life was plotted in the Air Force barracks in Islamabad and was carried out by Army soldiers hailing from the Tribal Areas. According to knowledgeable European and Pakistani experts having direct interaction with the Pakistani armed forces,<sup>168</sup> who have spoken on condition of

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<sup>166</sup> As revealed by an observer of Pakistani scene in another closed-door interaction at IDSA, also in 2011.

<sup>167</sup> [www.nation.com/pk08/07/2010](http://www.nation.com/pk08/07/2010)

<sup>168</sup> As revealed in closed door interaction at IDSA in early 2011.

anonymity, the Pakistan Army's top brass is very concerned about the penetration of the radical influence in the Army's rank and file. A fairly large section of the soldiery and many officers going up to the rank of Brigadiers harbour strong radical views and cannot be trusted to vigorously confront the Jihadists in the society, who despite having been initially reared and supported by the Army, have now gone under the *Al-Qaeda* influence. Nothing underlines this shift better than the killings of Col. (Retd) Sultan Amir *alias* 'Col. Imam' and Sqn. Ldr. Khalid Khwaja, ISI's main contacts and 'Advisers' to the *Taliban*, in January 2011. They were kidnapped in April 2010 along with a Pak-origin British journalist Asad Qureishi while on a mission to patch up between the TTP leadership and the ISI/Pak Army and later possibly open a dialogue with the Americans.<sup>169</sup> While the ISI retains the hope to revive some links with them at some stage in future due to their common religious links, past association and the common anti-India factor, Pakistani observers who have had close interaction with most TTP leaders feel that even though many Islamic radicals may not be willing to confront the Pakistan Army in a direct fight due to the Islamic factor and the fear of Army reprisals against them, they are unwilling to cooperate with it. They are not willing to join hands with the Pakistan Army, but wish its destruction through sabotage and subversion of loyalties. Beheading of the captured Pakistani soldiers and officers by some elements of the TTP and the silence of all others over it is indicative of the rift that has come to exist between the jihadists and the Pakistan Army.<sup>170</sup>

The Pakistan Army today does not appear to be as professional, secularist and non-sectarian as it used to be in the past. Nor has it a strategy, or the mindset to correct this current profile. The Army's plans to keep the Islamic radicals at bay for the present through the traditional 'iron-fisted' response (as was done in Baluchistan and in erstwhile East Pakistan) and then let time smoothen the ruffled feathers, does not seem to be producing the expected results either. Recruitment data from the GHQ shows that since the 1970s the recruitment process

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<sup>169</sup> *The News* online edition April 22, 2010, *Daily News*, online edition January 24, 2011

<sup>170</sup> As stated by late Salim Schzad in an interaction at the IDSA shortly before his assassination in 2011.

has moved from the traditional districts to new cities and urbanised communities that are cash rich thanks to inflow of Gulf remittances. The new-found affluence of these centres, particularly in Punjab, has also created a new and relatively deprived class of people living on the fringes of these areas, who have increasingly become the new recruiting ground for the Army due to the economic and social benefits flowing from it rather than traditional military values. Islamic radical groups have also been active in them and radiate their influence into the Army through their 'boys' joining it, often on active encouragement.<sup>171</sup>

Apparently, this gradually transforming Pakistan Army has changed so much by now that any prospect of the traditionalists regaining full control over it does not inspire much hope. The number of radical elements in the Army has steadily been increasing in the post-Zia period, periodic exercises to weed such elements out notwithstanding. It is therefore no surprise that in the initial phases, Pak GHQ leaned heavily on such non-Sunni units as the Northern Light Infantry (predominantly *Ismaili Shiites*) to do most of the direct fighting with the TTP cadres. Many of the NLI elements were stated to have deserted from their posts when they found that they were being used as cannon fodder in the fight against TTP by their Sunni superiors, who appeared to be 'hands-in-glove with the 'enemy'. Other Sunni elements belonging not only to the Frontier Corps, but to regular Army units as well have also deserted, or at least made clear their reluctance to fight with the TTP with which they shared religious affinities.<sup>172</sup>

The Pakistan establishment, particularly the Army, remains tied to its own jihadism and continue to view various radical and jihadi elements on the *Deobandi/Wahabi* spectrum basically as its allies and "strategic assets". However, an ever-increasing penetration of the jihadis inside military ranks is clearly discernible in incidents like the attack on PNS *Mehran* on 22 May 2011 (and the latest one at Pakistan Air Force base at *Kamra* on August 16, 2012) and the arrest of Brig. Ali Khan, shortly after the *Mehran* attack. According to Salim Sehzaad, the Pakistani journalist who died in mysterious circumstances after the *Mehran* attack,

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<sup>171</sup> Shuza Nawaz *Crossed Swords*; Hussein Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*

<sup>172</sup> Statement made in 'Islamabad Today' programme of Aaj TV, uploaded to You tube on June 7, 2010

the Karachi incident took place after the naval authorities refused to ease pressures on some of their personnel for harbouring *jihadi* tendencies. Notwithstanding claims to the contrary, the *Mehran* attack appeared to be mainly an inside job, even if there were some civilian *jihadi* intruders. Clearly, Pakistan's military has become ideologically divided as never before, notwithstanding General Kayani efforts to build bridges with the *jihadist* groups by tacitly making peace deals with them and off and on talking in the idiom of religion.

The arrest of Brig. Ali Khan, who had generational links with the Army and had received training in the US and was set to retire soon, was linked to his involvement with *Hizb-ut Tabrir* and its attempts to penetrate Army ranks. Ali had protested over Osama bin Laden's killing and cooked up a plot to bomb the GHQ to register his protest.<sup>173</sup> Ali was not alone: a Lieutenant Colonel and four Majors, who worked under him, had also been detained. These arrests and the extent of reaction among Army's middle rungs to the US commando attack on Abbottabad in May 2011 had rattled the Army's top brass and they found it hard not to acknowledge the presence of *jihadi* tendencies in the armed forces.<sup>174</sup> Speaking to *Dawn*, the Army's spokesman Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas contended in early 2012 that although there was zero tolerance in the garrisons for religious and sectarian organisations, the ranks could not remain unaffected by what was happening in the society - a clear acknowledgement of rising religious extremism in the country.<sup>175</sup> According to Pervez Hoodbhoy, religion deeply divided the Pakistan military now. Perhaps it might be more accurate to think of it as two militaries. The first, -The Army One -headed by Gen. Kayani seeks to maintain the status quo and the Army's pre-eminence in making national decisions. The second- The Army Two - is Allah's army. This awaits a leader even as it launches attacks on Pakistani military installations, bases, top-level officers, soldiers, public places, mosques and police stations. Soldiers have been encouraged to turn their guns on to their colleagues, troops have been tricked into ambushes, and high-level officers have been assassinated. Allah's army hopes to launch

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<sup>173</sup> *Trying To Join Twain That Cannot Meet*, Praveen Swami, *The Hindu*, June 25, 2012

<sup>174</sup> *Pakistan's Army: Divided It Stands*, Pervez Hoodbhoy, *Vienpoint Online*, Issue 63 August 20, 2011

<sup>175</sup> *The Dawn*, Internet edition June 22,2011

its final blitzkrieg once the state of Pakistan has been sufficiently weakened by such attacks.<sup>176</sup>

What separates ‘Army-One’ and ‘ISI-One’ from ‘Army-Two’ and ‘ISI-Two’? This may not be immediately evident as both were reared on the ‘Two-Nation Theory’ and are thoroughly steeped in anti-Indianism since their early days in Army Cadet Colleges at Petaro and Hasan Abdal. They also share a deep-rooted contempt for Pakistani civilians. This attitude has resulted in roughly half of Pakistan’s history being that of direct military rule. Still, they are not the same. The One’ers are “soft Islamists” who are satisfied with a fuzzy belief that Islam provides solutions to everything, that occasional prayers and ritual fasting in Ramzan is sufficient, and that Sufis and Shias are bonafide Muslims rather than *mushriks* or apostates. They are not particularly interested in defending the Sunni states of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, or the GCC. But should a lucrative overseas posting come the way of an individual soldier or officer, well, that may be another matter. While having a dislike of US policies, they are not militantly anti-US. Army-Two and ISI-Two, on the other hand, are soldier ideologues who have travelled further down the road of Islamism. Large numbers of them regularly travel to Raiwind, the headquarters of the *Tabligh Jamaat* and whose preachers are still allowed open access into the Army, despite restrictions. The Two’ers are stricter in matters of religious rituals, they insist that officers and their wives be segregated at army functions. They keep an eye out for officers who secretly drink alcohol, and how often they pray. Their political philosophy is that Islam and the state should be inseparable. Inspired by Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, who preached that 7<sup>th</sup> century Arab Islam provides a complete blueprint for society and politics, they see capturing state power as a means towards creating the ideal society along the lines of the medieval Medina state. Many Two’ers are beardless, hence hard to detect. They are fundamentally anti-science but computer-savvy. For them, modern technology is a tool of battle. Like the proverbial ostrich, the One’ers fiercely defend the myth of army unity. They dismiss mutineers as isolated individuals.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *Pakistan’s Army: Divided It Stands*, Pervez Hoodbhoy, *Viewpoint Online*, Issue 63 August 20, 2011

<sup>177</sup> *Pakistan’s Army: Divided It Stands*, Pervez Hoodbhoy, *Viewpoint Online*, Issue 63 August 20, 2011



The Pakistan Army, like the nation, is at crossroad. They both have nurtured and unleashed forces they cannot control now. Whatever direction the military takes, the nation seem destined to pay a heavy price for the forays in religious affairs. The first scenario is that Pakistan Army's conflict with Islamic radicals continues unabated as per the current trend. This would entail paying a heavy cost in terms of resources and lives and severely eroding its efficacy and structure. Yet, the Islamists remain untamed, leading to a drastic change in the present contours of the Pakistani nation. The other scenario is that Army is forced by circumstances to change its India-centric mindset, it substantially pulls out its forces from the Eastern borders and takes on the Islamists with total resources and determination. This may broadly preserve the Pakistan as we know it today. But the cost of this achievement would again be too high and may also force the Pakistan Army to change its complexion. The decision of the direction events take is in the hands of Allah and the Army.

Events in the recent past tend to suggest that there could now be serious doubts about the Army's will and commitment to confront the Islamists due to the penetration of its own rank and file by the latter. Ironically this demon of radicalism springs out of the Pakistan Army's continued spousal of the Zia-era doctrine of 'total Jihadist wars' that treated militant groups like *Al-Qaeda* as its allies in the continuing and inevitable conflict between *Dar-ul Islam* and *Dar-ul Herb*. Kayani is reported to have told senior officers in the I39th Corps Commanders' Conference, (Islamabad, June 9, 2011) that Army was "drastically cutting" the number of US troops stationed in Pakistan and US military aid to Pakistan should be diverted to the civilian use as it was no longer essential for the Army. He also declared that US drone strikes in FATA were "not acceptable under any circumstances".

The tone and tenor of the Army leadership's statements and the wide media publicity they have been given is indicative of not just the extent of the feeling of hurt and betrayal that pervades Pakistan's civil and military structure but also the alarm it seems to have set-off among the top-brass. Coming in the aftermath of attack on Mehran Naval Aviation Base in Karachi, the military's statement was a tacit admission of the significant extent to which radical sentiments seem to have travelled inside the Pakistani military establishment and the preparedness

of these elements to openly challenge the military hierarchy and structures. One could be pardoned if one hears echoes of Anwar Sadat's assassination in Egypt in recent armed attacks on Pakistani military establishment from within its own ranks in recent weeks. It may be recalled that Sadat's assassination showed that just a handful of religiously fired military men were enough to nearly bring down an established regime. In Pakistan this phenomenon had been there for past many years and, if any thing, elements attacking Musharraf, the Karachi Corps Commander and the Musharraf's Prime Minister designate Shaukat Aziz have only become stronger and bolder.

## Chapter VIII

# Radicalisation of Education

A reformed and modernised education system could have been the instrument to build Pakistan as a modern albeit a religion-based state with rational policies and balanced growth. However, education was the one field which successive Pakistani governments since independence not only neglected but, worse, allowed, or even encouraged, it to have clear religious overtones, which were propped up as its ideology. This led to radicalisation of almost the entire educational set-up in Pakistan in the coming years, particularly as an ever-worsening economy and lack of resources ensured that education continued to be treated as a low priority sector by successive Pakistani governments. This provided radical Islamic forces an opportunity to dominate the education system through their madrassa networks. In course of time, religious obscurantist and bigots acquired almost a total stranglehold over educational activity for the country's burgeoning impoverished masses to preach their message of a sectarian and radical Islam. Many educationists now believe that a time has come to openly discuss the issue of religious intolerance so that it leads to some action to save younger students from such influences from the very beginning of their lives.<sup>178</sup>

### The initial years

Although Jinnah wanted Pakistan to be a democracy and not a theocracy, the very first high-powered meeting of the newly set-up Pakistan Government decided (November 27 to December 1, 1947 in Karachi, the then national Capital) that educational syllabi in Pakistan would be in conformity with Islam, Islamic studies would be an important part

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<sup>178</sup> <http://dawn.com/2012/09/03/hate-content-in-punjab-sindh-school-curricula/>  
printed on September 3, 2012

of the curricula and Urdu would be taught compulsorily in schools as it was the medium that had projected Muslim nationalism during the Pakistan Movement and kept diverse Muslim communities unified. The centrality of Urdu as the medium of instructions in government schools was designed to promote a national identity, suppressing regional and ethnic identities as also to economise in the expenditure on education by obviating the need to use many languages. The focus in this initial step for laying down the educational policies for the new nation was on ideological, political, pragmatic and economic factors rather than human growth, freeing the mind and building up rational personality. However, it was also decided to retain English as a compulsory subject of study in deference to Jinnah's wishes who wanted English to be retained "for some considerable time" for university education and international communication.<sup>179</sup> English education had to be retained to also meet the needs of the elite and upwardly mobile social classes.

