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From the Director's Desk

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This is yet another double issue of the Quarterly. Thus far this has been a very productive and engaging year for the CPPG. Productive for three reasons; first, we published a Special Number on Pakistan and Afghanistan, which has been very well received by the academic and policy community; second, the Punjab Government approved and awarded record number of (11) fellowships for the officers of Punjab Government to compete and seek admission in our Executive Masters in Public Policy program, we applaud that and support the continuation of this policy. Public sector capacity building and human resource development remains one of the cherished goals of our program; third, the CPPG has launched its Monograph Series and two such publications are in the pipeline. The CPPG continues to grow as one of the most engaging and vibrant academic and policy dialogue platforms in the city of Lahore, the contents, range of topics and the quality and diversity of speakers testify to that. I remain indebted to my colleagues at the CPPG, whose dedication and support have contributed enormously in enriching the scale, scope and diversity of our Seminar and Policy Dialogues. We have begun to deliberate on how to turn Quarterly into a Journal? As always, we look forward to our readers/participants' comments for any further improvements in our program and activities.

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CENTRE FOR PUBLIC POLICY
AND GOVERNANCE

Research Article: Aashiana Housing Project (AHP)

: Rashid Munir Kahloon

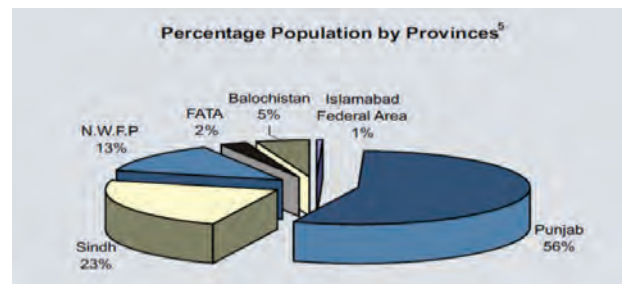
A byproduct of the capitalist economic system especially in the industrialized or developed economies is the widening of gap between the rich and poor. A small percentage is becoming increasingly richer, while larger numbers are falling below the poverty line. This widening of gap between the rich and marginalized has compelled political economists to redefine the concept of Welfare State (which initially comprised of tax collection and income redistribution); it is now more inclusive and encompasses the comparative wellbeing and standard of living of the existing population in terms of a basket of noncash benefits such as education, health, capacity building of unemployed youth and housing facilities.

Context

Most developing states are unable to escape the forces of globalization and thus have free market or capitalist economic systems, therefore the scale and importance of the demand for "housing" for the poor and marginalized is on the rise in these countries. Let me enumerate some of the reasons why housing policies for the poor in developing countries have become a contested issue. First, urbanization has emerged as a global trend increasing the size of urban poor. Rapid urbanization and globalization have put tremendous pressure on the political governments of developing countries to prioritize the housing sector and deliver low cost and affordable housing to the end users. Second, the rural to urban migration has led to the expansion of informal sector. Putting the size of the informal sector into this context is very important, as it is widely recognized that construction boom in the housing sector generates employment opportunities particularly for unskilled and semi skilled labour (a major percentage of the labour force of informal sector). Third, we are also aware of the fact that employability of the unemployed is extremely important for developing economies as they are labour abundant economies in which high employment rate is essential in maintaining sustainable economic growth. Thus housing has crucial significance both in the supply and demand aspects of the economy and can be used as a significant indicator in evaluating the standard of living and quality of life¹.

In the last two decades housing needs have acquired new

salience in developing countries and governments have also realized the importance of housing sector especially for low or middle income class. Governments are revising strategies and revisiting the entire policy process to facilitate and enhance public sector's role in building a framework that strengthens the capacity and sustainability of the housing sector, particularly low cost housing. However, like many other policy areas in this sector too, Pakistan is lagging behind.



Source: <http://www.pap.org.pk/>

Population wise Punjab is the largest province and plays a significant role in providing political as well as economic baseline of Pakistan. Thus in the federal structure of Pakistan, it is a key player. Devolution of financial as well as legislative powers to provinces under the 18th amendment has put the onus on the Government of Punjab to deliver and provide an example for others to follow. Is Punjab ready to assume the leadership role under this new dispensation? Exploring the possibilities, it is estimated that the population of Punjab is growing at the rate of 2% per annum² but despite population growth and rapid urbanization, little effort has been made to develop a regulatory framework for low income housing. Although international or domestic factors have exerted some pressure for the establishment of a policy framework, still the momentum is lost in the implementation phase following the formulation of the theoretical framework and policy documents because of the provincial and local governments' lack of enthusiasm and capacity for implementation. Hence the delivery of low cost housing to low-income and middle class remains unfulfilled.

In order to access the actual housing needs of Punjab, the understanding of population demographics along with their socio economic profile is very important. Punjab's

population as a percentage of total population of Pakistan is 56%.

Table 1: Urban Population & Growth Rate of Pakistan

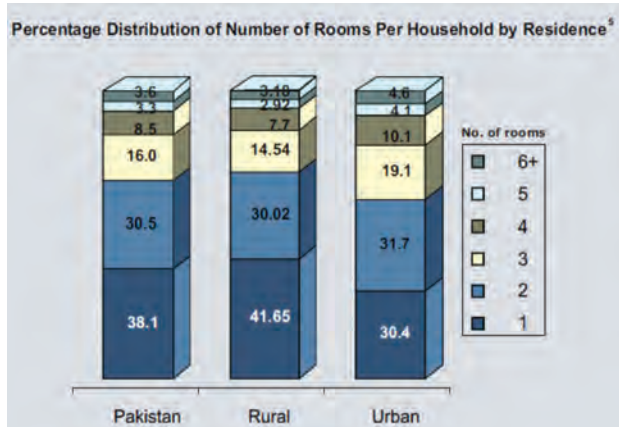
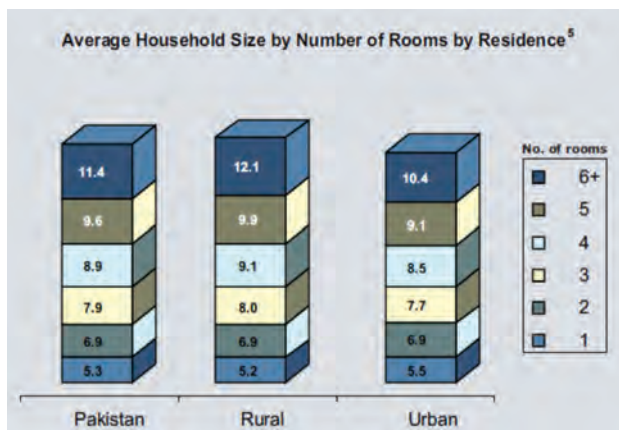
Year	Urban Population	Urban Annual Growth Rate
2010	66.318	2.97
2015	77.420	3.10
2020	90.199	3.06
2025	104.735	2.99
2030	121.218	2.92

Source: World Urbanization Prospects 2009, Revision Population Database

The urban population as percentage of total population in Pakistan is also increasing rapidly. According to 1998 census, 31.3% of the total population lived in urban areas whereas by 2010–2011 it had increased to 37% and will be more than 50% of the total population by the end of 2015 with an average growth rate of 2.97%³.

Socio-Economic profile is also very important in this context as factors like large family size, marital status and no of rooms per residence draw important attention towards the need for larger size houses to cater to the needs of individuals, a snap shot of statistical data of these demographic indicators indicates the importance of housing in urban areas of Punjab.

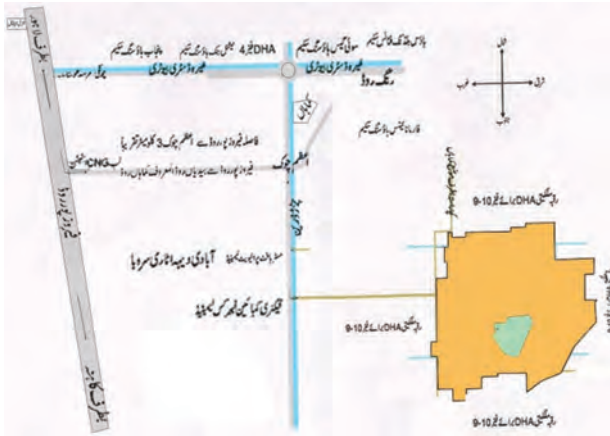
Lahore is among the densely populated metropolitan cities of Pakistan. It is the second biggest city of Pakistan with population of around 8.63 million⁴ (Khaliq-Uz_Zaman & Arif A Baloch 2011) with an annual growth rate of 2.83%⁵ and also holds the status of provincial capital of Punjab with urban population of around 13% (1998 Census) of the total urban population of Pakistan⁶. Lahore has witnessed huge expansion in terms of housing infrastructure development. Along the Grand Trunk (GT) road, Ferozpur road and Multan road which are traditionally densely populated areas, a mushroom growth of new societies has occurred; namely, DHA-EME, Muhafiz Town, Eden Gardens, Sukh Chain Gardens, Bahria Town etc. Several factors have contributed towards this expansion; firstly, plentiful land was available, secondly infrastructural base existed in terms of roads, electricity and natural gas etc. essential for the success of any housing society in Lahore. Very recently, the pace of development in terms of housing societies is also increasing around Thokar Niaz Baig, Raiwind and adjoining areas. Again the reason has been the availability of adequate land and huge infrastructural development in Muslim League Nawaz's former Centre and current Punjab governments. The existence of personal property of former Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif and current Chief Minister Punjab Mian Shahbaz Sharif is a reality that also can't be neglected when critically evaluating the primary causes of expansion of Lahore in these areas.



Source: <http://www.pap.org.pk>

“ Along the Grand Trunk (GT) road, Ferozpur road and Multan road which are traditionally densely populated areas, a mushroom growth of new societies has occurred...”

ited through easy installments spanning ten years. A 5% discount will be given to those who submit full payment up front⁹. The interested buyers must fill a form provided by PLDC and submit it along with a processing fee of Rs. 890 to the Bank of Punjab.