The above policy was for government-run schools and no mention was made of a large number of elitist English medium schools run on the pattern of top-class British institutions by missionaries and other Europeans, to which the children of the elite and the senior armed forces officers went. They were allowed to carry on their businesses as usual. Thus at the very beginning two educational systems were created in Pakistan that were two worlds apart and unequal. For the masses there were Urdu medium schools with their emphasis on *Islamiyat* and Urdu as the medium of instruction (excepting in erstwhile East Pakistan and interior of Sindh where Bengali and Sindhi were also allowed), and then there were English medium schools following western syllabi and teaching system. A third system of education - the madrassas - also came to exist in Pakistan almost on its own, despite a total lack of patronage from the state and its elite. For the madrassas the framers of Pakistan's first education policy suggested, "Steps should be taken to bring these madrassas into line with the existing system of general education".<sup>180</sup> It is ironical that even 65 years later, this objective is still

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<sup>179</sup> *Proceedings of the Pakistan Educational Conference, 27 November- 1<sup>st</sup> December 1947*, Ministry of Education, Interior Division.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid*

being bandied about. These decisions became the “operational principles” of all subsequent education policies of the day, only different words were used to lay out supposedly different strategies to achieve what was outlined right in the beginning, i.e., countering the threat of ethnicity; countering religious lobbies as rivals for power; safeguarding the privileges of the westernised elite; creating a citizenry that would support state policies and be available to fill-up subordinate positions.<sup>181</sup>

In accordance with these policy guidelines, a Text-Book Board was set up in 1959. Its main task was to ensure that the government’s policies were reflected in the text-books. One of these was that the moral and spiritual values of Islam combined with the freedom, integrity and strength of Pakistan should be the ideology foundations of the educational system.<sup>182</sup>

### **Bhutto’s role in strengthening Islamic heritage through education**

Religious education was more symbolic than real in Ayub Khan era. However, this underwent a significant change after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took over power. Despite his and his party’s supposed anti-radical and pro-socialistic stance, subtle changes were made in educational curriculum in the name of promoting an Islamic Pakistani identity. This was more as a panic reaction to the break-up of Pakistan after the 1971 war and the stirrings of regional nationalism in ethnic majority provinces of not just Baluchistan and the then NWFP, but even in Sindh. Most Pakistani text-books on the subject of *Pakistan Studies*, introduced in the Bhutto era as a compulsory subject, start by propounding, “Pakistan is an ideological state.” Since then, these books have evolved into a one-dimensional manual on how to become, behave and believe like a “true Pakistani”. They are like a monologue, broken into various chapters about how the state of Pakistan sees, understands and explains the country’s history, society and culture. The students are expected to imbibe this vision whole-sale. Though the content of these books pretends to be of a historical nature, in reality they are anything but

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<sup>181</sup> *Demizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Taiq Rahman, Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid*

that.<sup>183</sup> Similarly, faced with rising strength of the Islamists in Pakistan, theology was introduced for Muslim students in the first eight years of schooling, but it was not compulsory at higher levels, nor were sectarian differences conveyed to the children. Even the madrassas were encouraged to include modern secular subjects in their syllabi.<sup>184</sup> These trends in Pakistani syllabi have continued undisturbed down the ages to the present day.

### **Zia-ul Haq's 'Islamisation' policies and education system**

However, with advent of General Zia-ul Haq, the transformation of education from an instrument of mental awakening to a tool for indoctrination of minds began. Education was now expected to consolidate the Islamisation process.<sup>185</sup> It was laid down that the main aim of education would be to:

- i) Foster in the heart and minds of the people of Pakistan in general and the students in particular a deep and abiding loyalty to Islam and Pakistan and a living consciousness of their spiritual and ideological identity, thereby, strengthening unity of the outlook of the people of Pakistan;
- ii) Create awareness in every student that apart from being a Pakistani, he is also a part of the universal *Ummah* and that it is expected of him to make a contribution towards the welfare of fellow Muslims inhabiting the globe, as also spread the message of Islam throughout the world;
- iii) Produce citizens who are fully conversant with the Pakistan movement, its ideological foundations, history and culture so that they feel proud of their heritage and display firm faith in the future of the country as an Islamic state; and

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<sup>183</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed 30/8/13

<sup>184</sup> *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Taiq Rahman

<sup>185</sup> *Making sense of Pakistan*, Farzana Sheikh, p.101

- iv) Develop and inculcate in accordance with the *Quran* and the *Sunnah* the character and motivation expected of a true Muslim.<sup>186</sup>

For the sake of record, the Zia regime also spoke of strengthening scientific, vocational and technological education.<sup>187</sup> *Madrasas* set up with *zakat* funds and support from private sponsors with privileged access to huge amount of Saudi money, worked in tandem with state schools to forge a new national consensus. At heart of the exercise lay the promotion of the new notion of “ideology of Pakistan” by altering the educational activity and school text-books to achieve the above objectives.<sup>188</sup>

### Post-Zia years

The ‘democratic’ dispensations that followed Zia-ul Haq did not alter the general contours of either the educational policy, or the educational set-up in the country. The emphasis in education continued to be on Islamisation, two-nation theory, with its concomitant hatred for India, glorification of the wars and the military, the subservience of teachers to administrators, increased control of the military and the private sector over elitist education. The only difference was that strong lip-service to democracy was also injected in the educational curricula. The new and ambitious ‘National Education Policy 1998-2000’<sup>189</sup> unveiled by Nawaz Sharif’s second government also repeated the clichés every other official education policies had expounded since 1947. It emphasised increasing replacement of lecture method of imparting instruction by one which increasingly relied on modern educational aids like computers, TV-Video, etc. and means of information technology. However, this policy had also a chapter on ‘Islamic Education’ which declared that all aspects of education including the sciences were to be governed by religion. Even the report on ‘Education

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<sup>186</sup> *National Educational Policy and Implementation Programme* (GoP, 1979);

<sup>187</sup> *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Taiq Rahman

<sup>188</sup> *Rewriting the History of Pakistan*, Parvez Amirali Hoodbhoy & Abdul Hamid Nayyar, quoted in Asghar Khan edited *Islam, Politics and the state: The Pakistan Experience*, London Zed Books, 1985, p.165

<sup>189</sup> *198 National Education Policy*, Islamabad, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

Sector Reforms: Action Plan 2001-2004', unveiled during General Pervez Musharraf's stewardship of Pakistan was no different from earlier education policy documents, except that it laid emphasis on "private sector investment in secondary and higher education" through liberal grants, development of multiple text-books and private exam boards.<sup>190</sup> The Musharraf government laid down certain objectives for teaching of various subjects, which used Islam as the marker of identity to define the boundaries for one-self. Whatever is on the 'other side' of this boundary is by definition, non-Muslim. This was, however, conditioned by a sense of nationalism which made it almost mandatory to exclude any references to 'Indian Hindus' who have to be referred as 'non-Muslims friendly with Pakistan' if at all necessary!<sup>191</sup> The new policy required that education must:

- i) "Inculcate the unflinching love for Islam and Pakistan, strong sense of national cohesion and state integrity;
- ii) Promote understanding of socio-economic and socio-cultural aspects of Pakistani society, the ideology of Pakistan and struggle for freedom".

The teaching of the history, according to this policy guideline, had to:

- i) "Evaluate the Islamisation efforts by various Governments in the perspective of an Islamic ideological framework;
- ii) Inculcate among students the qualities of *Khudi*, self-reliance, tolerance, research, sacrifice, *jihad*, martyrdom, modesty and the behaviour patterns of national character".<sup>192</sup>

### The role of the text-books

A significant aspect of any education policy is the format and content of the school text-books, which were supposed to be 'Islamised' from 1947. They were given a religious orientation in most fields, including

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<sup>190</sup> *Education Sector Reforms: Action Plan 2001-2004* Islamabad, ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

<sup>191</sup> *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Tariq Rahman

<sup>192</sup> Various Pakistan Government education policy documents reproduced by Tariq Rehman in his *Denizens of Alien Worlds*



natural sciences. Moreover, this religious orientation was designed to support the state's militaristic policies and tended to plant the suggestion in the sub-consciousness of their readers that Pakistan, the Pakistan movement, Pakistan's wars with India, the Kashmir issue were all connected not only with Pakistani nationalism, but with Islam itself. Significantly, Islamic studies were made compulsory up to class -X.<sup>193</sup> Along with this very explicit religious orientation, Urdu was promoted as the medium of instruction, though privately-run English medium school managed to hold on thanks mainly to the elitist support.

Zia-ul Haq regime made the study of Pakistan Studies and Islamic Theology compulsory up to undergraduate levels. A further impetus was added to the radicalisation of the education system when pro-Zia Islamic political parties stepped up their madrassa movement. These parties have been running their mosques and their linked madrassas from the very beginning of Pakistan, but their efforts were limited and the madrassas mostly served as an auxiliary system of religious instructions. However, due to increasing socio-economic imbalances in the society and the political patronage these institutions received during Zia years, the madrassas become an important segment of the Pakistani school network.<sup>194</sup> While the upper echelons of the Pakistani society patronised the elitist or even the state-run schools, an ever increasing number of children were sent to madrassas not only because of the religious orientation of their parents, but because they could not afford to send their wards to any other school, not even government-run ones. The *madrassas* with free boarding, and even lodging in some cases, free 'text-books' and practically no expenditure on uniform and other sundry expenses became the only option available to Pakistan's ever-increasing poor to provide an opportunity to their children to be literates.

Even in the post-Musharraf era, Pakistani education remained shackled to pre-partition political, social and religious prejudices. The increasing conflict in the society between the religious radicalists and the state also did not seem to have induced any change in the way the country's young minds should be moulded. Thus, schoolchildren in Pakistan

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid

<sup>194</sup> *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Taq Rahman

continue to study text-books that retard critique and intelligent analysis. The social studies textbook for Class VII enlightens pupils about European conspiracies against Muslim nations over the past three centuries; the textbook on Pakistan Studies for 13/14-year olds propagates that one of the reasons for the downfall of Muslims in the subcontinent was the lack of the spirit of *jihad*, which is very important in Islam; and that those who offer their lives in it never die. Pakistani educationist Tariq Rehman has carried out a detailed content analysis of text-books officially prescribed for educational institutions and has listed following interesting instances of biases being implanted through them:

### **English medium school text-books**

Class 6: Sentences like “I am a Muslim. I am a Pakistani?”

Class 7: Pictures show girls covering their heads with *dupattas*.

Class 9: References to conquest of Spain by the Muslims.

Class 10: An essay justifying Tariq bin-Zaid’s conquest of Spain.

### **Urdu Medium school text-books**

Class 6: An Urdu couplet, glorifying Muslim victories. It translates – “The Himalayas remember their (Muslims) deeds. Gibraltar still carries their stamp on it.” A lesson on the 1965 war refers to India as a “clever and manipulative enemy”.

Class 7: Poet Akbar Allahabadi is eulogised for opposing “Western culture in India”. The textbook has such other remarks also: “In those days the extremist had launched a movement against Urdu since they considered it the Muslim’s language.”

Class 8: In a reference to the partition: “The Hindus and Sikhs killed Muslims whenever they were in a minority. They burnt their houses and forced them to migrate to Pakistan”. Another reference to an Indian pilot says, “In the other world he had to burn; here too he died by fire.”

Class 9: Many passages romanticizing “thousand-year” Muslim rule in India. The text is replete with references to the alleged Hindu conspiracies against rulers like Tipu Sultan and their alliance with the British to hound Muslims.

Similar instances of a distorted history and glorified religion abound in text-books on Social Studies. Some examples:

- i) “People of Africa requested Muslims to invade their lands to save them from the tyranny of the Christian rulers”. (Class 7, English medium textbook.)
- ii) “British and Hindu ... atrocities”; the Christians wanted to take revenge from the Muslims; European nations have been pursuing a policy to “subjugate the Muslim world”; “Qaid-e-Azam saw through the machinations of the Hindus”; and many more.

Rehman carried out content analyses of all language and literature text-books from Class -I to Class -X in 1999 and categorised their contents under three heads – Pakistani nationalism, Islam and the military. Under the first heading were pieces of prose, poetry, lessons, exercises about the Pakistan Movement, nationalist heroes, messages on national integration, Pakistani identity, ideology of Pakistan, messages on national integration, etc. Under the second head were items relating to religious personages, beliefs and movements. Under the last category were articles about war with India, Islamic wars, war heroes, glorification of the Pakistan Army, etc. Rehman found following %age figures of ideological content in various language text-books in Pakistan:

Arabic 66%

Urdu 40%

Pashto 43%

Persian 32%

Sindhi 29%

English 8%<sup>195</sup>

**The primary and secondary schools curricula (being taught to children in public and private schools in Punjab and Sindh) is even now replete with content that can fan hatred, prejudices, torture, extremism and religious intolerance in society.**

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<sup>195</sup> *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan*, Taiq Rahman

A content analysis report (of the books published in 2012 by Punjab and Sindh Textbook Boards) prepared by the National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), entitled *Education or Fanning Hate*<sup>196</sup> says the hate content in school text books has increased manifold with the passage of time. Many books that had no hate material in their earlier versions now carried such material in both Punjab and Sindh. The curricula 'hate material' is mostly targeted at religious minorities including Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and the neighbouring India. There is also a lot of material that has the potential to turn innocent minds against Westerners/Europeans. Despite hectic and repeated efforts by human rights organisations and impartial educationists aimed at pointing out negativity being promoted through text-books, especially for the last three decades, the latest text-books have more hate content than those written previously.

The content analysis report on Punjab text-books reveals that there were 45 lines containing hate material in the books published in 2009-11, which rose to 122 lines in 2012. Urdu and Pakistan Studies' text-books for Class -VII, VIII, IX and X were found to be the "most-affected" as the hate material swelled from 15 lines to 86 lines this year. In all, 22 lessons in the current primary and secondary schools curricula have hate content. The 2009 text-books for Class -IX and X Urdu (grammar and composition), Class -IX Pakistan Studies textbook, Class -VI History book and Class -VIII social studies had no hate content, but their latest versions have three, three, one and four lessons, respectively, that contain such material. The Class -VIII Urdu textbook had also one such lesson, but in the new book the number has risen to three. The report also mentions that hate material lessons which were part of Class -VII *Islamiyat* and Class -VIII social studies were removed from the latest text-books. It is worth mentioning that according to the report, Punjab's text-books carry no hate content against Sikhs. Similarly, the hate material lessons in Sindh Textbook Board (STB) books being taught from Class -I to Class -X in public schools has doubled as compared to 2009-11 text-books. The STB Urdu books published during 2009-11 for Class -V, VIII, IX and X carried no hate

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<sup>196</sup> <http://dawn.com/2012/09/03/hate-content-in-punjab-sindh-school-curricula/>  
printed on September 3, 2012

material but those produced in 2012-13 have one, seven, and one hate material lessons, respectively. The STB, however, removed such material from Class -VI social studies and Class -VII Islamiyat text-books.<sup>197</sup>

The speakers at a seminar on “Biases in Text-books and Education Policy” held in September 2012, lauded the NCJP’s executive director Peter Jacob and researchers Yousaf Benjamin and Attaur Rehman Saman for highlighting the hate content in text-books and hoped that such efforts could lead to removal of such material from curriculum to help build a peaceful and tolerant society in Pakistan. Educationist Dr A.H Nayyar said the report had precisely pointed out the rot that was pushing Pakistani society and its future generations towards devastation. “Still, there are no signs that these howlers in text-books will be removed,” he said dejectedly. It was hardly a surprise if Punjab Education Minister Mujtaba Shuja-ur Rahman and his officials preferred to give the seminar a miss. According to Nayyar, anti-liberal and anti-secular forces were working systematically in Pakistan and frustrated all efforts being made in the right direction with one subtle entry. “In 1997, we worked hard to develop an education policy and developed seven policy drafts one after another. Then, the eighth draft came from nowhere that carried a chapter on ‘Islamic education’.” Educationist Dr Baela Raza Jamil said a 1997-like situation was again witnessed in 2009, when Chapter -IV on ‘Islamic education’ was inserted in the education policy from the “backdoor”. Within a month’s time, the education policy was approved by the Federal Cabinet. She said the National Curriculum made in 2006 was much better in many ways but it was never implemented. Still, she said, text-books were being produced that carried hate material and fostering intolerance among Muslims against Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and the Englishmen. Dr Jamil called for original thinking and its promotion at all levels to change the rotten mindset prevailing in the society.<sup>198</sup> According to educationist Dr Mehdi Hassan, the entire world was afraid of religious education being imparted to children in Pakistani madrassas. However, only a fraction of children were seeking education in madrassas and if the government ensured quality and unbiased education to rest of the

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid

<sup>198</sup> Ibid

children going to public and private schools then that fraction going to madrassas would become irrelevant. “Teachers are neither competent, nor educated and trained enough to develop a nation that could compete at international level,” he regretted, saying that the responsibility to develop a tolerant society lies with the teachers and curriculum-makers.<sup>199</sup>

There was another phenomenon of grown-up and otherwise reasonably well-educated Muslim girls from well-to-do *Barelvi* families being sent to female madrassas for religious indoctrination. The number of such female madrassa students is estimated to be more than a quarter million and the number of such madrassas nearly 2000.<sup>200</sup> Interestingly, while education in male madrassas is free, female madrassa students have to pay Rs. 3000-4000 per month for their education. Most of these students justify *Barelvi* radicalism as displayed through actions like killing of Salman Taseer,<sup>201</sup> or the support for his assassin. This phenomenon not only has deep-rooted socio-economic causes, it has tremendous negative implications for the future of the society as it may convert young mothers-to-be into hard-line Islamic radicals and sectarian zealots.

### **The impact of Pakistani education on successive generations**

The natural fall-out of this skewed educational process has been production of flawed opinions and irrational arguments. The following figures tabulated by Rehman from a survey of Pakistani students in 1999-2003 are still relevant to some extent and demonstrative:

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid

<sup>200</sup> This figure has to be seen against the estimated number of total number of madrassas belonging to all the various sects. These estimates vary from 11,882 (by Ejaz-ul Haq, Pakistan's Minister for Religious Affairs in 2006), to 15,000 (D. Suba Chandran, IPCS Article 314, January 25, 2000) to 40,00 (estimated by Hyat Kamila in 2008 (*The News International*, September 25, 2008))

<sup>201</sup> Salman Taseer, the former Governor of Punjab, who was killed by his *Barelvi* body-guard for having called for a review of country's Blasphemy Laws.

**Tolerance among Urdu-Medium Students:**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Equality for Ahmadiyas:	44.04	33.85	22.12
Equality for Hindus & Christians:	56.73	23.65	19.62
Equal rights to women:	84.81	9.04	6.15

**Tolerance among Urdu school teachers:**

Ahmadiyas	27	65	0.8
Hindus	37	58	05
Christians	52	42	06
Women	61	33	06

**Tolerance among students of Cadet Colleges/Public Schools:**

Ahmadiyas	41.54	36.92	21.54
Hindus	64.62	31.54	3.85
Christians	76.92	18.46	4.62
Women	67.69	25.38	6.92

**Tolerance among Teachers of Cadet Colleges/Public Schools:**

Ahmadiyas	29.41	62.75	7.84
Hindus	60.78	35.29	3.92
Christians	60.78	33.33	5.88
Women	37.25	58.82	3.92

**Elitist English medium school students:**

Ahmadiyas	65.52	9.48	25.00
Hindus	78.45	13.79	7.76
Christians	83.62	8.62	7.76
Women	90.52	6.03	3.45

**Elitist English Medium School Teachers:**

Ahmadiyas	43.07	36.92	9.23
Hindus	61.54	26.15	12.31
Christians	81.54	10.77	7.69
Women	78.46	13.85	7.69

Other revealing statistics is about the attitude of the above categories of respondents to issues of war and Kashmir:

**Urdu medium school students:**

Issues	Yes	No	Don't know
Annex Kashmir through open war	39.56	53.04	7.39
Help <i>jibadi</i> groups to fight India	33.04	45.22	21.74
Support Kashmir issue peacefully	75.65	18.26	6.09

**Students of Cadet Colleges/Public Schools:**

Kashmir through war	36.92	60.00	3.08
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	53.08	40.00	6.92
Peaceful approach	56.15	36.92	6.92

**Teachers of Cadet Colleges/Public Schools:**

Open war	19.61	68.63	11.76
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	39.22	52.94	7.84
Peaceful approach	66.66	19.61	13.73

**Elitist English Medium School Students:**

Open war	25.86	64.66	9.48
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	22.41	60.34	17.24
Peaceful approach	72.41	18.97	8.62



**Teachers of Elitist English Medium Public Schools:**

Open war	26.15	64.62	9.23
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	38.46	56.77	10.77
Peaceful approach	60	33.85	6.15

**Madrassa Students:**

Open war	59.86	31.69	8.45
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	52.82	32.39	14.79
Peaceful approach	33.80	54.93	11.27

**Madrassa Teachers:**

Open war	70.37	22.22	7.41
Support to <i>jihadis</i>	59.26	29.63	11.11
Peaceful approach	29.63	66.67	3.70

The above statistics are interesting but are not only dated, but also do not fully cover the entire spectrum of issues relevant to understanding the role played by the country's education system in growth of radical attitudes among Pakistan's younger generations. Subsequent surveys by organisations like the PEW, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) and scholars like Jacob Shapiro and Christina Fair for Massachusetts Institute for Technology (data collected through A.C. Nielsen, Pakistan) throw some additional light on the radicalisation of youth in Pakistan as a direct by-product of radical influences inherent in Pakistan movement and the subsequent attempts at nation- building through a 'committed' education system. Shapiro and Fair quote from the *National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on United States, The 9/11 Commission Report* to contend that poor education is a particular concern. Millions of families, especially those with little money, send their children to madrassas. Many of these institutions provide the only affordable opportunity for education to the young ones of the poor masses. Some of these institutions have also served as incubators for violent extremism.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> *Understanding Support for Islamist Militancy in Pakistan*, Jacob N. Shapiro & Christina Fair, International Security, MIT, Vol 34, No 3, Winter 2009

A 2010 study, *Trends and Patterns of Radicalisation in Pakistan* done under the aegis of *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies* (PIPS) by Mujtaba Rathore & Abdul Basit shows that 92.4% of the students from graduate colleges and universities in Pakistan, who were surveyed for the study, felt that religion was an important factor in their lives. More than half of those surveyed (55.8%) insisted that religious values were critical to Pakistan's progress. While, 51.3% endorsed country's hybrid legal system in which the *shariat* is one of the significant sources of law, at least 28.2% felt that *shariat* should be the only source of law in the country. 50% of the respondents from Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa and 61.5% from FATA held this view. The opinion was equally divided on whether religious parties should get a chance to rule the country, with 42.6% supporting the idea and 42% opposing it. Interestingly, 71.3% male respondents and 57.1% female respondents felt that women should veil outside their homes, even though 95.3% supported equal opportunities for them to study and 75.7% supported their working. Despite this clear trend towards increasing religiosity among Pakistan's higher education students, 79.4% did not support *Taliban*, with 85.6% considering suicide bombings to be un-Islamic and 61.7% supporting military operations in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa against radical Islamists.<sup>203</sup> All said and done, the PIPS study clearly brings out the impact of religiously oriented Pakistani education system on university students. The impact of this education system on the country as a whole comes out even clearer in a *PEW Research Centre Survey on Pakistan -2012* which found that 84% of Pakistanis favoured *Shariat* as the official law in the country. Like most practicing Muslims in practically all Islamic countries, a huge majority of Muslims in Pakistan is also deeply committed to its faith and wants its teachings to shape not only the personal lives, but the society and politics as well. While the approval rating for the *Taliban*, including the *Tebriq-e-Taliban Pakistan* (ITP) remained low, one-in-five Pakistani (22%) viewed it with favour, 41% offered no views and 37% viewed it negatively.<sup>204</sup>

<sup>203</sup> *Trends and Patterns of Radicalisation in Pakistan*, for *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies* by Mujtaba Rathore & Abdul Basit, April 2010.

<sup>204</sup> *PEW Research Centre Forum on Religions and Public Life*, 2012, released in April 2013; *The News* (Internet edition) May 1, 2013 accessed 28/6/2013

The attitudes of Pakistani youth, as reflected in above surveys, are the natural outcome of a blinkered educational system that owes its origin to the Pakistan Movement and then the economic constraints that the new-born nation faced. It has created a thought process that motivates even those youth to join jihadist causes, who have otherwise been educated in formal educational institutions.<sup>205</sup> According to Pakistani sociologist Muhammad Amir Rana, the surveys of Pakistani youth show the widespread perception among them that democracy would not help Pakistan deal with its problems.<sup>206</sup> Perhaps, this also is a desperate idea emerging from a mind conditioned by a manipulated education system that the Pakistani nation and society have jealously protected and nurtured so far. According to Nadeem Paracha, the noted Pakistani thinker and analyst, In the past two decades, a whole generation of educated middle class has grown up who, (thanks to the current Pakistani education system) believe that establishing a *shariat* based order was Jinnah's main goal and that the so-called Pakistani ideology emerged from the sacrifices rendered by their elders during the Pakistan Movement. Even though Pakistani liberals, intellectuals and ethnic nationalists have vainly tried to counter these views and impressions, these ideas defining 'Pakistani ideology' mould the attitudes of most young Pakistanis today. This process is helped by a biased Urdu press and growing economic, judicial and political influence of the urban middle classes, which though would still like to proclaim that they are a Muslim first and a Pakistani afterwards.<sup>207</sup>

Does the international community, particularly India, have any ideas how to communicate with a people whose minds are conditioned by such a vision of their evolution as a nation? Perhaps, therein lies the complexity of dealing with the Pakistani mind. It may be added that there are very strong political-religious lobbies in Pakistan who would do everything to prevent this mindset from changing. Zia's Islamisation

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<sup>205</sup> *Folds of radicalism*, Muhammad Amir Rana, *The Dawn*, archives 30323, accessed June 28, 2013

<sup>206</sup> *Radicalisation of Pakistani youth*, Muhammad Amir Rana, South-East Asia Centre For Counter Terrorism, featured article /59, accessed on June 28, 2013

<sup>207</sup> *The Pakistan Ideology: History of Grand Concoction*, Nadeem F. Paracha, Dawn Blog, <http://dawn.com/news/1038961/the-pakistan-ideology-history-of-a-grand-concoction>, accessed 30/8/13

measures, particularly those which gave a decided push to radicalize the education system remain intact even today, nearly 25 years after his demise. So many governments assumed power in the intervening years and, yet, none of them has made any serious effort to undo Zia's legacy in the country's educational system. The ANP government in KP had made some efforts to take out from school syllabus those lessons on the Quranic Studies that eulogised *jihad* and encouraged radical attitudes. However, after the May 2013 elections the coalition government under *Pakistan Tehriq-e-Insaf* has restored those deleted portions from the text-books. Education portfolio in the coalition government is held by *Jamaat-e-Islami* as per its own wish.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>208</sup> PTI report based on a report carried by

# Continuing Religious Radicalisation & Ever Widening Sectarian Divide

Religious radicalism and its offshoot, the sectarian divide continue to cast their negative impact on efforts to promote stability and the rule of law in Pakistan. Successive governments in Pakistan have indulged in repeated window-dressing to convey to the world at large that they have been serious about tackling the evil of radicalism. Gen. Pervez Musharraf's stint in power provides an eloquent testimony for this phenomenon. A more recent example of this effort in suspended animation came in August 2011, when in a meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, attended by the top military brass, it was decided to pay "special attention" to a de-radicalisation programme "to motivate youth to engage and isolate them from militancy and terrorism and bring them back to peaceful living". However, in practice, hardly anything was done to address the underlying causes of religious radicalism and the sectarian militancy, which have become even more closely intertwined.

### **No coherent strategy for combating radicalism**

According to liberal Pakistani thinkers and experts, a coherent strategy for de-radicalisation should have concentrated on action to protect and enable religious plurality and repealing or amending laws and official procedures that reinforced sectarian identities (like mention of faith in passports, job applications, etc.); preventing use of *zakat* revenues to support any particular sect, or creed; purging of text-books on Pakistan and Islamic studies that promoted religious fanaticism and sectarianism; launching of a concrete action plan to regulate, reform and streamline madrassas and their education system; disbanding all armed militias and militant organisations under the relevant provisions of the Constitution; vigorously enforcing laws against hate speech and banning *jihadi* publications preaching international *jihad*; and well publicising the nexus between *jihadi* elements and ordinary criminals.

Needless to say, none of these measures were anywhere near implementation. The state's response to *jibadi* and sectarian activities remained confined to merely containing the armed threat from the protagonists of such activities. Apparently, the Pakistani state and the Army have been more interested in curbing the direct armed-threat to their existence and hold from the *jibadi* elements, than waging a battle for hearts and minds to wean the country away from the religious radicalism. In those areas in FATA and the Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa where the Army did manage to wrest control from the Pakistani Taliban and their cohorts, the effort has just been to maintain control without initiating any moves to bring about a change in the *jibadi* mindset and usher in normal social and religious behaviour.

Overemphasis on religious activism inexorably leads to militant assertions in matters of faith, which in turn fuels sectarian conflicts. In Pakistan, sectarianism produced greater religious assertions, starting a new cycle of action and reactions. Increased *Deobandi/Wababi/Salafi* activism invariably gravitated towards militant suppression of followers of other faiths, beginning with the minority communities, then the *Shias*, and finally the *Barelvis*. The *Shias* and the *Barelvis* chose to reply fire with fire and this vicious circle of sectarian hatred continues to move at its furious bloody pace in Pakistan.

Syed Ejaz Hussein, a Pakistani Deputy Inspector General of Police, opines in his doctoral thesis<sup>209</sup> on criminology that the network of sectarian violence has its roots in the *Deobandi* sect. Of the 2344 terrorists arrested in Pakistan between 1990 and 2009, over 90 per cent were *Deobandis*; 35 per cent of these were ethnic Pashtuns, who otherwise constitute just 15 per cent of the Pakistani population. According to the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), 314 persons were killed in 111 sectarian-related incidents in Pakistan in 2011.<sup>210</sup> Of these there were as many as 36 incidents in Karachi alone, leading to a death toll

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<sup>209</sup> Syed Ejaz Hussain, "Terrorism in Pakistan: Incident Patterns, Terrorists' Characteristics, and the impact of Terrorist Arrests on Terrorism", April 2010, unpublished doctoral thesis, <http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1163&context=edissertations>

<sup>210</sup> PIPS figures cited in Shahzad Raza, "Self Inflicted Wounds", *Friday Times*, 2 March 2012, <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta2/tft/article.php?issue=20120302&page=2>

of 58. According to some Pakistani experts, the burgeoning scale of sectarian violence in Karachi, which has an invariable ethnic complexion too, is a direct offshoot of the Pakistan Army's operation against the Tehriq-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its allies in FATA and Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa that forced militant cadres of these groupings to leave their rural habitat and find sanctuaries in the bubbling sectarian/ethnic cauldrons of Karachi and other urban metropolises and pursue their sectarian agenda.

This sectarian-cum-ethnic violence is a triangular affair, with *Deobandis*, inevitably better armed and organised, attacking both *Shias* and *Barelvis*, and the latter retaliating wherever they could. While the *Deobandi Sunnis* targeted *Shia* doctors, the latter went after *Sunni* lawyers and leaders. *The Dawn* reported, on the basis of intelligence inputs available with the Karachi Police, that the sectarian killings in Karachi and other places were not a result of any planned pogrom by Islamic sects, but spontaneous acts of criminals and ethnic groups acting on their own under the garb of communal/sectarian vigilantism, targeting mostly ordinary people belonging to rival sects. The sweep of this sectarian/ethnic violence covers virtually the entire country. If in Balochistan the targets of the *Deobandis* are *Hazara Shias*, in FATA, KPk, Punjab and Sindh they are both *Shias* and the local *Barelvis*. Arrested attackers have revealed strong anti-*Shia* and anti-*Barelvi* indoctrination. “*Barelvis* and *Shias* are the same. They both need to be killed”, they were stated to have asserted during their interrogations.<sup>211</sup> The theological dimension of this conflict becomes clear from the attacks on numerous shrines of *Sufi* saints on the *Barelvi* spectrum, both in KPk/FATA and Punjab.