It is ironic and disturbing that politicians while launching such projects do not look at the fate of earlier ventures. It is instructive to note that a similar kind of programme was launched under the name of Apni Basti by Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo in 1987 to build 150,000 housing units, which eventually resulted in the construction of only 35,000 houses¹⁰. Similarly Nawaz Sharif in his second term as Prime Minister had launched an analogous scheme "Mera Ghar Scheme" which also remained elusive. These schemes smacked of a flawed policy making process; unrealistic pricing, and poor provision for water, power and gas etc. Eventually, people took away the door and window frames of the houses as well as the bricks in case of Junejo's initiative. These and few other projects taken up by the public sector have not worked well. The lessons learned could be summarized with the statement that the low cost housing schemes for lower income groups should be public private partnerships¹¹ (PPP) or initiatives solely of the private sector as this would ensure better management and sustainability as compared to the schemes initiated solely by the public sector. Furthermore transport, utilities, schooling and health are key elements of success along with the involvement of NGOs (to facilitate the provision of low cost facilities like training the unskilled youth, basic general and vocational education etc.) as they all play a crucial role but have been missing in almost all housing schemes launched by the

Public Sector. Khuda ki Basti projects in Lahore, Karachi and Hyderabad, which are best quoted examples in terms of viability and sustainability, were built under the public private partnership.

A history of flawed and failed housing schemes demands a critical evaluation of Aashiana Housing Project. Although the provision of civic facilities like water, power, gas, and the sewerage and waste disposal systems as pledged by the Government seems like a good beginning, still the Punjab CM's continued insistence that AHP would be comparable to Defense Housing Authority (an upper class housing scheme) is misleading and could rouse unrealistic expectations among the potential buyers. Managing expectations is important as private developers are promising all kinds of higher end services like parks, commercial areas, spacious roads, and community centers.

While all housing projects look good as long as they are on paper, it is actually the implementation that matters. Knowing that this particular project will be accommodating only the lower-middle class as announced by the current government, one can expect some delays and hiccups in the proceedings. Also monthly payments, while not as much as the average market price, are still on the higher side when we look at the monthly income of the target group. It wouldn't be easy for a household with a joint family income of less than 20,000 to keep aside monthly installments of 7,500. Additionally, the backing of Punjab Government will put a question mark on the future of AHP as soon as the government changes.

“ It wouldn't be easy for a household with a joint family income of less than 20,000 to keep aside monthly installments of 7,500. ”

Serious doubts are also being expressed from different quarters on the rationale, and economic viability of the ambitious Aashiana Housing Scheme. This scheme is now the biggest public sector housing scheme launched in Punjab involving an expenditure of billions of rupees in a few years. But it has not gone through any channel of official scrutiny as suggested by the World Bank (Jakarta

2009) guidelines stressing a transparent identification and screening of beneficiaries.

Assessment and Evaluation of the Scheme

In critically evaluating the merits of the AHP according to prevalent housing policy debates, we consider the current Punjab Government's intervention into the housing market as serious because most economists argue for less government intervention in the housing sector as compared to other groups of experts. Most economists have qualified faith in the efficiency of markets and argue for government intervention to oil the wheels of market mechanism. They hold this view of the housing sector as well, arguing that the principal role of government should be to enable housing markets to work and to ensure the adequate provision of infrastructure (a public goods problem) instead of direct provision of housing facilities out of its own pocket, especially when its already facing severe financial difficulties due to lack of revenue generation and mismanagement of existing financial resources coupled with a poor state of governance. Many examples can be quoted in this regard, for instance the so called "Sasti Roti Scheme" where public money was wasted to gain political popularity among masses without realizing the importance of a targeted approach to public money spending. Rather than pursuing these cumbersome tasks, the government should adopt standardized and transparent PPP (Public Private Partnership) models and contracts. Government should develop more reliable data on population with minute details of micro and low income housing needs so that the private sector can be effectively utilized and can become a major stakeholder.

Housing policy in developed countries is redistributive in nature, having the ideal of providing "decent and affordable" housing for all. Economists tend to respect consumer sovereignty because households know best how to spend their incomes rather than the government and therefore tend to favor income redistribution¹². Unfortunately, the Punjab Government has failed to recognize this very fact as there is an increased risk that "social justice" which entails that all households enjoy basic levels of "merit goods" - decent housing, adequate nutrition, clothing, sanitation and health services, a safe and healthy environment, and access to a decent basic education for children, may not be achieved through this housing scheme due to

a lack of future planning activities and a risk in continuation of the scheme following the change of the current Government. Thus this whole scheme can meet the same fate as the "Mera Ghar Scheme" of the Junejo government.

“...provision of appropriate road links as well as hubs of activities and employment in the immediate surrounding areas can strongly encourage house occupancy at the project.”

The viability of AHP may also be questioned when evaluated against the global low cost housing criteria. The economic viability of low-cost housing depends on the economical capacity of the target group. If the house or services are too expensive, the poor cannot afford to live there leading to the failure of the programme. The AHS falls short on this criterion as the target group selected by the Government of Punjab is very poor and can't afford to pay the required monthly installment out of their own pocket given that their expected monthly income is capped at 20,000. Keeping in view the current inflationary figures and the distance (approximately 17 km one way) they will have to travel to reach their homes from their work place (Lahore city), the daily cost seems too high. To cater to this problem of affordability, a financial support scheme is being floated through the BOP. But the financial position of BOP is not hidden from public view and given the politicization of loans and the tradition of non-payment of services and loans in Pakistani society, the continuation of this scheme seems suspect after the current government completes its tenure in office.

Additionally, there is cultural and value dimension that needs to be kept in view. People with a low income do not want to live in houses labeled only for low income groups, because of the "poor" label associated with it. They may feel isolated and degraded among their own social and family circles. But unfortunately since the announcement of AHP, it is widely advertised as a scheme for poor widows, pensioners and other socially and economically dependent groups. In most cultures generally and in Pakistan

specifically, the women are in charge of domestic affairs of the family. As the target group in AHP largely focuses on women, it is therefore important to include women in the planning process and ensure that they would be able to pay rent. Therefore the Punjab Government's job does not end in providing just a housing scheme but also needs to include the development of community's human resources to ensure the programme's long term viability. But unfortunately the Punjab Government has not conceived any capacity building programme as part of the AHP.

Suggestions and Way forward

The Punjab Government has limited resources to combat the monstrous problem of housing in the province due to several reasons. Firstly, its financial constraints should lead to prudence and caution rather than risky housing schemes which could burden it with excessive overheads and a failure to collect revenues. Secondly, due to a variety of reasons, the gap between housing supply and demand is constantly widening. Thus while the Aashiana Housing Project will consume scarce provincial resources, it will not have any impact on the gigantic scale of the problem in the province. Thirdly, the housing units being given are highly subsidized thus helping only a few instead of the many. Fourthly, the project is framed to win popular support but lacks the political will to solve the actual problem of housing for the urban poor. Lastly, while community participation is given much importance on paper and in intellectual & academic discussions, however, no organized or meaningful effort in this regard has been witnessed in this project so far. All housing programs that lacked community participation have proved to be expensive and contrary to the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the dwellers and acceptability of the target-group.

As a way forward it is important that the Punjab Government concentrate on the implementation of AHP and setup an efficient organization to cater to the needs of the housing project during and after the completion of housing structures. The aim of most low-cost housing projects like AHP should be to introduce and boost the idea of public sector intervention in the housing sector. Thus, if AHP is wrongly designed as is feared, or badly implemented, support for public sector intervention in the housing sector will suffer a major blow. It is thus suggested that concentration should be made to develop

appropriate grassroots level institutions for the long term viability of the scheme.

Secondly the socio-economic characteristics of the people play a crucial role in making a decision to acquire a house. For the low income group, housing's proximity to work place and other services play a major role in its success. Therefore provision of appropriate road links as well as hubs of activities and employment in the immediate surrounding areas can strongly encourage house occupancy at the project.

“...the principal role of government should be to enable housing markets to work and to ensure the adequate provision of infrastructure (a public goods problem) instead of direct provision of housing facilities out of its own pocket...”

Thirdly, high order services like schools, hospitals, civic centers and other facilities have always worked well in the success of housing schemes. Thus, the Government of Punjab should pursue this approach to make AHS a more attractive living experience for the occupants.

Lastly at a strategic level, the Governmental should realize that the process of housing delivery or rather facilitating citizens to acquire housing themselves should be an across the board initiative rather than be limited to certain segments of the society or specifically the voters of the ruling party. It is strongly suggested that the government does not become an agent in direct provision of housing services as this may lead to market failure further resulting into government failure. Rather, the Government should explore the various Public-Private Partnership options and incentivize, facilitate, motivate and regulate the private sector to enter the low-cost housing sector as it can play a critical role in bridging the urban housing gap and in building strong communities¹³.

End Notes

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Forthcoming Research

November 2011

CPPG to publish a monograph titled **Pakistan, Afghanistan & US Relations: Implications and Future Directions**.

January 2012

Hajra Zafar, Research Associate CPPG is in the final stages of completing her study on **Industrial Policy in Punjab: A Case Study of Sundar Industrial Estate**.

: Dr. Imdad Hussain was Director, Punjab Urban Resource Centre and Instructor of Public Sector Management Course at the Civil Services Academy, when he was invited to deliver a talk on “Is Islamization Persisting in Pakistani Education? An Institutional Analysis” on the 13th of January 2011. He has since joined CPPG as Assistant Professor.



Hussain framed the context of his talk by stating that when the 9/11 Commission Report found the genesis of terrorism in Islamized education of Pakistan, the critical analysis of Islamization of education and its reform became an essential feature of the War on Terrorism (WoT). The American and Pakistani planners of the WoT took no time to agree that terrorism could not be defeated without reforming Muslim education in general and Pakistani education in particular. In 2001 and 2002, the President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf, the Interior Minister Moin-u-din Haider and Education Minister Zubaida Jalal publicly acknowledged the link between education and terrorism before the national and international media and resolved to reform education in general and curriculum and textbooks in particular. Ten years down the road however, Islamized education is functioning largely unchanged: the curriculum of Social studies, Urdu, Islamic studies, Pakistan studies and English have only slightly been changed, and the old textbooks in these subjects are still being taught which carry intolerant contents that encourage violence. In 2007, the draft of a new education policy (NEP) of Pakistan did not have a separate chapter on Islamic education indicating that the government was thinking to end the Islamization of education. However,

the final draft released in 2009 by the Government of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) again had a separate chapter on Islamic education. This twist generated a question as to why Islamized education continued to persist in Pakistan when it has not contributed to advancing peace, tolerance and security. It has not even produced civil Muslims believing in the co-existence of religious and sectarian pluralism.