The increasing *Deobandi* attacks on the *Barelvis* should have encouraged the latter's ideological/theological convictions and they should have become even more steadfast in their acceptance of sectarian/religious syncretism and moderation. Instead, the *Deobandi* threat appears to have induced the *Barelvis* to become even more singularistic, dogmatic and hardliner. Haji Mehboob sent a large number of fighters from his *Barelvi* militia *Ansar-ul Islam* to attack *Shias* in Kurram! *Barelvi* militancy

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<sup>211</sup> Cited in Ali K. Chisti, “The Al Qaeda connection”, *Friday Times*, 2-8 March 2012, <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/beta2/tft/article.php?issue=20120302&page=4>

resulted in the assassination of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer (January 2011) by his police guard, a *Barelvi*, for suggesting a re-look into the country's Blasphemy Laws, which incidentally were promulgated by Zia ul-Haq under *Deobandi* influence. The mass support for Taseer's killer came from *Barelvi* clergy and Pakistani lawyers, most of whom are *Barelvis*. The lead counsel for Qadri, Taseer's assassin, was a former High Court Judge. The judge who tried and sentenced Qadri to death had to leave the country along with his family for safety.

*Barelvi* orthodoxy is not only sought to be projected but nurtured and protected by the community through increased activities of the *Dawat-e-Islami*, the *Barelvi* answer to the *Deobandi* evangelical group the *Tablighi Jamaat*. *Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Pakistan* (JUP) was a predominantly *Barelvi* political party, but it had waned considerably, creating a vacuum on the *Barelvi* political front. This was sought to be filled up by converting *Sunni Tebriq* into a full-fledged political outfit. Not to be left behind, the sectarian militant groups on the *Deobandi/Salafi* spectrum also decided to create a political platform for themselves by launching their *Difab-e-Pakistan Council* (Defence of Pakistan Council). Expectedly, the first demands from the new outfit included a call not to grant Most Favoured Nation status to India and continued ban on movement of NATO trucks through Pakistan.

There is nothing to indicate that the Pakistani nation might even be trying to come out of this murky socio-religious environment. Reforms and modernisation of education could have been the instrument to prise open the stranglehold of religious obscurantism and bigotry. This, as discussed in detail in the previous chapter on 'Radicalisation of the Education', has become a distant dream.

### Minority woes

In such a radicalised socio-religious environment, if the treatment of the minorities remains as cruel and unjust as ever, it is hardly surprising. Amnesty International accused the Pakistan Government, in a report released on March 1, 2012, of having failed to protect religious minorities from systematic campaigns of violence and vilification. There have been instances of even the microscopic Hindu and Sikh population being hounded in KPK, Balochistan and Sind. Many Sikhs in FATA and Hindus in Balochistan and Sind have been forced to leave their



ancestral homes and hearths and take refuge in other parts of the country, or even migrate abroad if they could. However, it is in Sindh where the latest wave of Hindu-bashing has been taking place. According to the latest Census figures of Pakistan (of 1998 vintage) that are available in public domain, Hindus comprised 1.6% of Pakistani population.<sup>212</sup> According to Ayesha Siddiqi, a later estimate placed 4.5 million Hindus in Pakistan, most of whom have been concentrated in Sindh, especially Hyderabad-Karachi, Tharparkar, Mithi, Mirpur Khas, Shikarpur and Sukkur areas. The more affluent ones tend to migrate legally. Most of the poor ones try to slip across the border under the pretext of performing *yatra* to religious places in India after which they do not return.<sup>213</sup>

A lot of this discrimination has happened under various Pakistani governments, including those of the PPP, says Siddiqi. The PPP may not be directly responsible for the radicalisation of the Sindhi society, which is rather the result of recent consolidation of the presence of military's *jibadi* surrogates in large areas of the province, but the party leadership in Sindh has done “nothing to dissuade its own powerful members from contributing to this human tragedy”, she contends. PPP and other parties have an equal share of blame in creating conditions that have led to these waves of migrations. The fear of being forced to convert, abduction of daughters or other women in the family and their conversion to Islam under duress, or kidnapping for ransom are some of the many reasons that seem to have forced the local Hindus to seek asylum elsewhere. In the past couple of decades, militant forces in partnership with religious and non-religious political parties like the PPP have managed to make significant inroads in the Sindhi society, which had generally been under strong *Sufi* influence. Some of the prominent PPP leaders in Sindh are instrumental in establishing Afghan villages or radical madrassas. Then, there is the partnership between the PPP and the *Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Islam* - Fazal-ur Rehman group (JUI-

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<sup>212</sup> Sonya Fatah, New Delhi based Pakistani journalist, writing in *The Times of India*, August 21, 2012

<sup>213</sup> Ayesha Siddiqi, Pakistan: *The Hindu Exodus is a fruit of radicalisation, a grim reminder of horrors of Partition, Islam and Pluralism*, <http://www.newageislam.com/islam-and-pluralism/ayesha-siddiqi/pakistan—the-hindu-exodus-is-a-fruit-of-radicalisation,-a-grim-reminder-of-horrors-of-partition/d/8320>

F) that substantially expanded the religious party's influence in the province, which it used to provide support to a number of *Deobandi* militant groups such as the *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* and *Jaish-e-Mohammad*.

The State has also contributed its bit to this process of radicalisation of Sind by encouraging numerous 'welfare' outfits linked with the militant groups to assist the armed forces in search and rescue missions during the floods of 2010 and '11. This has allowed *Lashkar-e-Taiba* and its principal, the *Jamaat-ud Dawa*, to expand and become functional in areas inhabited by the Hindus under the pretext of conducting welfare activities. "There is the empowerment and consolidation of religious and militant forces, as also a new emerging rural and urban middle-class in the province that does not necessarily share the ethos of the traditional feudal set-up that at least ensured the protection of the comparatively affluent members of the religious minorities. This new middle and upper middle-class is obsessively authoritarian and even fascist", contends Ayesha Siddiqi. Many Hindu girls like Maneesha Kumari, Lata Kumari and Rinkle Kumari, were abducted and forcibly married to local Muslim hoodlums in 2012 in the latest instance of persecution of Hindus.<sup>214</sup> The new phenomenon is that whereas earlier it were relatively poorer Hindus who were targets of such attacks, now this has started to happen to affluent Hindu families also. This is a group of people who can afford to migrate abroad. Their tormentors like Mian Mithu use their power to extort greater influence and money. Mithu is politically aligned with the PPP and has tremendous political influence, a reason due to which the PPP and its leadership did not intervene to help the Hindu girls — Lata Kumari and Rinkle Kumari. Mithu is one of the *pirs* of the shrine of *Bharchundi Sharif*, which gives him the social clout to coordinate abduction activities that are monetarily beneficial. Most importantly, he has huge mob support behind him and doesn't seem to be under any pressure. Even the Supreme Court 'dispensed' justice a few months ago to Hindus of Sindh by declaring the conversion of the Hindu girls as consensual! It didn't matter to the highest court of law in Pakistan that the concerned girls were not allowed to meet their families and it were their abductors who had

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<sup>214</sup> For a graphic account of the travails of a Hindu girl, please see *Memoirs of a Hindu Girl*, by Faiza Mirza, *Dawn* (e-edition) August 21, 2012

regular access to them before being presented in the court. This migration of middle-class Hindus is also a barometer for the state of law and order in Pakistan. Some of the Hindus are of the opinion that they are being forced to leave because they can no longer pay to buy their safety and security. Indeed, cases of abductions for ransom have risen all over the country. The tragedy is that many cases are not even reported for fear of the abductors killing the abductees. It naturally gets worse for the minorities who have to suffer a double whammy of torture and religious bias.

Various Pakistani radical groups are openly calling for killing of *Shias*, *Sufis*, *Ahmadiyas* and Christians in numerous largely attended public rallies held regularly in various major cities of the country. The Blasphemy Law has become the favoured tool for Islamic radicals of various hues to hound the minority communities, particularly the *Ahmadiyas*. There are instances of mob-justice being handed down to victims of allegation of blasphemy despite police intervention.<sup>215</sup> According to a report released by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan for 2010, over 32 people were killed extra-judicially by mobs or individuals. The most significant recent incident of violence against the minorities took place on May 28, 2012, when an *Ahmadiya* mosque was attacked in Lahore, killing 94 people. This attack was not condemned by the political leadership. A follow-up attack on the hospital where persons injured in the first attack were being treated pushed the death toll even higher. Recently, a girl Rifta was arrested in a Christian slum of the capital (August 16, 2012) and remanded to custody for 14 days after a furious Muslim mob demanded she be punished for burning papers containing verses from the Quran. Rifta is suffering from Down's syndrome. This incident forced President Zardari to ask for a report on the subject from the concerned officials.

### **Emasculation of rational thought and logic**

The general attitude of intolerance and orthodoxy that the Pakistani nation held so close to its heart ever since its inception has become an

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<sup>215</sup> Attack by a mob of 2000 on a Police Station in Bahawalpur on July 14, 2012, where a supposedly insane person was being held for burning The Quran. (*The Dawn*, July 15, 2012);

even more all-pervasive and dominant phenomenon of the society. It is, therefore, hardly any surprise that there is a decline in the number of those Pakistanis who could think and speak rationally and logically and take a critical view of the sectarian/religious situation in the nation. While there were many Pakistanis who continue to live in Pakistan and think and speak objectively, like Ayaz Amir, Pervez Huddboy, Ayesha Siddiq, Najam Sethi, Nadeem Paracha, etc., a large number of other Pakistan thinkers and writers have felt constrained to shift bases and settle abroad, or spend a large amount of their time abroad. The names of Ahmad Rashid, Hassan Abbas, Hussein Haqqani, Ayesha Jalal, Imtiaz Gul, Farzana Sheikh, etc. readily come to mind in this regard. While a section of the Pakistani English language press retains its balance and continues to look at the sectarian/religious issues objectively and critically, the Pakistani Urdu press, whose reach and impact on the society is overwhelmingly vast, by and large continues to pander to obscurantist and fanatical traits, thereby, further fuelling the sectarian and religious tensions. Anyone with a stake in protecting ethnic identity, women's rights, religious liberty and free speech is threatened by the homogenising forces of radical Islam and the paranoid security state. These include the ranks of Pashtun poets and Karachi feminists, whose syncretic culture and modern ideas are under threat from radical Islam, as well as Sindhi and Baloch politicians who resent the way centralised bureaucratic and military control hollows out federalism.<sup>216</sup> Pakistan's liberal journalists and media personalities are the latest target of such intimidatory attacks. The fallout of vacillating between religion and politics because of complex historical and social factors continues to make Pakistani society susceptible, and minorities vulnerable to persecution by all concerned and there seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel.

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<sup>216</sup> *Pakistani Liberals Are No Leap of Faith*, Sadanand Dhume, The Wall Street Journal, July 12, 2012

## Chapter X

# Present Status of the Radical Islamic Challenge

The challenge to the Pakistani edifice from radical Islamists (RIs) on the *Deobandi* spectrum has moved many a notches upwards since 2009 when the security operations in Swat and FATA commenced. Pakistan now is seemingly hurtling down uncontrollably to a sectarian disaster that has the potential to change the political configuration of South Asia. After having penetrated into various structures of the state, the Army and various regions of the country, the RIs now seek to cow down sections of the media that have so far been standing up to them and such other sources of potent social and political resistance as the *Muttahida Qaumi Movement* (MQM) and *Barelvi & Shiite* institutions and personalities. They also seem to have acquired the power and the reach to dominate the political process in the country. What is most worrisome is that in this phase of radical Islamists onslaught, the Army has clearly abandoned its earlier pretence of alacrity in taking on the *Deobandi* zealots. As far as the civilian establishment is concerned, it is now more than willing to surrender to the RIs, worse, even willing to be a silent accomplice in their pursuit of the religious agenda.

A number of leading Pakistani journalists have come out openly with complaints of being threatened by the TTP, and, more sinisterly, the Pakistani establishment doing nothing to protect them against that onslaught. Journalists Hamid Mir, Javed Chaudhary, Mohammad Maalik, Iftikhar Alam, etc., have openly alleged having been threatened by TTP through calls on their land-line and cell phones and through e-mails<sup>217</sup>. To their despair the government agencies chose not to take any action on their complaints despite their having reported call/mail details to them. Hamid Mir even alleged that in this latest attempt to

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<sup>217</sup> Aaz TV October 23, 2012

intimidate the media into silence or submission, the TTP and the official agencies (a euphemism for ISI) seem to be acting in tandem. Hamid Mir contends that on October 5, 2012, the Crisis Management Cell of the Ministry of Interior itself had informed various federal and provincial security agencies that Hakimullah Mehsud had sent instructions to TTP units in the rest of the country to stop operations against the Pakistan Army and, instead, start targeting the media. TTP spokesman Ehshamullah Ehsan and the TTP's spokesman in Swat Sirajuddin clearly told targeted journalists that anybody who supported the government would be treated as opposing the *Taliban* and would be liquidated. In this regard any support or sympathy for the 14-year old victim of *Taliban* cruelty, Malala Yusufzai, was taken as an anti-religion conspiracy and threatened with dire consequences.<sup>218</sup> The chilling threat became real when a bomb was planted in the car of Hamid Mir, who providentially escaped as the bomb was spotted by his driver. TTP's spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehsan, claimed responsibility for the attempt to bomb Mir's car in a communication to *The Dawn*.<sup>219</sup>

It is not just the journalists who are the targets of the latest *Talibani* onslaught, as discussed earlier, socio-political groups opposed to the RIs like the MQM (predominantly *Barelvi*) and other *Barelvi* and *Shia* institutions are also sought to be forcefully suppressed so as to ensure that the RIs' dictate runs unopposed practically all across Pakistan. The Islamic radicals seek to create an ideological affinity with various sections of non-*Deobandi/Salafi* Muslims also by forcefully espousing such emotive issues as anti-Americanism and the West's perceived assault on Islamic culture and education. According to knowledgeable Pakistani journalist Khaled Ahmed, in the post-Osama bin-Laden period the *Al-Qaeda/Taliban* have sought to exploit the clerical consensus that already existed in Pakistan on the issue of education, particularly that of girls, on the one hand, and marginalise the traditional Islamic political parties by hijacking the anti-Army and anti-US planks. The *Taliban* have

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<sup>218</sup> Malala Yusufzai, the Swati school going girl who was shot at and almost killed by Taliban for having defied their dictate against continuing girls' education in March 2012. Malala had publically declared her resolve to study to become a doctor.

<sup>219</sup> *Dawn.Com*, 26/11/2012, <http://beta.dawn.com/news/766843/senior-journalist-hamid-mir-escapes>.

also declared that they were not against girls' education, but the secular education in general.<sup>220</sup> The *Talibani* threat to major strategic cities like Karachi, Peshawar, etc. has also assumed worrisome proportions and threatens to go totally out of control.

The Pakistani state, particularly the Army, is now either incapable of, or more likely, unwilling to confront the RIs over this latest upsurge in their activities. No less a person than former President Asif Ali Zardari had been reduced to merely wringing his hand in despair in public, despite his being in the office, over the weakness of the state to go after the RIs in the context of the attack on Malala Yusufzai. He admitted to a delegation of South Asia Free Media Association (October 21, 2012) that he could do nothing to avenge the attack on Malala as Pakistan was not ready for the extremist blow-back if North Waziristan was attacked. There were three reasons for this, he indicated: Pakistani political parties were not united over the implications of the attack on Malala; The extremists, ready to join hands with *Al-Qaeda/Taliban*, were too strong and widespread to risk challenging by going after North Waziri *Taliban*; and Pakistan was in a different situation today than in 2009 at the time of launching of Swat operations. It is worth noting that soon after Zardari's statement to journalists, in separate statements *Jamiat-ul Ulama-e-Islam's* Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman and *Jamaat-e-Islami's* Munawwar Hassan warned Army against going after the *Taliban* in North Waziristan.<sup>221</sup>

While Zardari appeared to be at pains in putting the direct blame for state's inaction on politicians and the lack of political consensus, others were quick to underline Army's reluctance to intensify its conflict with Islamic radicals due to an unholy nexus that seems to exist between the two. Hamid Mir alleged that some Generals had entered into secret deals with *Taliban* factions to either secure the release of captured Pakistani servicemen, or for preventing Army units from being targeted. Apparently these deals had been cemented by transferring large amounts of money to *Taliban* commanders. In other instances a spirit of

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<sup>220</sup> Khaled Ahmed

<sup>221</sup> Khaled Ahmed, *Too weak to attack North Waziristan*, The Friday Times November 1, 2012

camaraderie between the two sides emerged under the GHQ's mindset to treat *Taliban* factions –the “Good *Taliban*” – as its ‘strategic assets’.<sup>222</sup> Apparently it is Hamid Gul who continues to influence GHQ's thinking. The assassination of Major General Ameer Faisal Alvi of the SSG in Islamabad (November 2008) very starkly underlines the nexus between the RIs and sections of the Army. Alvi was killed by well-trained gunmen, who pumped 9mm bullets into him in a clinical manner after meticulously ambushing his car and not by ramming a VIED into his vehicle, or blowing him up by a suicide bomber, or in a landmine explosion that have been the hallmark of RIs attacks. This assassination took place soon after Alvi had written to General Kayani about the deals some of his senior Corps Commanders were striking with the RIs, instead of going after them with zeal and determination. There was not even a whisper from Kayani or the GHQ on either Alvi's complaint or his assassination,<sup>223</sup> which was carried out in a clinical manner in broad daylight in the heart of high security Islamabad, suggesting it to be an inside job by sections of the Army rather than a terrorist attack by TTP or their local supporters.<sup>224</sup>

### **2013 Elections and the domination of Pakistani political processes by Radical Islamists:**

In a country where all political parties and personalities, with few exceptions have been willingly submitting themselves to notions of supremacy of religion over the state and its polity, it is no surprise if the RIs now dominate the entire political process. The May 2013 General Elections in Pakistan provided an eloquent proof of this phenomenon. A cartoon by Pakistani cartoonist, Sabir Nazar, on [www.pakvotes.pk](http://www.pakvotes.pk), succinctly sums up the ascendancy of the RIs in Pakistan's current political discourse following the 2013 elections. Portraying “Old Pakistan” in which a *Taliban* gunman places his AK-47 on the head of a Pakistani politician of ANP/PPP variety, who is standing somewhat bewildered

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<sup>222</sup> Hamid Mir quoted by Mohammad Sehzaad, *Brotherhood of Bombs*, The Friday Times November 9, 2012

<sup>223</sup> *Who killed Maj. Gen. Faisal Alvi*, <http://theterrorland.blogspot.com/2011/06/murder-of-general/>; *The Daily Times*, [www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...16-12-2008\\_pg7\\_15](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page...16-12-2008_pg7_15)

<sup>224</sup> Khaled Ahmed, *Too weak to attack North Waziristan*, The Friday Times November 1, 2012; <http://archives.dawn.com/92979>



but firm, the cartoon portrays “The New Pakistan” in which the same *Taliban* is standing with a grin on his face and his gun slung on the shoulder, as a politician, looking like Imran Khan, kneels down at his feet.

The Taliban’s determination to demolish Pakistani political system based on western democratic ethos and practices had repeatedly been made clear by terming it as ‘un-Islamic’.<sup>225</sup> In December 2012, TTP attacked an ANP rally in Peshawar and issued public warnings to attack secular parties.<sup>226</sup> As the electoral process for Pakistan’s 2013 General Elections got under way, RIs’ challenge became even shriller. In mid-April, the *Taliban Shura* met and decided to selectively target “those secular political parties, which were part of the previous coalition involved in the operation in Swat, FATA and other areas of Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa”.<sup>227</sup> This clearly meant that the PPP, ANP and the MQM, who resisted the RIs, had to be sidelined through terror. The statement further clearly prescribed the preference for the voters by declaring that it was “neither in favour of ... nor against” the PML-N, PTI, JUI (F) and the JI, presumably due to their pro-Islamist stance and close links with the Pakistani RIs. Pamphlets were issued by TTP and its allies in FATA, KP and Karachi, warning citizens not to vote in the upcoming elections.<sup>228</sup> The threat to derail Pakistani democracy was repeated on the eve of the second anniversary of Osama-bin Laden’s killing.<sup>229</sup> A number of attacks on secularist parties in Karachi and elsewhere in Pakistan accompanied these statements.

As the self-professed guardian of the Pakistani state, one expected the Pakistan Army to come out forcefully to counter RIs’ threat to the democratic exercise of holding elections and publically declare its resolve to protect the entire electoral process by extending security cover to all political parties and their electoral activities. Instead, in a strange

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<sup>225</sup> [middleeast.about.com/od/afghanistan/qt/me080903.htm](http://middleeast.about.com/od/afghanistan/qt/me080903.htm)

<sup>226</sup> *The Dawn*, 10/12/2012 and other news papers.

<sup>227</sup> *The Dawn* April 28, 2013

<sup>228</sup> *Dawn.com*, April 25, 2013

<sup>229</sup> *The News International*, May 5, 2013

coincidence, Kayani almost simultaneously with the RIs spoke of Pakistani Army's commitment "to the basis for creation of Pakistan". He asserted, "Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and Islam can never be taken out of Pakistan. Islam should always remain a unifying force... Pakistan Army would keep on doing its best towards common dream for a truly Islamic Republic of Pakistan."<sup>230</sup> To RIs threat of hijacking the electoral process, he merely mouthed the platitude (in another statement) that "The armed forces would utilise all resources to ensure that the *polls are held*<sup>231</sup> in a fair and transparent manner." Perhaps, he was limiting the Army's role to only ensuring 'peaceful' polling and protecting the entire electoral process was not on his agenda. He significantly went on to add, "Like every Pakistani, the Army is also doing its bit to strengthen democracy... There is no place for looting and personal gains in a democracy and only honest (people) can end the game between democracy and dictatorship".<sup>232</sup>

This attitude of the Army practically sealed the fate of anti-radical forces in Pakistani elections. There were numerous attacks on ANP leaders and workers in Karachi and KP. PPP leaders and cadres were forced to keep a low profile, with the Chairman of the party, Bilawal Bhutto staying away from direct campaigning and not coming out to directly address any public meeting, even the one to mark the death anniversary of his maternal grandfather Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, held at his grave at Garhi Khuda Baksh in Larkana. The MQM resisted the RIs in its strongholds in Karachi by replying fire with fire. However, outside Karachi its cadres were also forced to maintain a low profile. A look at the media pictures and the video footage of the election campaigning makes it very clear that in Punjab and KP it were the favoured pro-Islamist parties that could stage large-scale political rallies in the traditional manner of electioneering and PPP and others were reduced to holding small street-corner meetings and door-to-door campaigning that too almost furtively. Wherever workers of 'secularist' parties tried to be

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<sup>230</sup> Kayani's speech at a passing out parade at PMA Kakul, April 20, 2013, *The Dawn*, April 21, 2013

<sup>231</sup> Emphasis is author's.

<sup>232</sup> Kayani's speech at *Yom-e-Shuhada* (Martyrs Day) Parade at GHQ, April 30, 2013, *Dawn.com*, 30/4/13

active, they were promptly targeted by the RI goons. Former Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani's son was attacked and kidnapped virtually from his door-steps. He and his brother also lost their Provincial Assembly elections by a huge margin in an area which the senior Gilani had pampered during his premiership. Same was the case with practically all PPP and ANP candidates in Punjab and KP where the RIs' writ seems to have run unopposed. Even in Baluchistan the impact of the RIs was clear from the fact that pro-Islamist PkMAP, PML-N and JUI (F) bagged a majority of seats, pushing the Baluch nationalists to the side lines and totally wiping out the PPP. The sweeping of elections by PML-N and the PTI was a foregone conclusion in Punjab and KP also. The question remained who would head the results tally, and if the RIs would be forced to engineer a pro-Islamist coalition government after elections. The results ensured that the RIs would not have to be bothered.

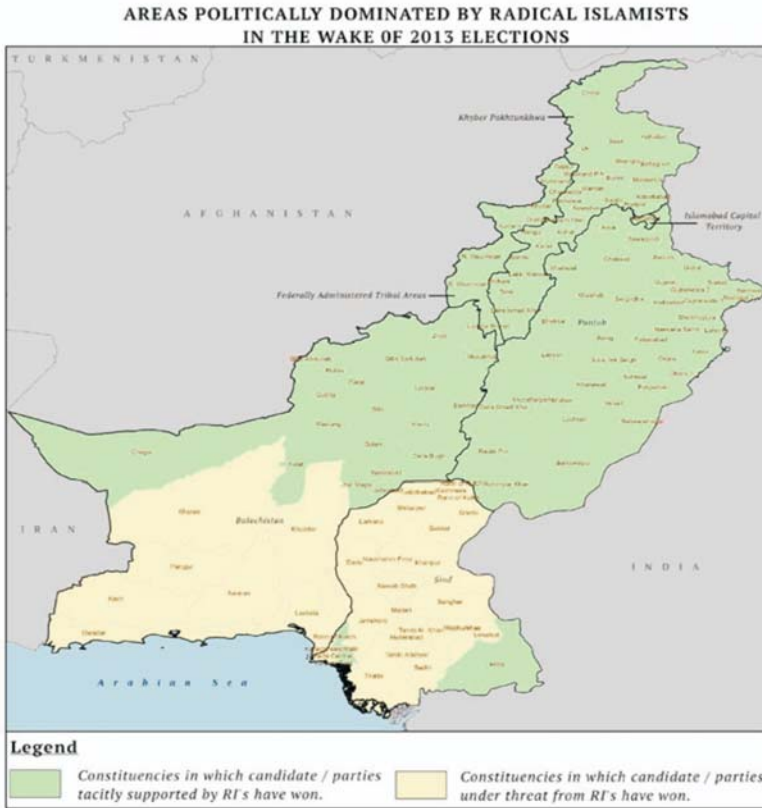
Thus in the post election Pakistan it is the RIs who have their clients in power in Federal Capital Islamabad and in provincial capitals in Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta. The PML-N, PTI and JUI (F) are bound to pursue pro-Islamist policies because of their convictions and conveniences. But, should they begin to waver, the RIs' warning to them is boldly on the wall. In its pre-election warning the TTP had, while immediately targeting the PPP, ANP, and the MQM, also stated, "We are neither in favour of the PTI, JI, JUI-F and PML-N nor against them... We are against the secular and democratic system, which is against the ideology of Islam, but we are not expecting any good from the other (*i.e. these*) parties either, who are the supporters of the same system, but why they are not (being) targeted is our own prerogative to decide."<sup>233</sup> The desire to be on the right side of the RIs, particularly the TTP was clearly visible in the PML-N, the PTI and JUI (F), as soon as the elections were over. An electoral map of Pakistan in the wake of May 2013 elections results, clearly brought out the fact that with the exception of Sindh, (leaving out a small pocket in the south-east corner of the province) and central and southern/south-western Baluchistan, the winning candidates belonged to those political

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<sup>233</sup> *The Dawn* April 28, 2013

parties that had the tacit support of the RIs. This would be clearer from the following map:

Map II<sup>234</sup>



*Map based on constituency wise results declared by Pakistan Election Commission after May 11, 2013 elections. Areas shaded in light green are the constituencies in which the winning candidates/parties had tacit backing of Radical Islamist groups and their electoral campaign were not disrupted through terror strikes. Thus these areas can be taken as the ones in which Radical Islamists established their political domination. The areas shaded in yellow represents those constituencies in which 'secularist' candidates / parties won despite Radical Islamists' threat of violence against their election campaign.*

© IDISA, GIS LAB, Map not to scale

‘Peace’ with the RIs was the first agenda on the plate of the political parties that had come to power with the former’s tacit support. However, it is here that the Pakistani apple-cart is threatening to tip

<sup>234</sup> Map prepared by GIS Lab of IDISA from published data. Map not to scale.

over. But, before this is discussed any further, it would be worthwhile to take a look on Nawaz Sharif's mindset and his links with the jihadists in Pakistan and elsewhere.

### **Nawaz Sharif's attitude towards the Radical Islamists**

During his earlier stints as Pakistan's Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif had openly betrayed an Islamist agenda and had been more than willing to concede ground to Islamic militancy. In his first stint as PM, he appointed Lt. Gen. Javed Nassr, a staunch pan-Islamist, as the ISI Chief. Under Nassr, the ISI started to recruit Dawood Ibrahim and his gang and planned the Mumbai serial blasts of 1993; arranged various Europe-based pan-Islamic organisations manned by Pak origin persons to route aid to Bosnian Muslims and himself arranged to airlift a substantial amount of weapons to them from Pakistan which effectively neutralised EU's attempts to enforce an arms embargo and keep Bosnia united; and aided Uighur rebellion in China's Xinjiang province. Pakistan's clandestine proliferation of nuclear technology also started during Nawaz Sharif's first innings as PM. In his second innings, apart from Kargil (about which his loud protestations of innocence have to be taken with a lot of salt in view of assertions of his complicity by Pakistani academics'/journalists), Nawaz Sharif has also to be remembered for his 1998 efforts to *shariatise* Pakistan through the legislative process in the form of Fifteenth Amendment to the Pakistani Constitution to ordain:

The Federal Government [shall be] under an obligation to take steps to enforce the *Shariat*, to establish *salat*, to administer *zakat*, to *promote amr bil ma'roof and nahi anil munkar* (to prescribe what is right and to forbid what is wrong), to eradicate corruption at all levels and to provide substantial socio-economic justice, in accordance with the principles of Islam, as laid down in the Holy *The Quran* and *Sunnah*.<sup>235</sup>

The move fell through, as Nawaz Sharif could not ensure the passage of this legislation in the Senate where he did not have majority. If he had succeeded, he would have pushed Pakistan deeper into Islamisation mould than what even General Zia-ul Haq could accomplish.