Hussain argued that the six decades long Islamization of education in Pakistan did not follow a single logic as various regimes advanced Islam in education in varied political ways. If the reasons of Islamization had been changing over time, the associated political factors could easily be isolated for study. Similarly, by identifying the leaders behind Islamization and by understanding their styles of Islamization, it was possible to make sense of political agendas. Once the political aims of Islamization in education were known, Hussain said, we could understand the affects of Islamized education on society. In precise terms, by understanding how Islamization under various regimes had changed the institutions related to education policymaking, the question of why Islamization persisted in education could be answered.

“ Ayub did not try to synchronize institutional arrangements of the State with his modernist views. ”

He then discussed his methodology to explain the persistence of Islamization in education. He identified exogenous variables (the variables outside the Ministry of Education, even outside Pakistan) to explain Islamization of education in Pakistan. In explaining how the Pakistani State advanced Islamization in education, Hussain tried to balance the existing scholarship on the reforms of Islamized education which incorrectly fancied a combination of computers, science and mathematics education, and fancy textbooks as both an alternative to Islamized education and as a cure to the problems of violence ostensibly produced by Islamized education. He believed that these technical solutions were neither an alternative to Islamization nor a panacea to intolerance. He further argued that the literature on public policy in Pakistan

had mainly been produced using the framework of elite theory which assumes elite competition as determinant of policies. While suggesting that education policymaking in Pakistan was elitist, elite theory did not provide sufficient explanation to understand the problems of Pakistani education policy. In contrast, institutional analysis provided a better lens to explain the persistence of Islamization in education in Pakistan. The institutional theory started with the identification of critical junctures (CJs) in a country's political and social life. The critical junctures were events or situations which are shaped over a period of time, produced significant political changes and necessitated institutional response. Sometimes, the CJs made existing norms of a society irrelevant, created the demand for an extraordinary political response and contributed towards lasting institutional changes.

For his analysis, Hussain developed an exogenous shock strategy commonly used in institutional analysis to identify periods in Pakistani history when exogenous factors stimulated particular kind of Islamization of education. The strength of institutional analysis lay in its potential to help understand the present by looking to the past, while by using exogenous shock strategy, Hussain divided the six decade history of Islamization of education in Pakistan into four periods: (i) Setting the Path to Islamize Education, 1947 to 1964; (ii) War, Islam, Militarization, 1965–75; (iii) Legitimacy, Control and Jihad, 1976–88; and (iv) Sharia, Jihad and Neoliberal Agenda, 1988–1998.

“ Islamized education is functioning largely unchanged: the curriculum of Social studies, Urdu, Islamic studies, Pakistan studies and English have only slightly been changed... ”

According to Hussain, Pakistan faced its first CJ at its independence. Cross-border migration, refugees' settlement, tensions with India over Kashmir, and participation of Pakistan in the Cold War set the path for a kind of Islamization in education, which suppressed the expression of ethnic identities within Pakistan. In addition, education was assigned the task of preparing students to

fight against communism within and without Pakistan. Americans provided financial and intellectual support to Islamize education during the 1950s, which continued until 1980s. In 1950s, the visions of modernist and traditionalist Islam battled in the domain of education policy. Under the imperatives of State building at home and challenges of Cold War abroad, the modernist visions of Islam in education policy were defeated by the traditionalists such as the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI). Between 1948 and 1952, the State leaders in Pakistan institutionalized a kind of Islam in education policy, which could be applied to fight against all kinds of political dissent at Pakistani universities. The first major institutional development was the adoption of the Objectives Resolution in March 1949. This provided powerful impetus to traditionalists to consolidate their power in the discourses of Islamization of education. By the time, the modernist military general, Muhammad Ayub Khan took over in 1958; the proponents of modernist Islam were almost insignificant in the Islamization debates. Owing to his personal inclinations, Ayub Khan tried to empower modernists in education policymaking. For example, the Report of the Commission on National Education, 1959 had a number of modernist provisions such as teaching Islam in light of the latest scientific knowledge. But the report was not implemented much to the pleasure of traditionalists. As a result, institutional arrangements consolidated during the 1950s continued unchanged while Ayub did not try to synchronize institutional arrangements of the State with his modernist views.

The loss of war against India in 1965 initiated a second CJ in the history of Pakistan. Despite all his modernist inclinations, Ayub turned to traditionalist ulema and Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) to retrieve legitimacy deficits for his regime. The Textbook Boards established in East and West Pakistan, in 1962, were also mobilized to advance Islamization which was qualitatively anti-India and anti-Hindu. In the aftermath of 1965, Ayub adopted some of the traditionalist suggestions of the JI and its student wing, Islami Jamiyat Talaba (IJT). Anti-Hindu Islamization in education was supplemented by banning the screening of Indian movies in Pakistani cinemas. Ayub's successor General Muhammad Yahya Khan (1969–1970) did much to construct 'ideological frontiers' of Pakistan. In July 1969, Yahya's minister of National Affairs, Nawab Sher Ali Khan Pataudi—a great admirer of

the JI—introduced a measure of seven years imprisonment against ideological offenses, which included speeches and publications against Islamic ideology. Yahya and Pataudi also introduced measures to curtail academic freedom on college/university campuses. In July 1969, for example, Professor Fazalur Rahman's book on Islam, which offered a modernist theory of Islam, was banned in Pakistan. The new Education Policy drafted in 1969 privileged madrasa education and traditional Islamic learning. The loss of Bangladesh in the war with India in 1971 acted to entrench traditionalist precepts of Islam in education policy. The institutional consequences during the CJ between 1965 and 1976 were immense. Even the Islamic-Socialist regime of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto continued the anti-Indian Islamization in education. The CII established in 1974 did much to promote Islamization in education while Islamization and centralization in education progressed in combination: the parliament of Pakistan passed "Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education," in 1976 inferring powers on the Curriculum Wing in Ministry of Education, Islamabad to check that no textbook could be published in Pakistan carrying material not in conformity with Islamic ideology. During the same year, the parliament granted equivalence to the degrees of madrasa students making them eligible for government jobs.

The third CJ formed slowly but it created conditions which made Islamization of education persistent. The political instability of 1976 and 1977 resulted in a military takeover by General Zia ul Haq in July 1977. Zia was religiously conservative. Unlike Ayub Khan before him, Zia engrafted his ideology on institutions related to education. Although Zia intensified Islamizing education from October 1977, still it was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Khomeini led revolution in Iran that perfected the CJ of 1970s and 1980s. If Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party was an enemy of Zia at home, communists in Afghanistan and Shia government in Iran were the external threats providing perfect circumstances for Islamization to thrive in education. More importantly, it was the Islam practised in Saudi Arabia that was infused in education as an official policy. Zia used the available institutional arrangements to employ Islamized education against all internal and external threats to his regime. Thus the CJ of 1970s and 1980s provided perfect circumstances for the

supremacy of Islamization as the only political option for Pakistan. The Objectives Resolution of 1949 was inserted in the constitution in 1985. A new dimension of jihad (holy war) was added to the existing Anti-Hindu Islamization of 1960s and 1970s. Islamized education policy became the chief instrument of not only spreading the ideas of jihad but also of providing practical training in conducting holy war. Most of the instruments of cultural production such as cinema, television, radio, print media, Urdu literature and theatre were Islamized to intensify the influence of Islamized education. Textbooks were rewritten inserting many stories of jihad in them and many progressive and leftist teachers were removed from their jobs in Pakistani universities and colleges.



The institutional consequences of Islamization during the Zia regime were enormous. The CII was reconstituted in 1977: most of its members were Deobandis. International Islamic University was established in 1980 largely to Islamize Pakistani education. Islamic Research Cell was established within the Ministry of Education in 1979. Five thousand mosque schools were established in Pakistan where imams (mosque leaders) were hired as teachers with a small honorarium. Official collection of Zakat was instituted in 1980 and significant share of Zakat funds was provided to the madrasa students across Pakistan. The recommendations of the National Committee of Deeni Madaris (est. 1979) regarding provision of land and utilities to madrasas were adopted officially. The patronage to religious leaders created a large support for Islamization of education in Pakistan.

When Zia died in 1988, Pakistan was in political, social and economic disarray. After his death, the CJ in the making was related to the neoliberal paradigm of governance and moral anxieties produced as a result of liberalizing media. In the 1990s, Kashmir Jihad and the glamorizing of Jihad provided an anti-dote to the moral anxieties of a liberalizing economy. The takeover of Kabul by the Taliban reinforced the confidence of military leaders, Islamists of various persuasions, and militant groups in the power of Islamized education. At the same time, the Pakistani State reduced its spending on education while encouraging privatization which resulted in the immense growth of private schools and private Islamic schools. The National Education Policy 1998-2010 said little about issues such as access to education but more about Islamizing the content of education. It increased the hours spent for the recitation of the Holy Quran and rewriting of social sciences using the Islamic framework. A detailed reading of the policy of 1998 suggested that Pakistani State wanted to continue Islamization.

“ In 2004, when the federal minister of education, Zubaida Jalal announced to remove jihad related Islamic references from the school textbooks, she could not find more than a handful of people supporting her. ”

In 2004, when the federal minister of education, Zubaida Jalal announced to remove jihad related Islamic references from the school textbooks, she could not find more than a handful of people supporting her. The opposition from the religious organizations such as the JI, IJT, Mut'hidda Majlis Amal, Jamiyat Ulema Islam of Maulana Fazalur Rahman, Tehrik Usatza Pakistan was expected and understandable. The opposition, however, was not constituted only by these religious organizations. A significant resistance to Jalal's plan came from within the institutions which had been involved in Islamization of education. The agitations of religious parties and resistance from within the government did not let Jalal actualize her promise despite having the support of General Musharraf. The pro-Islamization officials in the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Wing,

Ministry of Religious Affairs, Council of Islamic Ideology successfully lobbied with a number of parliamentarians. As a result, the support for rewriting curriculum and textbooks did not grow. Both the traditionalists and government officials mobilized the Objectives Resolution, constitutional provisions of Islamization, and Islamic provisions of various education policies as their agitating symbols. The curriculum wing, ministry of education was reluctant to draft alternative proposals to rewrite textbooks. As a result of these agitations, many officials and politicians chose to remain silent.

In conclusion, Hussain argued that the Islamization of education helped the Pakistani State to expand its reach in society. It also helped the State to legitimize itself without democratizing the dispensation of education and the institutions of the State. The framing of political issues in Islamic terms restricted the emergence of alternative political agendas. Since the late 1970s, Islamization blocked emergence of any leftist student movement which could pose a threat to the status quo. Hussain stated that majority of his 2009 and 2010 interviewees at the Ministry of Education, Council of Islamic Ideology, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Curriculum Wing supported continuing Islamization and disapproved removing of religious and anti-Hindu material from textbooks. Based on his analysis of the history of education policymaking in Pakistan and interviews with the officials involved in Islamizing education, Hussain was convinced that Islamization of education would continue in future in Pakistan. A reading of the curriculum documents published in 2007 attested this claim as only negligible changes were made to the Islamization paradigm.

The talk was followed by a lively question and answer session. In answering a question if the federal government had retained curriculum development in the 18th Constitutional Amendment and what kind of problems could emerge after the devolution of curriculum to the provinces, Hussain stated that curriculum development had been transferred to the provinces through the 18th Amendment. Although Ahsan Iqbal and Abid Sher Ali of Pakistan Muslim League (N), Professor Khursheed Ahmed of Jamati-Islami, Sardar Asif Ahmed Ali of Pakistan Peoples Party were trying to stop the devolution of curriculum wing to the provinces, still another constitutional amendment

would be required to stop this devolution. The possibilities for an amendment were extremely dim. He cautioned that many problems would emerge when provinces start making their curriculum and writing textbooks because three of the Pakistani provinces nurture strong anti-Punjab and anti-Centre feelings. The Gilgit Baltistan Assembly has recently pointed out that the Islamiyat textbooks predominantly narrated Sunni version of Islam thus offending the sensibilities of the local Shia population. Sindhi legislators wanted to write Raja Dahar as their national hero in provincial textbooks. Similarly, voices to rewrite history along nationalist line were being raised in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In these circumstances, Hussain opined that it would be harder to promote national harmony if provincial histories were in conflict with each other.

While answering a question why leaders such as Bhutto, Musharaf, Benazir and Nawaz Sharif who were liberal in their outlook did not reform education, Hussain corrected that Nawaz Sharif was actually more conservative than Zia as Sharif introduced the Sharia Act in 1991, established Permanent Commission on Islamization of Education under this Act, and granted many privileges to the propagators of Saudi version of Islam in Pakistan. Bhutto's were liberal but they did not institutionalize their politics. An education policy document drafted during Benazir's first tenure was never made public while the rise of Taliban in Afghanistan and jihad in Kashmir during her second tenure made the removal of jihad related material from the textbooks impossible.

Commenting on the question of how Islamization of education policy has contributed to the feeling that one was no longer a Muslim and needed to be Islamized, Hussain recalled the words of Professor Kaneez Fatima Yousuf who once said "we [Pakistanis] were better Muslims before the State actually started teaching Islamiyat in schools... our [Pakistani] families used to provide good Islamic education to their children." Hussain agreed with Professor Kaneez. He said that by enforcing a particular version of Islam in Islamic studies, Islam itself had been politicized and the contention over Shia and Sunni Islamic studies illustrated this point well.

Answering a question of how Islamization of education had influenced knowledge generation in Pakistan, Hussain

said that a very selective Islamization was promoted by Zia ul Haq and Nawaz Sharif primarily to maintain status quo, moral policing and violence. As a result, reason had gradually and systematically been suppressed in educational institutions. Islamized education had focussed more on morality than on social problems and creation of a just society. Rather than being about producing scholarship of higher standing, Islamization had actually stifled it as it was used to silence modernist scholars such as Professor Fazalur Rehman who was forced to leave Pakistan in 1964. In fact, Islamization promoted mediocrity in politics and academia.

“...education policy would change if citizens from various sectors were involved in curriculum policy and textbook writing and if inclusive institutional arrangements for curriculum and textbooks were put in place.”

Answering the last question of whether there were possibilities of the reconstruction of education policy in Pakistan, Hussain argued that the existing institutional arrangements did not support change. Nevertheless, modest changes would be possible only through installing different institutional arrangements accountable to the parliament and the people. Hussain said that the present state of education policy would change if citizens from various sectors were involved in curriculum policy and textbook writing and if inclusive institutional arrangements for curriculum and textbooks were put in place.

“Nawaz Sharif was actually more conservative than Zia as Sharif introduced the Sharia Act in 1991, established Permanent Commission on Islamization of Education under this Act, and granted many privileges to the propagators of Saudi version of Islam in Pakistan.”

: Dr Tahir Kamran, the Iqbal Chair at Wolfson College, University of Cambridge Centre of South Asian Studies and former Chairperson, Department of History Government College University delivered a talk on “Community of the Marginalized: A State of Pakistani Christians” at the Centre for Public Policy & Governance on March 9, 2011.



Kamran opened his talk by asking a pertinent question; why did the majority minority discourse start in Pakistan when its founder had clearly envisioned and pledged to make it a democratic and pluralistic State? Then he contextualized the present to draw the attention of the participants by referring to incidents like Shantinagar, Khanewal, Gojra, Sumbrial, Kasur, Blasphemy Law and the recent assassination of the Federal Minister of Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti, thus, putting onus on social scientists, particularly, historians to reflect and explore citizenship rights and responsibilities as propped up by majority-minority discourse.

Kamran argued that it was the transformation of the empire into a Nation-State system through colonial modernity introduced by the British in undivided India that gave rise to the majority minority phenomenon. The British employed their own methodology to produce knowledge and to redefine India through census, ethnographic surveys and gazetteers. In the case of Punjab, the majority minority discourse was set into motion though the introduction of separate electorates in 1883.

Quoting Jinnah's speech of 11th August 1947 to the Constituent Assembly “You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed — that has nothing to do with the business of the State”, he argued that the Founder envisioned a pluralistic Pakistan. With these words, Kamran observed, Jinnah abandoned his separatist politics and embarked on a path to create a plural polity that accommodated religious and cultural differences. He neither wanted Pakistan to be an Islamic nor a Muslim State but instead a democratic State where all citizens had equal rights regardless of religious belief, caste, class or ethnicity. The elevation of Jogindar Nath Mandal, a member of the scheduled caste to president of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan also pointed towards how Jinnah was envisaging Pakistan's future.

“ In the case of Punjab, the majority minority discourse was set into motion though the introduction of separate electorates in 1883. ”

Reflecting on the role of Christians in the independence struggle, Kamran opined that books produced by Pakistani Christian scholars on the role of their community altogether presented a different discourse to the existing main stream knowledge about the freedom struggle available to students and scholars. Punjabi Christians had sided with the Muslim League during the freedom struggle against the Congress majority rule because the Muslim League represented minorities in undivided India. The first instance could be traced to 1928 when the Christian leader L. Ilea Ram along with the Muslim League boycotted the All Parties Conference called by Moti Lal Nehru. The March 1940 Lahore Resolution meeting became a benchmark of Christian-Muslim League cordiality. According to Ch. Chandu Lal, thousands of Christians participated in the annual Muslim League meetings. Jinnah hailed this cooperation and paid special attention to the effective representation of minorities in his 14 points of the Lahore Resolution. The Christians continued their unconditional support to the Muslim League in their struggle for freedom. Recognizing this spirit of Christian community's

support, Jinnah participated in a thanksgiving organized at the Holy Trinity Church, Karachi as Pakistan came into existence.

He further added that the role of Christians as citizens of Pakistan soon after independence was commendable and note worthy. Faced with a gigantic refugee crisis, inadequate shelter, scarce food in Lahore and other transit points, and monsoon rains creating an epidemic of the worst kind, Christians extended their help to the 7.5 million Pakistani migrants living in refugee camps. 70–75% of the paramedic staff at the time was Christian; Christian educational institutions provided shelter to the many homeless refugees, case in point being the hostels of FC College (closed at the time), which were converted into a full fledged hospital known as United Christian Hospital. Additionally, prominent Christian Women—to name a few— Ms. S. P. Singha, Ms. Najum-uddin and Ms Soba Khan who worked with the Red Cross along with hosts of Young Women Christian Association workers facilitated helpless migrants from India to Pakistan. It was sad and ironic that these fraternal relations were not duly reciprocated by the Muslim League leadership after Jinnah.

Kamran then traced the marginalization of minorities in Pakistan by listing three historical benchmarks; the Objectives Resolution (OR) topped his list (which was made part of the Constitution in 1985). He considered the passing of OR as a marked deviation from Jinnah's vision of the Pakistani State. He cited Justice Munir's Book From Jinnah to Zia who had observed that Jinnah visualized Pakistan as a modern democratic state with sovereignty resting in the people. Kamran pointed out that prominent Christians, like, Dr. Michael Nazir Ali, the Bishop of Rochester, was apprehensive about the implications that Objectives Resolution could have for minorities, calling it a "Trojan Horse". Similarly Joshua Fazaldin apprehended that without constitutional protection, the clause could be used to consign non-Muslims to zimmi status. The OR was perceived carrying exclusionary over tones for minorities.

When minorities from East Pakistan (Hindus) voiced their unease on OR and presented 12 amendments, their reservations were cast aside. Prem Hari Varma demanded that the motion be circulated for eliciting public opinion. Another non-Muslim member Chandra Chatupadia also

pleaded for more time arguing that they had only received this notice four days back, did not have the time to fully understand the implications of some paragraphs and thus would require study, consultation and deliberation with both Muslim and non-Muslim friends. Much to the dismay of minorities, the Objectives Resolution was tabled on March 7, 1949 and hurriedly passed on March 12, without any meaningful discussion or consultation among the members. This was the first step towards the marginalization of minorities by the majority community. Thus the majority-minority fault line crystallized just after 18th months of Pakistan's independence as all Muslim members with the exception of Mian Iftikhar-uddin voted in favor of the motion while all minority members voted against it.

“ Christian educational institutions provided shelter to the many homeless refugees, case in point being the hostels of FC College (closed at the time), which were converted into a full fledged hospital known as United Christian Hospital. ”

After its passing, the Constituent Assembly instituted numerous committees to work out the details of the constitution which used the OR as a directive principle of State policy. The 1956 Constitution epitomized the deviation from the pluralist vision of Pakistan's founder as Article 27, outlining the rights of each citizen to qualify for appointment in the service of Pakistan irrespective of his/her religious denomination; Article 28, ensuring the rights of everyone to preserve and promote his own language, script or culture without religious discrimination were withheld from the minorities. Despite stark differences between the 1956 and 1962 constitutions, OR was retained as a preamble along with other Islamic provisions. The system of basic democracies which formed the electoral college of the President, National & Provincial Assemblies from the lowest level public representation was further detrimental to the interest of minorities as it drastically reduced the chances for Christians to successfully contest elections to the Provincial or National Assemblies. Ayub Khan also abolished the 5 % quota in government

services, technical and educational institutions that the Muslim League had specified for Christians. Additionally nullification of the provision of 2 acres of agricultural land to Christian families of farm laborers that had been agreed after Pakistan's founding further snapped the opportunities for Christians to rise to the level of economic viability.