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<sup>235</sup> *The News*, February 17, 2009

In the post 2008 elections, Nawaz's PML and the RI factions, particularly the *Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan* (SSP) had a tacit understanding to accommodate each other and, according to Pakistani columnist Ayesha Siddiqi, not to hurt the Sharif family in return for freeing of SSP leaders and accommodating its cadres into government jobs. Many academics and journalists have also pointed out that the Punjab government made budgetary allocations to *Jamaat-ud Daw'ab* and a number of its front institutions during this period.<sup>236</sup> In the May 2013 elections, the PML-N gave tickets to various personalities belonging to religious outfits, who had been accused of and even tried for terrorism-related offences, to contest National and Provincial Assembly seats. These include, Chaudhary Abid Raza Gujjar of *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* and Sardar Ebaad Dogr, Maulana Ilyas Chinoti and Maulana Hafiz Abdul Kareem of SSP. Some other radicalists, who successfully contested as independents, have also joined PML-N after the elections.

Nawaz Sharif<sup>7</sup> has repeatedly spoken both before and after his electoral triumph in May 2013 elections about improving relations with India by making a fresh start and re-orienting attitudes. He even spoke of sharing with India the results of any enquiry into the 1999 aggression in Kargil. However, his words and actions continue to mismatch. On such relatively simple an issue as granting MFN status to India (which India conferred on Pakistan years ago) his government continues to dilly-dally. His close confidant and Minister for Planning and Development, Ahsan Iqbal, has as recently as second-half of September 2013 spoken of need to create a "level playing field" and "missing political commitment" which prevent Pakistan from reciprocating and conferring this status on India!<sup>237</sup> Similarly, on security related issues, despite being on the wanted lists of the US, UN and the Interpol, Hafiz Mohammad Saeed continues to roam free and hold public rallies in Lahore and Islamabad right under the noses of Nawaz Sharif and his brother and Chief Minister of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif. The latest demonstration of this comes from his recent rally in Islamabad to

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<sup>236</sup> [www.bbc.co.uk/news/10334914](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10334914) June 18,2010; [aspak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/06/19](http://aspak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/06/19)

<sup>237</sup> *Forces beyond Pakistani control are disrupting the peace-process*, The Times of India, September 22, 2013

mark 'Pakistan Defence Day' (September 6), which was attended by nearly 10,000 persons and had the obvious municipal and police support. After brazenly spewing venom against India, Saeed showered kudos on the Pakistani martyrs of the 1965 war and praised Pakistan Army profusely for defending the nation, again against India.<sup>238</sup> One wonders what Nawaz Sharif would have to say for this most recent provocation, besides incidents on the LoC, in the overall context of his peace-overture to India. Or would he and his associates once gain take recourse to blaming 'disruptive forces' and other conspirators determined to derail the Indo-Pak peace process? Incidentally, it is interesting to note that TTP or its allied RI groups have not come to notice for making any show to commemorate the 'Defence of Pakistan Day'!

### **'Old wine in new bottles'**

Dealing with this clear and present danger to the Pakistani State requires firm determination, clear ideas and goal, unity of purpose and synergy between various components of the Pakistani apparatus. However, these have largely been missing and, as a result, the Pakistani State has responded to the growing threat from radical Islam in a knee jerk manner. Newer tactics seemed to be unfolding on the part of the establishments to deal with rising Islamic terrorism. Refusing to learn from its past experiences in clandestinely raising non-state players to further state's internal and external agenda, the Army and the ISI had once again tried to raise yet another non-state player to deal with RIs. Some determined efforts were made in recent past to rope in the *Tabligh Jamaat (TJ)* movement to counter Taliban's radical influence in Punjab in general and South Punjab in particular, as also elsewhere in the country. The TJ is a mass-based movement amongst the Sunni *Deobandis*, which seeks to steer clear of sectarian and *fiqh* differences. Many of its volunteers are retired military personnel, including a large number of former senior officers, who were allowed and even encouraged to join it during Zia-ul Haq's rule. Through these part-time preachers, who in their normal lives lead totally routine lives like any other believer, the TJ promotes basic Islamic values and practices, as laid down by *Deobandi* dogma and that is why it is generally confined

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<sup>238</sup> <http://dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page2013\09\09>

to the *Deobandis*. Through its espousal of the basics of the religion, TJ, according to many, strengthens fundamentalist traits among *Deobandi* masses. This has ideologically helped militant groups. In the past some links were discovered between TJ in Pakistan and the militant group *Harkat-ul Mujahideen (HuM)*. However, the TJ has not come out openly in support of the *jihad* presently being waged by the *Taliban* and its associated groups in Pakistan. This has generated some tension between the two sides and TJ's congregations at its Pakistani centre in Raiwind (near Lahore), were being held amidst tight security for the past few years.<sup>239</sup>

Just before Pak TJ's annual congregation in 2009, (Raiwind, November 12-15), there was a daylong meeting of a group of 50 very senior retired Pak military Officers, who were associated with the TJ movement. Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Javed Nasir, the former head of the ISI, presided over the meeting in which others who participated included Admiral (Retd.) Karamat Rehman Niazi, the former Pak Navy Chief; Lt. Gen./s (Retd.) Agha Masood Hasan, Aftab Ahmed and many other former Major Generals and Brigadiers. The GHQ had apparently blessed the venture. The meeting discussed the need and propriety of politicising the TJ's agenda in the context of the current situation in the country. The Pak TJ Chief (*Amir*) Maulana Abdul Wahab, however, went along with the idea very reluctantly. He alluded to Prophet Muhammad's life in Makkah in his early years, when he tolerated all violence and criticism from infidels and patiently focused on preaching Islam. Nonetheless, he asked the assembled ex-military men that being the main force behind the TJ, they should start planning about the direction the forthcoming congregation should take.<sup>240</sup> Pakistani media had not been very forthcoming on the deliberations at the congregation, which was reported to have taken place amidst the tightest security ever. Nor have its decisions been highlighted. Only *The News* (November 16, 2009) carried a report on the congregation and underlined fiery anti-*Taliban* sentiments of some of its participants, describing the former as "un-Islamic" and "enemies of Islam".

<sup>239</sup> The Daily Times, Internet Edition, accessed on Nov 9, 2009

<sup>240</sup> Jang.com, accessed on Nov 3, 2009; *The News International*, Internet Edition, accessed Nov 6, 2009; Nov. 17, 2009; Tablighi Jamaat: An Indirect Line To Terrorism, Stratfor, January 23, 2008.



It is clear that the Pakistani establishment had managed to willy-nilly rope in the TJ to play the role of a non-state player to ideologically take on the *Taliban*. It is, however, a double-edged weapon and of dubious reliability. TJ is a mass movement of the *Deobandis*. Therefore, the theological affinity of its followers with the *Deoband* RIs in asserting supremacy of their version of Islam has more or less thwarted the Army's attempts to sow dissensions among their ranks. It is doubtful if the Army's use of TJ's appeal has been able to motivate the RIs to give up their hostility towards the state. In fact, the Army's efforts to manipulate the TJ against RIs seem to have strengthened the radical Islamist's domination of the *Deobandi* spectrum of Islam. There have been two attacks on JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazal-ur Rehman in early April 2011, by TTP.<sup>241</sup> Serious polemics broke out between the TTP and the JI also in 2012 following a rare video-taped interview by Hakimullah Mehsud (April 2012) in which he accused the JI leadership, particularly its former *Amir*, Qazi Hussein Ahmed of distorting the concept of *jihad* and defending Pakistan instead of Islam.<sup>242</sup> This not only demonstrated the chasm that now separates the Islamic radicals of today with their theological guides of the yesteryears, but also the complete domination of the *Deoband* movement in Pakistan by the RIs. In any case following these incidents both JUI and the JI have muted the show of their 'independence' of the RIs and meekly following their agenda from within the country's power structures. Any further goading of the TJ to take a stronger anti-RI posture is unlikely to produce the desired results, and if it does, it could open up its leaders and cadres also to violent RI reaction. Since prevention of such tensions is clearly beyond the means of the Pakistan Government, any accentuation of the *Taliban*-TJ rift would lead to the arming of the TJ supporters for self-defence and raising of yet another non-state player whom the State would not be able to control and which may further boost the process of 'Lebanonization' of Pakistan.

In a desperate move to degrade the armed capabilities of the TTP, the Pakistan Army once again tried to play its surrogate cadres of the LeT, *Ansar-ul Islam* and other allied militias, backed by the Haqqanis, against

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<sup>241</sup> *The News*, March 31, 2011 (Internet edition); April 4, 2011.

<sup>242</sup> Rahimullah Yusufzai, *The News*; April 20, 2012

the former in June 2013, soon after the May 2013 elections. The events panned out as follows: Nawaz Sharif and his ally the JUI (F) wanted to work out a peace deal with the TTP and its allied RI groups as a "Thank You" to them for their electoral support, as also to ensure that the new government may not have to tackle the major issue of radical violence right from day one. Nawaz Sharif made all the proper noises and Maulana Fazal-ur Rahman contacted the TTP without loosing any time to discuss a peace arrangement covering entire Pakistan. However, during his post-election meeting with Nawaz Sharif, General Kayani probably tried to dissuade any intercession with the TTP, unless it gave up its *jihad* against the Army. It is doubtful if he would have taken Nawaz Sharif into confidence about the impending Army inspired assault on TTP. (A repeat of Kargil syndrome?) TTP, which was already aware of a major attack being planned against it at the behest of the Army, wanted the planned operation to be rolled back as also set-forth some stiff conditions to join any 'peace dialogue'. Ehsanullah Ehsan, the TTP spokesman, tells *The Dawn* (June 6) that TTP was aware of the planned attack on it from Kunar province in Afghanistan and warns of major bloodshed. Fazal-ur Rahman and Nawaz Sharif again sound Kayani, who refuses to bend as he has high hopes from the Army/ISI plan to significantly dent TTP's military capabilities. Fazl-ur Rahman throws in the towel. The assault on TTP by surrogate militant groups of the Army begins by last week of June. TTP, reeling backwards under the combined assault from various groups, appealed to Mullah Omar and others and buys its peace with them. Afghan groups withdraw from the assault and the rest are beaten back. In a revenge-full mood, TTP and its allied RIs resume their attacks against Pakistani security forces as well as bombing of other targets, like the July 7 bomb attack in Anarkali Bazar of Lahore, or the killing of foreign mountaineers at Nanga Parbat in Gilgit-Baltistan. There has been a relative calm in Pakistan's Punjab province and there have not been many terrorist incidents there since July 12, 2012 when a group of trainee prison warders from KPk was attacked in Lahore and some of them were killed. According to *The Dawn*, terrorist attacks in Punjab had gone down by 56% in 2011 as compared to preceding years. This downward incline in terrorist violence continued in 2012-13 also and Nawaz Sharif's triumph in the May 2013 Pakistan elections was also due largely to the tacit support he received from the RI groups. This 'tranquillity' in the province had to a large extent been due to the

‘understanding’ that Shahbaz Sharif’s PML (N) government of Punjab had struck with the RIs. This spirit of ‘peaceful coexistence’ between the RIs and the Nawaz Sharif government is now under severe strain.

Pakistan is passing through desperate times and its government seems to be reaching out for the straws in the hope of somehow escaping the RIs onslaught. Despite having burnt its fingers by its policy of toying with non-state armed players in the past, it is still inclined to take recourse to that tactics yet again. Notwithstanding such strategies, situation in South Punjab and elsewhere is fast becoming critical with even Army units now being more frequently coming under attacks. Such incidents have tended to move towards North Punjab also in recent times. A case in point is an attack on an Army camp at Wazirabad, close to capital Islamabad In September 2012. The concerned Army unit was searching for the crew of a military helicopter that was said to have crashed in the Area in May! Seven security personnel, including a police official died in the attack.<sup>243</sup>

### **The call for ‘peace’ and ‘negotiations’ with TTP**

The pro-RI political parties, the PML (N), JUI (F), the PTI and the JI did not lose any time after the elections to seek an accommodation with RIs and seemed to be scrambling over each other with moves to initiate ‘peace’ with them. The TTP, on its part, has been airing its conditions for a ceasefire from time to time. In November 2012, its top leader Hakimullah Mehsud spoke of a “ceasefire”, though without renouncing the armed struggle or trusting the Pakistan Army, if the Pakistan’s civilian government agreed to implement the *Shariat*, broke all ties with the United States, stopped interfering with *Taliban* operations against the government in Kabul, and agreed to refocus on a war of “revenge” against India.<sup>244</sup> Repeating these conditions a short while later, TTP spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan also called the Pakistan Government to re-write its laws and constitution in accordance with the *Shariat*.<sup>245</sup> Later in February 2013, the TTP repeated this call with a

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<sup>243</sup> *The Dawn*, Internet Edition, accessed on September 7, 2012

<sup>244</sup> [www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page+2012-12-28](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page+2012-12-28), *The News International*, Nov. 27, 2012

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid*

twist by suggesting that Maulana Fazal-ur Rehman, Nawaz Sharif and Munawwar Hassan (Chief of JI) should be the interlocutors and the guarantors of any deal between the TTP and the government! This appeal was made in the name of pan-Islamic unity in the wake of French intervention in Mali with tacit US backing.<sup>246</sup>

Nawaz Sharif, who had been on record for having advised the PPP government to seriously take up the TTP offer for ‘talks’,<sup>247</sup> in his very first statement after the elections repeated his stand for peace parleys with the TTP in accordance with their earlier announcement. “All options should be tried and guns are not solutions to all problems”, he said.<sup>248</sup> Soon enough Pak media reports indicated a plan by PML-N and the JUI (F) to engage TTP through a “Grand Peace Jirgah” that had been mooted in an all-party conference hosted by JUI (F) in February 2013.<sup>249</sup> There appeared to be a competition between PML-N and the PTI in proving themselves to be a bigger loyalist to the TTP than the other. However, the PTI conspicuously stayed away from PML-JUI plan. Instead, it joined up with Maulana Fazl-ur Rehman’s rival, Maulana Sami-ul Haq to approach the TTP for ‘peace’.<sup>250</sup> Maulana Sami-ul Haq, the leader of his faction of the JUI, known as JUI (S), and the President of the *Muttahida Deeni Mahaz*, is considered by many as the ‘Father’ of the *Taliban* and is closely associated with their alma mater the *Dar-ul Uloom Haqqania* at Akhora Khattak in KP. Even the JI was more favourably inclined to this initiative and was also keen to join the PTI-led coalition in KP. The party had indicated its interest in having the Education Ministry in the provincial government by announcing that it did not intend to ‘radicalise’ school text-books.<sup>251</sup>

However, pretty soon the initial rush of adrenaline among the new victors of the Pakistani elections for a quick-fix deal with the TTP subsided. Maulana Fazal-ur Rehman announced his unwillingness to

<sup>246</sup> [www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page+2013/02/04](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/print.asp?page+2013/02/04)

<sup>247</sup> *Dawn.com*, 19/5/2013

<sup>248</sup> *The Dawn* (web edition), May 20, 2013

<sup>249</sup> Pak media, 27/5/2013

<sup>250</sup> *The Dawn*, May 21, 2013

<sup>251</sup> [Dawn.com,/news/1012840,23/5/2013](http://Dawn.com,/news/1012840,23/5/2013)

broker peace with the TTP any further, because in view of the “disinterest shown by the establishment”, there was “no opportunity or atmosphere for negotiations”. The “establishment” was identified as the Army by JUI (F)’s spokesman, who added that any reconciliation with the *Taliban* was impossible if coercive measures continued to be taken.<sup>252</sup> In any case this ‘mediation’ attempt for a truce between the TTP and the government met a momentary demise following the killing of TTP’s no.2 Wali-ur Rehman in a drone attack on May 29, 2013 in Miranshah in FATA and the Army-prompted assault on TTP by a rag-tag conglomerate of its client militant groups, referred to above. Another attempt was made in September 2013 to revive the process of dialogue with the TTP through the mechanism of an All-Parties’ Conference (APC) convened by the Nawaz Sharif government. This time even the Army was associated with those parleys by the political parties. The Chief of Army Staff Kayani and his DG ISI, Zaheerul Islam, briefed the participants on the security situation and, possibly about the Army’s perception of having a deal with the TTP. The APC adopted a resolution saying that urgent negotiation be pursued with the RIs to “give peace a chance.” The government was authorized to evolve a mechanism for talks and suggest interlocutors.<sup>253</sup> The TTP welcomed the APC resolution and showed willingness for a “meaningful dialogue”, as also urged the government to take more sincere steps in that direction.<sup>254</sup> The Pakistani Government on its part announced within a few days that a framework for talks had been finalised and it would now start to constitute an All-Party Committee to select the mediators and receive inputs from the TTP and then proceed with the actual parleys.<sup>255</sup> Kayani and Nawaz Sharif also met to discuss strategy for the talks.