“...the majority-minority fault line crystallized just after 18th months of Pakistan's independence as all Muslim members with the exception of Mian Iftikhar-uddin voted in favor of the motion while all minority members voted against it.”

During the 1960s, there was some stir among the Christians and a number of organizations were formed including the Pakistan Masihi League in 1964, the Conventional Masihi League, the Pakistan Christian Democratic Party and Pakistan Christian National League but all failed to make any significant contribution for the community. The Masihi Majlas-Amal was an exception as it did take the streets but still Christian voices against discrimination all went in vain. Christians were even accused of spying for the enemy during the 1965 war. Interestingly Gen. Yahya Khan showed minority friendly attitude when he appointed Justice Cornelius as Minister for Law & Parliamentary Affairs and assigned him the task to frame a new constitution for Pakistan. However, the constitution could not be framed because of the fall of Dhaka and opposition from Bhutto and the head of Jamaat-e-Islami. The last nail in the coffin for the status of minorities was the decrease in their ratio from 23% to almost 2.7% with the loss of the eastern wing providing an opportunity for the extreme right to assert their position and influence. Further, the nationalization of educational, social and cultural institutions during the Bhutto era was a death knell to the financial status of the Christian community. Despite nationwide protests and killing of two Christian protestors in Rawalpindi, the protests could not gather the needed support from the majority and fizzled out as the government forcefully took control of the institutions.

Kamran listed Blasphemy Law as the second benchmark towards the marginalization of minorities in Pakistan. This came about in the aftermath of Zia's Islamization, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, emergence of Imam Khomeini leading to the mobilization of Shia in Pakistan, funneling of money by USA, Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries to support Jihad in Afghanistan, financial support to Madrassas and the rise of the Ahl-e-Hadis sect to the discomfort of liberals in Pakistan. He suggested that the Blasphemy Law which had drastic impact on minorities especially Christians had no connection to Islamic history as there was no mention of blasphemy in the Quran. It was rather a Judo-Christian connotation that the Muslims had co-opted. Nobody in South Asia had ever heard of this law before 1860 when the British first promulgated it. It was revised in 1927 following the Ghazi Iltumdin Shaheed case when the 295A clause was added. However it was note worthy that from 1927-1986 only 6 cases were registered under this law while after 1986 when 295C was promulgated, the number of cases increased to nearly 6,000 mostly implicating Muslims.

The third benchmark was the promulgation of Separate Electorates also by General Zia-ul Haq. The real issue was political as the regime feared that if political participation was allowed, the minorities would vote for Pakistan People's Party. It was withdrawn during the tenure of Gen. Pervez Musharraf. Kamran's contention was that all three benchmarks were not passed democratically by legislatures while the last two were passed by a single individual, thus providing hope that the democratic process would eventually undo them. Concluding his talk, he remarked that these critical benchmarks had very strong imprint on the history of Pakistan and on society. He asserted that they had given rise to sectarianism, intolerance and violence in society.

While answering a question referring to contradictions in Jinnah's stance before and after independence, Dr. Kamran stated that contradictions were part of history and human life and thus could not be discounted altogether. He argued that Jinnah being an intelligent politician knew the practicalities and realities of governing a newly independent nation. He understood that for Pakistan to be a viable State it had to be democratic involving the skills and human resource of the minority communities. Both in

Punjab and Sindh, the commercial and economic classes who could gear the economy were non-Muslims. Similarly he was also aware that all Muslims could not migrate to Pakistan and their welfare and safety in India was a top priority. India and Pakistan had mutual consultation on legislation for the security of minorities in both countries. Thus his speech to the Constituent Assembly had the background of commitments made to the United Provinces (UP) Muslim notables staying behind in India and of wanting the minority communities to stay back and help build Pakistan.

“...from 1927-1986 only 6 cases were registered under this law while after 1986 when 295C was promulgated, the number of cases increased to nearly 6,000 mostly implicating Muslims.”

Answering another question referring to Pakistan as a State with a confused ideology, Kamran responded that this confusion was a product of the notion that Pakistan while being a Nation-State was created in the name of Islam, which was a contradiction in terms. He argued that the Nation-State system was a modern concept and Eurocentric, which was transplanted to colonies and thus was a new phenomenon for non-Europeans. Muslim political philosophy had no concept of Nation-State as Muslims had only ruled empires. Thus the transition from empire to Nation-State had become problematic and required hard work to change the mindset of the people.

In answering a question regarding the education system introduced by the British, Kamran stated that in his opinion the education introduced by the British was not a liberating enterprise because it had no connection with society's cultural ethos. He suggested taking a leaf out of the India book which had managed to come up with its own modernity by producing its own knowledge. He argued that producing knowledge of one's own self and representing oneself instead of allowing others to represent you was the first step towards education as liberating experience. The responsibility lied on the intelligentsia, the

academics and universities as they were completely missing in the public discourse.



“...producing knowledge of one's own self and representing oneself instead of allowing others to represent you was the first step towards education as liberating experience.”

:Dr. Nosheen Ali, visiting scholar at the Center for South Asia Studies, University of California Berkeley was invited to deliver a talk on "From Protests to Poetry: Contesting Sectarianism in Northern Pakistan" on December 2, 2010.



Nosheen Ali opened her remarks by explaining that Gilgit Baltistan (GB) was an area with pronounced sectarian conflict and violence. Over time, sectarianism had seeped into the social structure of the region but its comprehension required an understanding of state building and governance in Gilgit Baltistan. Showing an older map of Pakistan, she pointed out that Northern Areas (As Gilgit Baltistan was earlier known) was part of the larger internationally disputed territory of Kashmir claimed by both Pakistan and India. It was under Pakistan's administration but Pakistan's policy regarding the region had been inconsistent and irresponsible.

She argued that the sectarianism narratives in Pakistan were primarily from the political science and international relations perspective highlighting only few factors. Additionally, primordialist arguments stating that Shia-Sunni differences have existed since 1400 years, have caused conflict and will continue to in the future were usually given. This argument that difference inevitably leads to conflict was flawed as social history showed otherwise. Theology obviously fostered a sense of difference, however, modern political structures needed to be analyzed to understand the rise of sectarianism. Another narrative on sectarianism attributed it to variables like illiteracy, proliferation of Madrassas etc. Although these factors were

relevant, still they were not enough for us to understand the regional and historical context in which sectarianism emerged. Lastly, though international factors like the Afghan War were instrumental in increasing sectarian violence, still the linkages between the two needed to be traced. The question one needed to ask was how the Afghan War translated into conflict in Northern Areas. This linkage and trajectory was not properly traced out in contemporary analysis of sectarianism in Pakistan.

To analyze public policy, it was important to have a comprehensive understanding of the State. A narrow perception of the State was mainly understood through the parliament, the judiciary, the police and so forth while not recognizing school textbooks, cultural policies on Pakistan Television as also part and parcel of the State. She argued that examining the ideological apparatus of the State was essential and realizing that education was a major part of this apparatus very important. There was a need to look at more subtle ways in which State policy perpetuated itself and one of the ways was through public school textbooks.



<http://gbtribune.blogspot.com/p/tourism.html>

Ali began her analysis by providing the regional context of the issue. Gilgit Baltistan was the only Shia majority political unit in Pakistan. Along with the fact that it was a disputed Kashmiri territory, being religiously different and territorially unsettled produced a sectarianism based on a very different cause and consequence structure. While usually sect was analyzed in terms of laws, madrassas and political structures, it was important to understand

sectarianism at an emotional and everyday social level by moving the analysis away from political structures to daily social life.

Historically, sect was never a marker of identity in Gilgit Baltistan. It was the tribe or “qaum” that stood out. The regional or tribal identity was the primary identity of the people and inter-tribe marriages were common. Religion was not taught in schools so the question of, what was taught leading to whose Islam was right never arose, and so conflict was avoided. Gilgit Baltistan had a history of managed pluralism where interregional marriages were encouraged; women and marriage were both used as tools of political resolution and it was considered necessary to accommodate different interpretations of religion for the security of the political and moral order.

“...argument that difference inevitably leads to conflict was flawed as social history showed otherwise.”

Ali then proceeded to describe some of the key events which were critical in understanding how the situation in the region changed. In the 1970's a secular nationalist movement emerged in GB that struggled to achieve political and democratic rights. The “Jail-breaking incident” that occurred during this time was of prime importance. It involved army highhandedness provoking the masses (thousands of protestors) to come out on the streets. The protestors were jailed but more protestors came out demanding their release. The movement became so powerful that the protestors eventually broke into the jails and freed the jailed protestors. An important occurrence during these protests was the refusal of Gilgit Scouts, an army unit established by the British in 1913 to fire on the protesting crowd as ordered by the then district officer. In reaction, the Pakistani State broke up the Gilgit Scouts in 1975 and replaced them with frontier troops from Peshawar. She explained that regional troops usually managed the area better and thus this government decision mainly served as a means of dividing people as the presence of troops from Peshawar was still greatly resented in Gilgit Baltistan. Additionally, to counter the secular nationalist

rights based movement, the State through intelligence agencies started funding religious leaders and clergy of both sects. This State policy sowed the seeds of sectarianism in one of the most peaceful intra-Muslim areas. The 1988 violence in which 12 villages were burnt, 800 Shias killed, animals were slaughtered and trees were cut down was one of the worst incidents of sectarian violence in Pakistan, but had not been properly documented. Still everyone in GB remembered it and it was part of the psyche of the region.

“ Religion was not taught in schools so the question of, what was taught leading to whose Islam was right never arose, and so conflict was avoided. ”

A major and most recent sectarian conflict that the region had seen was the issue of textbooks. Both the 1988 violence as well as the current textbook conflict occurred during the military regimes while policies most favorable for the region were implemented during civilian times. It was both under civilian governments that the 1974 feudal system ended in the region and the Gilgit Baltistan Ordinance was changed last year. Explaining the textbook conflict, she said that it was a movement that went on for over five years in Gilgit Baltistan, severely aggravated the sectarian conflict and shaped the recent history of the region. Generally, it was recognized that extremist mentality, both anti-Hindu and anti-Christian content was present in our textbooks. But we must also recognize that textbooks were sectarian (anti-Shia) which was a major issue in Shia majority GB. A study conducted in Gilgit Baltistan showed that that curriculum of English, Urdu, History, and Drawing from Class 1 to FSc had a sectarian and ideological bent. This led to a peaceful movement by the Shia community to replace these textbooks, which lasted five years. They sent delegation after delegation requesting to undo curriculum reflective of only one dimension of Islam and instead demanded that only consensus-based concepts be included to ensure that the curriculum was reflective of all sects. She thus called it a secular Shia movement.