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<sup>252</sup> *The Dawn* June 4, 2013, June 7, 2013

<sup>253</sup> <http://dawn.com/news/1041637/nawaz-urges-leaders-to-shun-politicking-on-terrorism>  
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/601864/prior-to-apc-imran-khan-briefly-meets-kayani-nawaz/>  
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/601864/prior-to-apc-imran-khan-briefly-meets-kayani-nawaz/>  
<http://dawn.com/news/1041678/apc-backs-govt-push-for-peace-talks>

<sup>254</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/602245/renewed-correspondence-ttp-welcomes-unanimous-resolution/>

<http://dawn.com/news/1041680/ttp-welcomes-apcs-peace-talks-decision>

<sup>255</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/602791/search-for-peace-framework-for-taliban-talks-finalised-says-nisar/>  
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1042034/ttp-leaders-in-session-to-firm-up-response>

Even this initiative for the talks appeared to be heading for the shoals as the TTP placed some stiff pre-conditions, demanding that the government should release its arrested cadres and begin a withdrawal of troops from FATA and adjoining areas where it had its presence.<sup>256</sup> The Pakistani media reported that a few cadres belonging to a splinter group of the TTP were even released, though the Army denied it.<sup>257</sup> On September 14, the pro-*Taliban* KP government announced a plan for a phased withdrawal of troops from the Malakand Division as a prelude to the peace talk. However, underlying the complexities of peace talks with the RIs, TTP killed the Pakistani military commander in the area, Major General Sanaullah along with a Colonel and some other military personnel in an IED attack in Upper Dir. Elsewhere, many other soldiers were killed or injured in rocket attacks on their posts in North Waziristan and Bannu. In another significant incident TTP's Spokesman and its media face, Ehsanulla Ehsan was sacked from his position after he welcomed the APC and the government's bid for peace with the *Taliban*.<sup>258</sup> This shows the extent to which the *Taliban* have hardened their stand towards the Army and the issue of a peace-deal. It does not augur well for any 'peace' efforts.

It is quite clear that after having gained a clear ascendancy in Pakistan, the RIs are neither willing to tone down their Islamic agenda, nor agree to dilute their *de facto* control over large areas of FATA, KP and northern Baluchistan. The Army, on its part, is not willing to coexist with the RIs without the latter giving up their weapons and once again agreeing to become a pliable tool in the hands of the former. According to Pakistani journalist Mohammad Shehzad, given the TTP's uncompromising stand against 'un-Islamic' Pakistani constitution and democracy, "The state may not be able to make a compromise on any of these points."<sup>259</sup> There is another more fundamental reason behind Army's reluctance for a 'peace-deal' with the RIs which may amount

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<sup>256</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/604908/body-blow-jolt-to-embryonic-peace-process>

<sup>257</sup> <http://dawn.com/news/1042302/prisoners-swapped-in-waziristan>  
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/603266/trust-building-taliban-confirm-military-denies-prisoners-swap/>

<sup>258</sup> <http://tribune.com.pk/story/602225.....9/12/2013>

<sup>259</sup> *The Friday Times*, 24/5/2013

to succumbing to them. If the RIs have their way and force the political dispensation to alter the basic structures of the state, it would demolish the power and the privileges that the Army enjoys at present, just as it happened to the Iranian Army after the advent of the Khomeini dispensation. The Pakistani 'Army Inc.' in the form of its role and say in the running of the country, various lucrative 'Fauji Foundations' and other Army enterprises, all would have to be wound up. Therefore, most top-brass in the Pakistan Army, including officers sympathetic to the *Deobandi* RIs, do not want to give them any more leeway. Moreover, if the RIs take effective control of the country their armed cadres would not vanish in thin air and it is quite possible that they may continue to be an armed Islamic militia that would wield effective power behind the country's Islamic government, like the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in Iran. It may be recalled that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had tried to create an armed force outside the control of the Army by raising the Federal Security Force (FSF). However, this force in reality remained just the personal goon-squad of Bhutto, rather than a counter to the Army. RIs may not fall into such a trap and would certainly try to whittle down the Army structure to prevent any counter revolution by it like the Egyptian Army.

Secondly, the Pakistani Army still is largely *Barelvi* in the sectarian orientation of a major chunk of its rank and file. In their heart of hearts these *Barelvi* elements clearly understand the implication of succumbing to radical Islam of *Deobandi* variety, which the political dispensation seem to be more or less resigned to accept and, therefore, it is they who have to prevent a total ascendancy by the RIs.

The assertions of the new Pakistan Government of Nawaz Sharif to de-radicalise the society by engaging the RIs in a dialogue and accommodation with them in reality means to many observers of the Pakistani scene a meek surrender to Islamic radicalism of *Deobandi* variety. Now that they are in the driving seat, the RIs are not likely to push their agenda of *shariatisation* of the entire Pakistan immediately. For the present, they are more inclined to acceptance of their *de jure* supremacy in the territories they *de facto* control. However, once they have achieved their Islamic goal in Afghanistan, or even ensured their supremacy and complete control in Pashtun areas straddling across the Durand Line, the Pakistani RIs are likely to revert back to complete

their unfinished Islamic agenda for Pakistan. The PTI government in KP, on its part, seems to be facilitating the RIs' agenda by raising the pitch against the US drone strikes that must be stopped either through negotiations with the Americans or through force. It has also effectively put a halt to security operations against TTP by provincial forces.

### **Implications of 'New Pakistan' for India**

The post-election 'new Pakistan' has some significant implications for India. How much can India trust Nawaz Sharif's peaceful overtures, given his past track record and his current equations with Pakistani RIs? How much reliance can India lay on Nawaz Sharif's capability, or intent, to reign in the Islamic militants, as far as their trans-national agenda, particularly in Afghanistan and Kashmir, are concerned? For the moment it would appear that Nawaz Sharif does not have leverage either over the RIs or the Army and he may be forced to go along with the RIs, if for nothing then just to buy internal peace and stability for his regime for the moment. His problem in this is the Pakistani Army, which is putting its foot down on his deals with the radicals. Will the differences between the civilian government of Pakistan and the Army reach such a point where the latter decides that for preserving its power and privileges it must assume direct control by staging another coup? The possibility cannot be ruled out now. Alternatively, with a Pakistani government having lost all ideas to keep the RI wolves at bay except by conceding their demands and letting them increase the areas of their *de facto* control and influence, and the Army being forced to a corner, would all centres of power in Pakistan agree that perhaps, the only way to save their skin is to create, or appreciably escalate tension with India and raise the pitch so much that even the RIs are forced to focus their attention and effort towards India, leaving the former with a breathing space internally? They know that a confrontation with India would be inadvisable and, like in the past, may have disastrous consequences for Pakistan, but if even after that disaster they could continue to be in power at least in Lahore and Islamabad, they would have survived in their home and that could be the prime motive of the beleaguered inheritors of the Pakistani nationhood. Perhaps, behind the recent periodic Pakistani provocations on the LoC, there is a method in the madness.



## Epilogue

Apart from being a robust religious order, Islam originated as a revolutionary political idea also with a strong element of egalitarianism and an inherent democratic spirit. In the tribal society of 7<sup>th</sup> century Middle East, when Prophet Muhammad was invited by a delegation consisting of the representatives of the 12 important clans of Medina as a neutral outsider to serve as Chief Arbitrator for the entire community (622 AD), he could have without any difficulty set-up a monarchy there with himself as the king. However, among the first things he did to settle the longstanding discord among the tribes of Medina and organise them into a functioning political entity was drafting a document known as the Constitution of Medina or *The Medina Charter*, “establishing a kind of alliance or federation” among the eight Medinan tribes and Muslim emigrants from Mecca, which specified the rights and duties of all citizens and the relationship between different communities in the state (including that of the Muslim community with other communities, specifically the Jews and other ‘Peoples of the Book’). The community defined in the Constitution of Medina as, *ummah*, had a religious outlook but was also shaped by practical considerations and substantially preserved the legal forms of the old Arab tribes. On the issue of his succession, he instituted a system of elected Caliphs – *Khalifa* - (The Successor) by a Consultative Assembly – *Shura* – which was a gathering of elders and heads of various clans and tribes. Another very significant duty of the *Shura* was to criticise the Caliph for his improper actions. In fact as per the *Medina Charter*, subjects of the Medina Republic had also the right to criticise the Caliph should he be astray. In its democratic spirit the Medina Republic was, perhaps, very close to the Great Indian Republics that flourished in the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Lord Buddha was the son of the head of one of those republics.

However, over the next dozen of centuries, the spirits of Medina Republic and Islam’s inherent democratic egalitarianism lost their way

and Islamic polity became archaic, violent and expansionist due to its mutilation and manipulation by various interests and the general level of ignorance of the Muslim masses. As Islam's boundaries spread, more and more people with different evolutionary processes and regional diversities joined its fold. They interpreted Islamic injunctions, including its polity as per their community experiences. This created schism. An exclusivist approach to faith, belief and practice, and a complete rejection of pluralism made Islam a very divided order plagued also by internecine conflicts. These conflicts intensified with the advent of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For a period of time western ideas of democracy and socialism influenced the Muslim world that was coming out of the colonial subjugation of the previous century and created a strong element of trans-national solidarities. This secularist order while accepting the primacy of the religious Islam, tended to be influenced by western democratic practices in its politics. By the 1970s Muslim world had undergone another transformation. Western political concepts based on democracy and socialism were sought to be rejected following an Islamic renaissance in the 1970s. With that came the reassertion of old sectarian issues and a stronger emphasis on ideological/theological exclusivism and an even stronger rejection of pluralism, both within and outside Islam. The emphasis shifted from upholding and following the spirit of Islam to what was purported to be the letter of its texts, which were explained by various groups and persons to suit their objectives and justify their actions. A descent into sectarian chaos and confusion over a correct Islamic system of governance and Islamic religious, social and political practices was inevitable to follow. *Sufism* which provided a human face to Islamic orthodoxy was castigated for sullyng Islamic purity and almost became extinct. Perhaps, the Muslim world would have avoided the condition in which it finds itself at present had it reinvented the spirit of democracy and egalitarianism inherent in the *Medina Republic* and reinterpreted them in the modern context. But, a doctrinaire approach which laid almost a total emphasis on the letter than the spirit coupled with sectarianism and radicalism have taken the *ummah* far away from where the founders of the faith, perhaps, wanted it to be. This may apply to the churning which is underway in many Muslim countries for the last decade in the form of the conflict between Islamic polity (as understood by many in the *ummah* today) and democracy; to flourishing of totalitarian regimes in most Islamic countries; to problems of mis-

governance; to repression and violent reaction to it; and so on. This applies also to the rise of Muslim separatism in India, the creation of Pakistan and the current state of affairs in this modern day 'Islamic Republic', albeit, of Pakistan.

Despite the current clear and present danger from radical Islam that Pakistan faces, it remains confused about both the strategy to deal with it, as well as the basic ideological issue, namely what should be the ideological contours of the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan' that drives the current religious radicalism to a great extent. What should be the relationship between the State and the mosque? If Pakistan is to remain an Islamic Republic, what would be the role of the *shariat* in its governance, and as per which *fiqh*? What power should *Ulama* and clerics exercise in deciding what is Islamic and what is not? Who would interpret Islam for the nation, its institutions and the people? What would be the powers of the legislature and the judiciary in this Islamic set-up? In a nutshell, where Islam would stop and democracy start and *vice-versa*? It would seem that the ideological ghosts of the previous century are still haunting the Pakistani nation.

Unfortunately, Pakistan continues to remain seemingly unconcerned and ambivalent and seems to think that the current crisis would blow away just as the earlier ones had and Pakistan would not have to sort out the dilemma of its ideological moorings. Loss of East Pakistan should have triggered an intense phase of introspection and course correction by the country. But that crisis and debacle were explained in terms of Bengalis' dubious loyalty to Pakistan; that the Bengalis were never a part of Pakistan; and that Pakistan was actually West Pakistan. The post-1971 Pakistan reconciled itself to the loss of its eastern half as 'good riddance' and sought to justify its structural ideological weaknesses even more forcefully. Pakistanis had no qualms about rejecting their pre-partition Indian legacy and identifying themselves with the West Asian Arab lands in terms of culture, traditions, history and religion. The drivers of this sectarian identification were not just pro-*Deobandi ulama* and their followers, but a host of politicians of myriad hues and successive generals and bureaucrats.<sup>260</sup> Their fixation

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<sup>260</sup> 'Why Sectarianism is tearing Muslim societies apart?' Ahmed Rashid, *Financial Times*, August 23, 2013

with these supposed socio-ideological moorings strengthened radicalised *Deobandi* ideology and pan-Islamism with ideological alliance with West Asian *Salafi/Wahabi* radicals, which in turn germinated in the *Taliban* movement that along with its other radical cohorts, seeks to assert its theological supremacy over the region now. The RIs seem to have assessed that their call for a strict *shariat*-based Islamic order has the witting or unwitting support of a fair number of Pakistanis, both within and outside the government. And those who do not support them can be tamed, or managed. Therefore, they have begun to call their current conflict a *jihad*.

The Pakistani Armed Forces rely on religion to base their anti-India indoctrination. The educational system also uses religious symbolism for nation-building and sustaining the pre-partition prejudices. Therefore, religious radicalism in the form of *Deoband* inspired RI challenge, or the *Barelvi* and *Shiite* militancy have extensive internal ideological and ethnic support, which, ironically, the Pakistanis have themselves nurtured over the years. Additionally, the sectarian hard-line positions are fuelling a competitive religious frenzy to be more orthodox and doctrinaire among different Islamic sects. There is a social angle to the looming crisis also. Secular and ideological opposition was never allowed to develop in Pakistan. The leftists were hounded by the vast pro-religious lobby and the Soviet entry into Afghanistan in the late 1970s virtually emasculated the leftist movement. The ruling oligarchy, through its control and exploitation of the state apparatus has made mosques and the mullahs as the one major and alternative source of succour, speedier justice and education to which an oppressed people could turn to in many parts of the country. Radical orthodox Islam has gradually become the opposition party to the ruling elite and has won large converts to its cause. Besides, the *Taliban* and their allied groups have an edge and have developed deep roots, acquired greater strength and a large reach. When all this clear and opaque pro-radical sentiments will come out in support of the RIs and their pro-*shariat* struggle to tip the balance in their favour, one does not have to wait and watch, it is already happening.