“...to counter the secular nationalist rights based movement, the State through intelligence agencies started funding religious leaders and clergy of both sects.”

This progressive demand put forward by the people, however, was seen and portrayed by the Pakistani media and State as a Shia movement. People got together to form legal committees and challenged acts of discrimination and sectarianism. A peaceful and progressive call for changing sectarian curriculum was given a heavy-handed response from the army and rangers, resulting in a rising death toll, curfew for 11 months and a complete shortage of staple items. It showed that people in Pakistan were capable of bringing about change but a lack of aptitude by the government in handling the situation completely defeated the purpose and created further conflict. Due to a repressive State policy, the movement was transformed from being against the State into a Shia versus Sunni movement (conflict). Assassination of the popular progressive Shia leader Agha Ziauddin further exacerbated the situation and was one of the key events that led to worsening of sectarian violence in Gilgit Baltistan. She challenged the many analyses terming them incorrect that claimed that Pakistanis had never raised their voice against sectarianism, giving an example of GB where people demonstrated their resistance at a social level. Thus, one needed to acknowledge the resistance of ordinary people to sectarianism. However, it was interesting to note that the textbook controversy and other incidents in GB rather than being well reported were minimally reported leading most of Pakistani public to believe that all was well in Gilgit Baltistan.

Highlighting the role of poetry to counter sectarianism, Ali explained that when the situation in GB got out of control with extreme daily widespread violence, poets of the region were provoked and decided to employ poetry as a means of resolving issues and promoting peace. Thus moving beyond protests, poetic method was used for social resistance and change. Poetry had historically been the source of Islam in the region and was a form of religious and devotional knowledge for the people increasingly in

terms of progressive values. Government officials and the poets came together in the Halqa Arbab-e-Zauq to resolve the sectarian problem through poetry. They organized a conference and a *Natiya Mushaera* (poetry gathering in praise of the prophet) and invited maulvis (clergy) of both sects to attend. It created a perception and belief that not attending the *Natiya Mushaera* was an insult to the Prophet implying that the religious leaders could not turn down the invitation. The *Natiya Mushaera* proved to be an effective strategy in bringing together religious leaders of both sects, and thus provided a space and opportunity to break the ice. The invited religious scholars discussed and propagated concepts of unity among Muslims.

In concluding her talk, Ali stated that in the context of sectarian violence, peaceful poetry constantly served to remind people of common values, humanity and a progressive vision of ethics and politics. During interviews conducted of the poets, they had said that their purpose was to promote harmony, humanism, and a peaceful vision of Muslim ethics and politics. She emphasized that it was important to recognize poetry as a means of social change and movement. In Gilgit Baltistan, it had been used to challenge the sectarian policy perpetuated by the Pakistani State.

“...poets of the region were provoked and decided to employ poetry as a means of resolving issues and promoting peace.”

Dr. Aslam Syed, Visiting Professor University of Berlin, shared his thoughts as a discussant pointing out that religious sectarianism and disputes also needed to be assessed based on economic and socio-political reasons. He highlighted three aspects; one, the building of Karakoram Highway while contributing immensely to the development of the region had also changed the socio-economic outlook of the people; two, the citizenry had been asking for their rights as full-fledged citizens of the country and three, a reflection of neglect of the people of the region and of State policy implementation to keep the area calm and quiet. In response, Ali emphasized that although development was important, still it was not a replacement

for granting political rights to the people. The situation in GB had improved since granting of the autonomous status. The political systems would be further strengthened with time. Additionally, she differed on the role of the State arguing that State policy had created the conflict through promotion of sectarian mentality rather than to keep the area calm. This had led to deep sectarian resentment and sectarian bias in various themes because people had become suspicious of the other, always protecting their own territory. She pointed that the text books issue had still not been resolved. The main issue was that Gilgit Baltistan did not have its own textbook board as it lacked proper constitutional rights. It had been teaching the Punjab Text Book Board books and rather than a radical change in curriculum had opted to replace these with the National Book Foundation books which were considered better. Two books had been replaced but the struggle was ongoing. She argued for a separate Text Book Board for GB which could produce non-sectarian books as a model for the rest of Pakistan.

In response to a question regarding religion and poetry, she stated that there was no divide between secular and religious poetry as human values and knowledge of the divine were both poetic themes, and were very much integrated for the people of Gilgit Baltistan. Further, elaborating poetry's role in politics she mentioned that it bridged the gap between Shia-Sunni communities by bringing both sects together during the textbook conflict. Additionally, incidents particular to Gilgit Baltistan history such as the fact that Gilgit Baltistan was the only region that fought a war to become part of Pakistan, were also discussed through poetry.

Explaining the linkage of sectarian violence in Gilgit to the Afghan War, Ali posited a direct and clear link. The Afghan War created madrassas and hate ideology with millions of dollars. A big part of this ideology and books were vehemently anti-Shia. Additionally 1988 violence was different from the local sectarian violence. The theory was that it was perpetrated to teach a lesson to the people of Gilgit Baltistan who had earlier stopped the Afghan War veterans and lashkaries (fighters) on their way to Kashmir just like few communities who had resisted the current Taliban. This violence was part of the organized program which tried cultural annihilation by forcing the Shia to

pray behind the Sunni imam or re-marriage of marriages earlier consummated under Shia law.

“The main issue was that Gilgit Baltistan did not have its own textbook board as it lacked proper constitutional rights.”

Answering a question regarding the use of technology in Gilgit Baltistan, she mentioned that mobile phones were made available in GB only in 2006 and were not allowed before. However, mobile phones were still being tapped and civilians were deeply hurt by the mistrust of the State towards them. While accepting that the role of technology for progress could not be denied, she argued that a structure guaranteeing rights to the people was essential for development, and there was no alternate to rights and respect.

“...a structure guaranteeing rights to the people was essential for development, and there was no alternate to rights and respect.”

: Mr. I. A. Rehman, former Chief Editor of The Pakistan Times and current Secretary General of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) was invited to deliver a talk on "Reflections: On the Changing Role and Dynamics of Media in Pakistan" on the 13th of October, 2010.



Rehman began his talk by providing a history of journalism in Pakistan. He stated that at the time of Pakistan's creation, most literature was agitational, related to the politics of the period and raised issues that concerned the masses. At that time, English journalism comprising primarily of the two English newspapers Pakistan Times and Dawn had a narrow base and was patterned on British journalism. The problem of having two languages in national print media was thus inherited leading to the emergence of two categories of media. One media catered to the public mood and the other tried to impose a discipline derived from the British parliamentarians.

He stated with dismay that the State of Pakistan deviated from its democratic principles early on. By 1950's, it had become difficult to sustain independent growth of journalism due to the interference of the Government. Gradually as differences emerged between East and West Pakistan, the Pakistani press could not develop into a National Press. Instead, it got divided into East and West Pakistan press compromising both a national purpose and journalistic values.

He emphasized that the period of the first military regime of Pakistan needed to be studied carefully to understand the changing role of media. The military regime of the

first martial law of 1958 practiced an extended exercise of establishing State hegemony over all institutions in the country. It began with controlling cinema- Censorship Act was rewritten and made stricter while State institutions of cinema were established. The attack on writers led to the establishment of a Writer's Guild under State patronage to support the tradition of developing literary yes men and women. Other institutions followed including institutions of law and bar councils. Control over the press was also established through the creation of the National Press Trust, which bought newspapers and brought them under direct control. These actions resulted in State's hegemonization of the spaces for expression, activity and creative growth.

He further stated that even the democratic governments followed the same anti-democratic and authoritarian systems. Elaborating, he argued that the media policy and institutions of Ayub Khan's rule were maintained during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's democratic government and no steps were taken to liberate the press. So the old system persisted even though the military regime was replaced by civilian rule. Ten years of controlled journalism had given rise to "handout journalism" whereby newspapers simply published an issued statement. Thus newspapers instead of becoming forums for debate became notice boards on which one stuck statements and press notes. To this day, when one opens a newspaper it is 70% statements.

“Control over the press was also established through the creation of the National Press Trust, which bought newspapers and brought them under direct control.”

Discussing recent history, Rehman suggested that after the end of the (Zia) military regime, Pakistani press needed 10-20 years to reestablish the principles and dynamics of independent journalism. But what happened instead was the overtaking of the press by electronic media. Today media is dominated by the electronic medium instead of print, and people form their opinions through what is shown on television and other electronic media. Thus they have a formed opinion even before the print

media reaches them leading the print media to ape the electronic. Interestingly, this dilemma has been resolved by making the electronic media a monopoly of print media whereby all major electronic channels have their own newspapers. Overall, he argued that today's media was either more commercial, business-oriented or power oriented. The newspapers now competed on the number of pages they printed and their aim had shifted from mass circulation through low prices to lower circulation at higher prices resulting in a greater reliance on television as advertisement rates on television were much higher than in newspapers.

“...the kind of critical function that the media should perform was receding while its partisan role was increasing.”

Rehman argued that ideally media should draw upon the intellectual and creative resources in society else it would have a very narrow base to work with. This explained the narrow base of Pakistani media as it had failed to draw upon literature, academics and intellectual pursuits. To make matters worse, all television channels had started copying one another without considering their individual requirements and creative input. For instance, if one channel started a talk show, everyone else would also start one without considering whether it suited the objective and purpose of the channel. Additionally, lack of proper training of anchors and reporters had also been detrimental to electronic media's performance.

There had also been a steady decline in the quality of newspapers as number of commentators in a newspaper had become the benchmark of its success. Opinions were stated without factual basis or proper referencing. No newspaper except one in Pakistan had a reference library in comparison to 1963 during his service in a newspaper when all had reference libraries. The old school of thought in Pakistani media was that all news had to be factual and opinions were to be found only in opinion columns. Today's newspapers however contained opinions in the news columns leading to biased and subjective report-

ing. Another reason for the decline of quality of analyses in newspapers was that the reading public had gradually become less discerning and critical about content.

He recounted that the magazine was historically an important part of the newspaper in Pakistan as long articles discussing contemporary issues and providing food for thought, which could not have space in the newspaper became part of magazines. These commentaries, analyses and historical reviews were both edifying and illuminating. In comparing the two main categories of journalism in Pakistan, the English and Urdu journalism, he argued that the contemporary Urdu magazines still followed the old tradition and format, and were informative, edifying and educative. But the contents of English magazines had significantly changed mainly focusing on entertainment and fashion. For example, two major newspapers in Pakistan published magazines of about forty pages which only contained pictures of the elite class at various events and parties. This implied that there had been an emergence of a new upper middleclass, which attached very little value to serious journalism and was not concerned with acquiring historical, political or economic knowledge.

Based on the arguments presented earlier, he suggested that the kind of critical function that the media should perform was receding while its partisan role was increasing. Both electronic as well as print media had started engaging increasingly in criticism and faultfinding rather than a more solution oriented focus to enable people to bring about change. This excessive criticism was instead spreading negativity, a sense of helplessness and a loss of self-confidence among the population. Partly disagreeing with the recent prevalent feeling of unparalleled freedom of press, he stated that there were still certain issues which the media could not discuss. Instead, the greater freedom granted to all institutions including media was mainly due to the government's dysfunctionality and its inability to control or supervise any institution.

Rehman concluded by emphasizing the significance of public discourse and the role of media. He explained that the progress of a nation depended not only on the strength of institutions but also on the strength of public discourse. It was the quality of discourse in a society that determined its ability to move forward. The quality of

journalism and media was determined by the interplay between society and the institution as ideas ultimately come from the people. Even with a vibrant press, Pakistan still lacked behind because the recent public discourse in Pakistan was peripheral and superfluous rather than substantive and valuable. Thus it was important to strengthen the linkages between society and media, and it was the responsibility of conscious citizens to ensure that media as an institution was monitored and corrected.

“...media should draw upon the intellectual and creative resources in society else it would have a very narrow base to work with.”

The talk was followed by a Q&A session. Responding to a question about the role of PEMRA, Rehman explained that PEMRA had been designed in accordance with colonial laws meant to gauge and control freedom of expression. It violated the spirit of our age which demanded that these institutions were regulated by public representatives. The civil society had a very limited role in PEMRA as most of the decision making space was occupied by government representatives and functionaries.



Answering another question regarding the role of State media channel, the possibility of publicly funded media channels and the problem of compromised public benefit for corporate interest, Rehman provided a historical perspective that the State channel had been created in 1964 to enable Ayub Khan to win elections to be held in 1965.

More recently the channel's dynamics had changed due to competition from private channels, the money making motive as it also sold time to private channels, and some programming on matters of public concern. He argued that new forms of communication would ensure that State media would gradually lose its influence, but there was a possibility for public interest channels as over the last few years, few FM radio channels had made considerable progress and acquired a certain degree of respect in this regard. However newspapers and television channels had become lucrative businesses and now required much more investment than before. Additionally, the State had not done anything to reduce these costs but on the contrary had made access to information through newspaper and television more expensive for the public.

Regarding a question if media was promoting brutality, he agreed that there had been a decline in discipline in the area and the media needed to exercise greater caution. He said that in the colonial period censor code, showing third degree on screen was banned and wounds which were vulgar and repelling could not be showed.

Answering a last question on the role of corporate interest in media, he stated that media was amenable to corporate advise only to an extent. Although concessions to corporate interests were visible, still corporate sector did not have decisive influence. The oriental habit of looking to power and authority was more decisive and the assessment of where the locus of power was, guided and determined media policy.

“...progress of a nation depended not only on the strength of institutions but also on the strength of public discourse.”

: Dr. Magid Shihade, a Palestinian scholar currently teaching at LUMS and author of the forthcoming book [What a Soccer Game Reveals: Sectarianism, Violence and Modernity in the Israeli State](#) was invited to deliver a talk on "Retaliation or Aggression? Gaza as a recent milestone in the Palestine question" at the Centre for Public Policy and Governance on March 18, 2010.



Shihade opened his remarks by stating that although Palestinians were generally known to reside in the West Bank, Gaza or abroad, still there were 1 million Palestinians living in Israel and he himself was a Christian Palestinian and an Israeli citizen. But despite being a citizen of Israel, like other Palestinians he also faced discrimination on many levels.

Taking the invasion of Gaza in 2008–2009 as a point of reference to understand the Arab-Israeli equation, he argued that while the media had reported that the Israeli attack was to protect its sovereignty and civilians against the attacks from Gaza by Hamas and other militant groups. However, the reality was that six months prior to the Israeli invasion, Hamas had not carried out any attacks and no Israeli civilian deaths had occurred. This was because a year prior to the attacks, Hamas and Israel had signed a ceasefire agreement according to which Hamas had to prevent attacks on Israel and in return Israel agreed to ease the blockade around Gaza. Hamas had kept its side of the bargain as attested by the Israeli intelligence's assessment that Hamas was interested in keeping the ceasefire. Thus to gauge and further explore the politics and the degree of truth in international media

news reports, Shihade sketched out three frameworks; propaganda, racism and projection.

He stated that the Israeli propaganda following the Gaza attack projecting it as mere retaliation was exposed by the United Nations investigation teams and international human rights specialists from Europe and other regions of the world. He further explained the Israeli spokesperson's argument claiming that Israeli attacks were carried out in retaliation of 13 Israeli civilians killed by Hamas as a racist understanding of the value of life whereby killing of hundreds of Gazans was justified in the name of 13 Israeli deaths. Some Israeli officials publicly propagated this hate ideology to justify the killing of Arabs while an Israeli Rabbi who was also an elected representative had even justified the killing of Palestinians based on divine command. Furthermore, the Israeli foreign minister openly propagated a policy of transfer which in simple terms was to kick Palestinians out of their land. The third framework was the pathology of projection, which was a part of modern colonial history. It included narratives which directed the blame for violence on the natives. Another projection was that Palestinians taught hatred for Jews and encouraged violence against them in their textbooks. Such narratives of violent natives and their inherent cultural violence comprised the Israeli response and explanations for attacks even when the massacre was committed by Israel.

“...a Jewish person belonging to any country in the world had the right to automatic citizenship of Israel while the Palestinians who had inhabited the land for hundreds of years did not have the right of return.”

Providing a historical overview of the discriminatory nature of the Israeli State, Shihade highlighted the use of legal terminologies and mechanisms to obfuscate the meaning of reality. In 1948 when Israel occupied 78% of Palestine, legal frameworks were created to appropriate the land of the people who had left to become refugees. The “Ministry for the protection of absentees' land” while

protecting the land in name, however, was used to establish Jewish settlements. Elaborating the legal frameworks, he pointed out two parallel laws which were framed to appropriate the land of Palestinians who had remained in the Israeli State. First, certain agricultural areas were declared part of "military zones" where no civilians were allowed and second, another law stated that if farmers did not use their agricultural land for over a year, it would be confiscated by the State. Further, a terminology of "present absentees" was applied to the Palestinians who remained in Israel but could not provide legal proof of citizenship. In 1948, the Israeli State demanded legal proof of citizenship from Palestinian residents of Israel. The process involved obtaining a certificate either from a local village council or the military government. Since many villages did not have local councils and not a single villager was given certification by the military government, people who were physically present became legally absent and without citizenship. More recently, Israel had tried to search for the possibilities of remains of a synagogue underneath the Aqsa Mosque, but excavation that could damage another site was prohibited under international law. Thus to legalize it, a plan for the "Preservation of holy sites" including approximately a 100 sites was proposed and since the word preservation had positive connotations, the act was legalized.

“...a terminology of “present absentees” was applied to the Palestinians who remained in Israel but could not provide legal proof of citizenship.”

He then proceeded to provide an overview of the contemporary situation by articulating the main hurdles to a sustainable peace process. He criticized the expansion of settlements, what Israel called "housing" instead of settlement or colonies, alongside peace talks arguing that the State could not blame it on extremist and unmanageable settlers because it provided them protection and facilitation through the Israeli military. Discussing the right of return, he implored how a Jewish person belonging to any country in the world had the right to automatic citizenship of Israel while the Palestinians who had inhabited the

land for hundreds of years did not have the right of return. More importantly, any Jewish person from another country could get property rights in Israel while Palestinians who had been living there for years were devoid of the same rights. This was legalized through an international Jewish organization, "The Jewish National Fund", which owned 80% of the land in Israel and leased it out to the State with the condition that the State could not sell this land to non-Jewish persons.

“...as Israel continued to occupy more and more Palestinian land, there was a greater chance of a single apartheid State.”

Dwelling on possible solutions to the conflict through a single or two separate States, he said that the Palestinian desire was to lead a dignified life with recognition and equality of rights. But the possibility of co-existence with the Jewish community on the basis of equality of rights and human life did not exist for the Palestinians as recent surveys conducted in Israel showed that 78% of Israelis did not want equality with Arabs and 75% of Jewish Israelis supported the concept of "transfer" i.e. forcing Israeli Palestinians to leave Israel. He thus argued that as Israel continued to occupy more and more Palestinian land, there was a greater chance of a single apartheid State. Given such an attitude and policies, he observed that the possibility of another intifada was always present as the Palestinians could not be subjugated to limited mobility, education, trade, employment and economic activity for an indefinite period.

Further, analyzing the international support for Israel, he articulated that the Christian-Zionist movement had increased its political and economic influence over the last 30 years as some fundamentalist Christian groups with political influence in the US wanted to preserve the land of Israel for Jews believing that Jesus would only return to the land of the Jews at the end of the world. He argued that Israel's continuation of discriminatory policies was only possible with the support of the US Government as without it, Israel would be forced to amend its poli-

cies. Furthermore, the US would only withdraw its support when it becomes too costly for it to support Israel.

In conclusion, Shihade suggested that most countries used propaganda to justify their policies while racism and planned projection were also common and universally used tools. The discourse of racism had been well-managed over the past 100 years and had even infiltrated the minds of objects/victims in the form of "colonization of the mind" and "native orientalism" where Orientals themselves repeated an oriental narrative about their own culture and history. He argued that though the citizens of Palestine had not been successful in liberating themselves, still they had made the occupation extremely difficult and costly through their resistance. He further clarified that the opposition and resistance to Israeli policies did not translate into hatred for the Jews.

“...the current international consensus accepted the occupation but condemned resistance to it as violence and terrorism.”