This, however, should not mean that the *Taliban* and their radical associates would sweep the country whenever they wish. *Deobandi* and *Barelvi* Schools represent a major schism among South Asian *Sunnis*. The *Barelvis*, who constitute over 50% of Pakistani Muslims, are unlikely to abide by the *Talibani* dictates. Many Muslims in Punjab are *Barelvis*,

where strong sectarian undercurrents are manifesting themselves. Most *muhajirs* in Pakistan also belong to the *Barelvi* School and are present in large numbers in Karachi and various other urban centres of Sindh. They have amply demonstrated their capability to successfully protect their turf. The *Taliban* are likely to encounter stiff resistance not only from the *Muhajirs* but from ethnic Sindhis as well, as most of them have strong *Sufi* influence despite the serious inroads that the *Deobandi/Wababi* sentiments have made in the Sindhi religious, social and cultural milieu. Then, there are the *Shias*, numbering roughly 20% of Pakistan's population. It is interesting to note that *Taliban* efforts to dominate *Parachinar* in the FATA, which is *Shia* dominated, have not been successful so far. *Parachinar Shias* are receiving assistance from their fellow Afghan *Shias* and the Iranians. Similarly, many parts of Gilgit and Baltistan areas are dominated by the *Ismailis*, who are also smarting under attacks from the *Deobandi/Talibani* version of Islam. In Baluchistan, the ethnic Baluchs have been relegated to central and the southern parts of the Province, particularly the Mekaran Coast. They follow the *Zikiri* School of Islam, which is moderate and is closer to Omanis and the *Malikis* of UAE. Further, they may still harbour progressive/leftist instincts which they did in the past on a much larger scale.

Another significant factor standing against a fragmentation of Pakistan is the Army, which is still by and large a professional and well-trained institution. It packs enough punch to deliver severe blows to the *Taliban* and Islamic radicals of various hues. However, its Achilles Heel, apart from its almost total India-fixation, is its extraordinary emphasis on Islamic indoctrination of its soldiers to enhance their martial spirits, which has mostly been based on *Deobandi* precepts from the time of Zia-ul Haq and the space that has been provided to it in the structure of the Armed Forces. Would that at some time de-motivate the lower ranks to fight the RIs? The possibilities of a repetition of the *Iranian syndrome* in Pakistan should not be totally discounted.<sup>261</sup> Interestingly,

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<sup>261</sup> The late Shah of Iran wanted to create a modern and progressive Iran defended by a well-trained and equipped Army. When the Islamic revolutionary challenge from *Ayatollah Khomeini's* supporters intensified, while the officers remained loyal to the Shah, the soldiery joined hands with the revolutionaries. Possibilities of something similar happening with the Pakistani soldiers, particularly its Pathan elements, should not be rejected out of hand, particularly if the anti-Taliban operations prolong and intensify.

the Pakistan Army has mainly relied on armour, artillery and airpower in its own territory to deal with the *Taliban* and has generally been avoiding any direct contact between its Punjabi dominated formations and the *Taliban* cadres, leading to large-scale casualties among them and hardly taking of any prisoners. Ironically, the Pakistan Army's iron-fisted response to the *Taliban* has solidified the RIs ideological opposition to Pakistan and its institutions. Despite efforts to divide the TTP conglomerates, the *Taliban* groups have not broken out fighting with each other. Pakistan does not have any specialized agency to deal with the threat of prolonged and sustained insurgencies, nor does its Army have any such prior experience. There are fundamentalist rumblings also within the ranks of the Army. These incidents and developments suggest a weakening of the Pakistani military structure and with it the beginning of the end game in Pakistan.

Looking at the current developments in Pakistan, the present crisis has the potential to '*Lebanonise*' the country in the shorter term. In fact this process already seems to be visible in large areas of FATA and some adjoining parts of KP and even in northern Baluchistan. The spread of such areas, ungoverned or ungovernable by a Pakistani apparatus weakened by economic crisis, inflation and increasing socio-economic unrest, to other areas of Baluchistan and parts of Sindh is not beyond the radar. Under this process the country could get carved up in various pockets of militarised ethno-sectarian influences and, correspondingly, the reach and the role of the government and its institutions may be truncated. In the worst case scenario, a beleaguered Pakistani establishment could resort to seceding *de facto* control over more and more areas to RIs to keep them away from its heartland on the eastern bank of Indus. In fact this is what is happening politically in FATA and KP and through moves to keep the armed forces out to sustain this 'peace'. Under the circumstance the possibility of a beleaguered Pakistani establishment taking military tension with India sky-high to force the RIs to go slow in their assault on Army and Pakistani dispensation, should now not to be treated just as mere rhetoric, but a real possibility. How far such desperate moves would keep Pakistan afloat, though, is debatable.

There are other issues also. What turn will situation in Afghanistan going to take in a couple of years? If the US and AATO forces withdraw from the country by 2014 and the Afghan Government fails to maintain

authority and peace and the country is once again plunged into internal conflict and disruptions, what role would Pakistanis play? What agenda would the *Taliban* (of both Pakistani and Afghan varieties) have for such an Afghanistan? Would Pakistanis be able to once again manipulate the *Taliban* as in the past and spread their influence in Kabul, or would the *Taliban* have their own agenda and create a larger Pashtun entity straddling both sides of the Durand Line? All these questions have a major bearing on Pakistan's own internal situation which seems to be inexorably linked with the general religious radicalism sweeping the Af-Pak region. Lastly, let us assume that the RIs gain total domination over Pakistan, its government, army and institutions. Would that end the turmoil in Pakistan? Perhaps not. In that situation the theological fault-lines between various RI groups would surface and come into play. After all, the *Deobandi Taliban* and the *Salafi LeT* and other groups, the JUI and *Ahl-e-Hadis* factions have bitter theological differences. So much so that in the 1950s JUI and *Ahl-e-Hadis* supporters fought bitter street battles in Punjab over control of some of the mosques. Another illustrative example is the polemics that broke out between the *Al-Qaeda* and the *Taliban* in 1996 when Mullah Omar appeared at victory rally in Kandahar to celebrate capture of Kabul, wearing a black cloak said to belong to Prophet Muhammad himself. *Al-Qaeda* ideologues denounced that as un-Islamic idolatry. Therefore, peace and stability in a Pakistan under RI control could still remain a mirage.

In order to deal with the situation developing on its western borderlands, Pakistan needed to reorient itself towards its eastern borders by making a fresh assessment of its approach and attitude towards India. However, here it is the same old tale. Even faced with a looming internal and external crisis, Pak Army still prefers to talk of India as Pakistan's major security obsession. Whether through elections or otherwise, Islamists are influencing affairs at the top rung of decision making. In any one of these scenarios it will be a folly to expect an enlightened approach towards India. The wounds caused to the national psyche in Pakistan by the partition riots and the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 are far from healed. ISI and military protection to rabid militants like Hafiz Mohammad Saeed and their organisations convey a clear message to the people of Pakistan that peace with India is not on the cards. A 2010 survey by the Pakistani Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS) found that 56% of people favoured a continuing *jihad* in Kashmir. Maududi's

instruction to all Muslims was to establish the rule of Allah all over the world. Saeed has been repeating the same message in recent times. The average Pakistani has, therefore, been overtaken by a siege mentality. He has become more receptive to dogma. He seeks refuge and security in his religion. The West and Western values repel him. His inspiration is neither South Asian nor sub-continental. He imagines his roots lie elsewhere and yearns for the transnational glory of *ummah*. He identifies all Islamic causes as his own. A typical Pakistani does not seem to be ready to make a break from the ghost of the pre-partition past. This appears to be the gravitas of being a Pakistani.<sup>262</sup> And, this Pakistani is not essentially a product of the madrasa. A recent study made by PIPS of the profiles of a sample group of militants indicated that only 2 out of the 20 in the sample survey were *madrasa* products. Most of them had received graduate level education and came from diverse social, educational and ethnic backgrounds, with interests in sports and social activities.<sup>263</sup> With this baggage how can the Pakistani nation confront the present and clear challenge to its existence?

Is India prepared to deal with this scenario? Is it ready to deal with the fall-out of the looming crisis in Pakistan like the fate of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal should Radical Islamists (RIs) directly or indirectly takeover power; implications for India of a 'Lebanonised' Pakistan in which no body is in control; the impact of sectarian divide in Pakistan on Indian Muslims; the fate of Pakistan's western borders? A policy of ignoring Pakistan's ideological fault-lines is unlikely to either pay any international and political dividends to India, or insulate it from the likely fall-out of a catastrophe in that country. Let it not be in a similar situation once again as in the early 1990s when the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc collapsed in quick time and it was left groping in dark for options. India can try to read the writing on the wall this time around and be prepared for the inevitable. The government must try and build up an informal broad national consensus on how to deal with not just the fast evolving situation in the north-west of the sub-continent, but on measures to deal with any similar traits lurking in

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<sup>262</sup> A.K. Verma, *Being Pakistani: His Gravitas*, article posted on IDSA community net on July 16, 2012

<sup>263</sup> *The Dawn*, (Internet edition), October 4, 2012



India itself. A study of what is happening in Pakistan could have some lessons for India also. Any uncertainty and indecision in this regard could have grave security and other implications for the country. It is, perhaps, time for Indians to actively engage with Pakistan's diverse communities and ethnic groups so that their actions do not spring any surprises. Lastly, India needs to revisit its own national experience and refrain from committing the religious and sectarian follies of the past.

## Radical Islamic Groups in Pakistan

Organization	Founders/ Current heads	Outlook
Harkatul Mujahideen (HM)	Maulana Fazlurrehman Khalil Farooq Kashmiri	Deobandi Sunni school of thought; emerged as Harkatul Ansar in 1980s to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan; strongly supported Sipah Sahaba move against Shiite community; moved to Kashmir in 1989
Jaish-e-Mohammad	Maulana Masood Azhar	Deobandi Sunni militant organization, a break-away from HM; launched in early 2000 with the goal of liberating Kashmir
Tehreekul Irfan	Maulana Abdullah Shah Mazhar	Successor to Jaish; launched after ban on militant organizations in January 2002
Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT); renamed Jamatud Dawa (JuD) after ban in January 2002; JuD claims it has nothing to do with Lashkar any more	Hafiz Mohammad Saeed (ex-head and founder)	Salafi Sunni school of thought; draws spiritual inspiration from Saudi Arabia and was the armed wing of Pakistan-based religious organization Markaz-al-Daawatul Ershad; ideologically closer to Al Qaeda, and created in late 1980s in Afghanistan; it is one of the three largest and best-trained groups fighting in Kashmir against India
Sipah Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)	Haq Nawaz Jhangvi (founder) Maulana Azam Tariq (successor)	Rabidly anti-Shia outfit, founded in 1984; espoused the goal of restoration of Khilafat; countered by Shia organization Sipah Mohammad
Lashkar-e-Jhangvi	Riaz Basra, killed in police encounter in 2002	Rabidly anti-Shia outfit, founded in late 1980s by Riaz Basra, who was also formerly associated with HM and SSP; he believed in using force to further Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi's mission
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) South Waziristan	Hakimullah Mehsud	Trans-agency outfit, wedded to anti-Americanism and determined to enforce sharia; also pursuing the goal of driving foreigners out of Afghanistan
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Bajaur agency	Maulvi Faqir Muhammad; also deputy to Baitullah Mehsud	Enforcement of sharia; drew spiritual inspiration from Baitullah Mehsud
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Orakzai, Khyber and Kurram agencies	Hakeemullah Mehsud, emerging successor-apparent to Baitullah Mehsud; responsible for three agencies bordering Peshawar	Enforcement of sharia; drew spiritual inspiration from Baitullah Mehsud
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Swat	Maulvi Fazlullah, also deputy to Baitullah Mehsud	Enforcement of sharia; drew spiritual inspiration from Baitullah Mehsud

Tehreek-e-Taliban Mohmand (TTM)	Omar Khalid, also deputy to Baitullah Mehsud	Wanted Mulla Omar-style of sharia justice through sharia court which would dispense justice according to the group's interpretation of Islamic law
Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TT) South Waziristan	Mulla Nazir	Formed tribal lashkar and mounted a vicious campaign against foreign militants, predominantly of Uzbek origins around Wana
Tehreek-e-Nifaze Shariate Mohammadi (TNSM)	Sufi Muhammad	Deobandi Sunni school of thought; its goal is enforcement of Islamic sharia and it is also opposed to the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan
Lashkar-e-Islam	Mufti Munir Shakir (founder) Mangal Bagh Afridi (current head)	Deobandi Sunni school of thought, close to the Egyptian Ikhwanul Muslimoon and Jamaate Islami (India and Pakistan)
Ansarul Islam	Pir Saifurrehman (founder) Mehbubul Haq (successor)	Deobandi Sunni school of thought
Amar bil Maroof wa Nahi Analmunkir	Haji Naamdar (founder) Maulvi Gul Niaz	Deobandi Sunni school of thought; inspired by the Afghan Taliban supreme leader Mulla Omar, Naamdar espoused enforcement of Islamic sharia in Pakistan

Pakistan owes its origin to the 'Two Nation Theory' in the sub-continent's polity. Leaders of the Pakistan Movement were convinced that Muslims were a separate nation from the Hindu nation and the two could not live together. In their zeal to create a modern progressive Muslim state in the sub-continent they chose to down-play, or even ignore, the sectarian divide that had been manifesting in South Asian Islam even when the British were still at the helms. Came independence and these sectarian fault-lines began to manifest themselves in Pakistan's polity. It would be erroneous to blame General Zia ul-Haq with triggering the big Islamic theological divides, they were already there. Even General Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto tried to politically manipulate the sectarian divide in Pakistan to suit their needs. What Zia ul-Haq did was to build a common cause with Islamic zealots and provide them Army/ISI's patronage and access within the structures of the government. Various national and regional events since then have allowed these Radical Islamists (RIs) become almost a state within the state. Which way this sectarian divide going to turn? Would Pakistan as came into existence in 1947 going to survive? What is going to be the future shape and structures Pakistan is likely to acquire under the Radical Islamist's (RIs) onslaught? These are some of the questions this monograph seeks to examine and hopes to trigger a debate on ways to assess and deal with the impending catastrophe in Pakistan which is likely to be cataclysmic by any yard stick.



**P. K. Upadhyay**, the author of this monograph, has watched events unfold in Pakistan during last forty-years very closely. After having joined IDSA as a Consultant for the Pakistan project in 2009, his association with research for this monograph also began and the end product is submitted herewith to experts and knowledgeable scholars, journalists and other interested in Pakistan as food-for-thought. P. K. Upadhyay is also the author of chapters on Islamic radicalisation in the two reports – Whither Pakistan? And Pakistan on the edge -that IDSA's Pakistan Project team prepared



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