Responding to a question whether negotiations with Israel would resolve the conflict and if violent means to counter occupation were justified, he stated that evidence showed that negotiation or recognition of the State of Israel by Palestinians had failed to bring any positive solution to the conflict as the current international consensus accepted the occupation but condemned resistance to it as violence and terrorism. Such perceptions needed to be challenged as Palestinians were resisting, they were not violent. The only way liberation could come about was through constant public pressure from abroad and persistent rejection of the dehumanizing and racist discourse where Palestinian resistance was seen as violence and Israeli attacks were seen as retaliation.

Industrial Policy in Punjab: A Case Study of Sundar Industrial Estate

: Hajra Zafar

An industrial estate is land developed for industrialization according to a comprehensive plan with the provision of required infrastructure and professional management. Industrial estates have been considered a viable and preferred strategy for industrialization across the world with China leading the pack. But industrial estates are differentiated from industrial zones based on the fact that they are more than land development and transfer from the State to private enterprises. Instead they provide professional management, have industries as active stakeholders in estate's strategic decision making, and provide the common infrastructure and services enabling shared usage of resources for investors to accrue benefits of agglomeration and clustering.

The Sundar Industrial Estate (SIE) was developed on the principles of offering outstanding infrastructure and services to entrepreneurs thus setting a precedent in planned industrial activity in the province of Punjab. Established in 2007, it spreads over an area of 1602 Acres on Sundar-Raiwind road at a distance of 45 kilometers from central Lahore. At present, out of a total of 691 plots only 105 have been industrialized. The largest number of firms belongs to the engineering sector followed by plastic, textile & garment, food & beverage and pharmaceuticals respectively. However, the biggest expansion is expected in the pharmaceutical sector.

The distinguishing feature of the Sundar Industrial Estate is its infrastructure. Three features stand out; first, a large and well-built road network, second, an underground electrification system and third, a water supply, sewerage and gas supply system. But despite this excellent infrastructure it is disturbing to note that some components of original plan have yet to be implemented, particularly those that deal with environmental protection. The two main missing infrastructure components are the Combined Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) and a landfill site, which are crucial for disposal of industrial waste and environmental protection. Developing countries like China and India have experienced and witnessed adverse effects of environmentally hazardous industrial production and have progressed to the idea of Eco-Industrial parks which

incorporate all environmental protection aspects.

Additionally, a number of commercial areas and services provision which were part of the initial plan have not been built. A Technical Training Centre leads this list as most industries are already short of skilled labor with the demand expected to grow as the number of industries rise in the estate. Though a needs assessment study for the Technical Training Centre at SIE was carried out in 2008, work has yet to begun on its establishment.

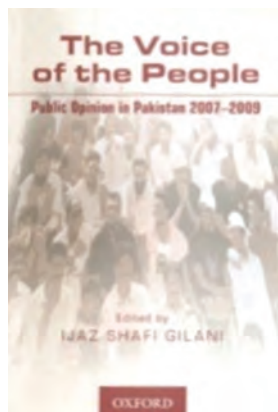
Overall, the pace of industrial progress at SIE has been slow despite the broad range of facilities it offers due to various factors most important being the lack of energy. For enhancing and reinvigorating the SIE, the detailed research based on literature review, investor feedback and personal observations recommends that the Punjab Government take the following essential steps:

- Formulate a preferential policy for industrializing the SIE. While the recent colonization drive has had mixed results, Government's financial support is required for completing a pharmaceutical lab and a technical training centre.
- Ensure continued energy supply including gas and electricity, and support the establishment of an independent power plant. Assist in exploring alternate forms of energy to fulfill long term energy demands and sustainable industrial development.
- Work with industry leaders to make the PIEDMC's Board of Directors and the newly formed Board of Management more effective ensuring constructive public private partnership, effective management and improved services at the SIE.
- Give due importance to environmental factors by ensuring construction of the CETP and solid waste landfill site, and regulation of air pollution.
- Develop a policy framework to support a labor intensive industrial strategy for economic growth by encouraging small enterprises and by facilitating a cluster strategy at the SIE.

**This is a slightly revised version of the Executive Summary of the above titled forthcoming research study.*

Review Article: The Voice of the People

By Imdad Hussain



Ijaz Shafi Gilani, (Ed) *The Voice of the People: Public Opinion in Pakistan 2007-2009* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Opinion polls can be regarded as referendums on important social issues. They provide a mechanism to reveal aspirations of the people about their societies, governments and policies. There could be many ways of finding out these aspirations including television talk shows, letters to editors of newspapers, and social science research. Such ways, however, are not as useful as public opinion polls, provided certain methodological requirements are met in a scientific manner at all stages of their design and execution. One of the main strengths of such polls is that they are conducted on representative samples, which make their findings representative of the people as a whole. These polls are also the best means of determining public opinion in a swift and timely manner and the data generated through them can be particularly useful for policymakers as it reveals public preferences, choices and judgments about surveyed issues. Thus if governments want to respect the wishes of their people, polls can provide a good way of determining future courses of action. It is because of these merits that opinion polls have long become an essential feature of Western democracies. Recent scholarship shows that opinion polls are no more limited to developed countries but have been globalized¹.

With their obvious merits, opinion polls are as relevant to the nurturing of democracy in Pakistan as elsewhere. The country is well-known for all kinds of social ills such as corruption, injustice and lack of transparency which mar the prospects of democracy. Besides these obvious problems, a sizable section of population feels that their opinions are not taken into consideration by the policy

makers. Whereas public policy may not have become responsive to the needs of the Pakistani people, research on public opinion has grown better. *The Voice of the People: Public Opinion in Pakistan 2007-2009* highlights findings of opinion polls on various issues in Pakistan. The book is refreshing and compiles the findings of polls conducted by the Pakistan Institute of Public Opinion (PIPO). It could become a trend setter and publication of more such books will help stimulate research and thinking on public opinion, which is very important academically and politically. The language of the book is simple and straightforward covering salient features of opinion surveys conducted during the years of 2007-2009. These years were marked by political struggles between the military regime and pro-democracy forces. The book includes the findings of polls about national politics, Pakistani international relations, socio-economic issues and health. The editor has provided statistical data with descriptions of the socio-political and economic context. The data provided in the book challenges a number of stereotypes about the Pakistani people. The findings of the Foreign Policy chapter tell that the Pakistani people are concerned about Pakistan's relations with India, United States, Japan and China.

Whilst *The Voice of the People* accomplishes something significant in providing the ordinary reader with useful information, it is deficient on several methodological counts. First, the book states that the polls used a sample of 1,000 respondents. No information, however, has been provided how the respondents were selected. Basic information about the sampling technique used to draw the sample is missing. It is not clear if all polls included in the book were conducted on the same sample or if any pre-testing of the questionnaires was undertaken. It is difficult to guess the language in which questions were designed and in which languages they were actually asked.

Secondly, the book portrays the opinion polls it cites as neutral, objective and useful. While the book is important, its claim to neutrality is inconsistent with recent public opinion scholarship establishing opinion research as "socially constructed."² Since long, the practice of opinion polls is highly contested: in 1972, for example, French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu even denied the existence

of public opinion in his essay "Public Opinion Does not Exist."³ But even if the polls included in the book are accepted as neutral, any serious reader with a research background would notice the lack of methodological rigor as their main deficiency. Statistical tables and their descriptions appear journalistic rather than academic. Each table needs to have the number of actual respondents or the response rate. Without knowing the response rate, it is extremely difficult to determine the representativeness of the polls and their findings. Additionally, findings of the polls are not analyzed at all but merely taken at face value. Therefore, the high level of confidence that the book puts in the findings is simply not justifiable. A sound analysis of the polls data may inform about the stability of the responses because the responses determined by the respondents' perceptions can be misleading.

Thirdly, major shortcoming of the book is that whilst interpreting poll results, no mention has been made of the forces (ideological, political and economic) which shape public opinion according to different agendas. The knowledge about the determinants of public opinion not only helps in data analysis but also enhances the generalizability of results. In Western countries, opinion polls are not taken at face value; not only are the findings of polls contested, but their methodologies are also seriously debated, which helps make findings usable for policy making. As a result, Western poll companies also reveal their affiliations, clientele and sources of funding.

Provision of information on these aspects should have helped to justify the book's claim to neutrality. Also detailed introduction and explanation about the topics should have been included. We get no real indication of the methodology adopted bar a sketchy three-page chapter entitled "How Scientific Polls Work," based on George H. Gallup's book published in 1976. Finally and most importantly, the language of some of the questions is rather vague. For example, the question "Do you think

your country is generally headed in the right direction, or in the wrong direction?" (p.3) is far too ambiguous and subjective. Another such question, "Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: women's rights bill is not according to Islam and the Quran", is appropriate only for scholars of jurisprudence. Only an expert in Islamic law could really be expected to evaluate the Islamic nature of a law, whilst the ordinary citizen can only approve or disapprove on the basis of his or her personal inclination. It seems that some polls were conducted to turn a non-issue into an issue suggesting moral politics of polls in Pakistan. The questions, "Recently, minister of tourism Nilofer Bakhtiar performed parachute jumping in a fundraising event for earthquake victims, in which a foreign coach greeted and hugged her. Do you think this is acceptable or unacceptable?" clearly suggests respondents to take a moral position on the matter. Such critical questions about religious leaders are not part of the book. Nor is there any real indication of the background of the clients of the polls included in the book. Information about clients may help the readers to determine whether the polls were neutral. In fact, clients can play an important role in determining the topics, objectives and results of the polls.

Considering the stated purposes of the book—"inform, guide and educate" (p. xi) the public—one would expect more information on sampling techniques, questionnaire construction, mode of interviews and data analysis. Public opinion research is more like marketing research conducted and used for specific purposes. Thus, one wonders why the editor did not anticipate that information on the consumption side of its data could be desired by the readers. It is important to know the users of polls data in both public and private sectors. In fact, one way to reveal the politics of opinion polls is to know the purposes of those who make appeals to polls data to advance their objectives. This book would have benefited overall through a more rigorously scientific point of view while conducting the polls and by including methodological information.

End Notes

1. For a good overview of the globalization of the public opinion research, see Pippa Norris, "The Globalization of Comparative Public Opinion Research", *The Sage Handbook of Comparative Politics*, eds. Neil Robinson and Todd Landman (London: Sage, 2009), 525-35.
2. Justin Lewis, *Constructing Public Opinion: How Political Elites Do What They Like and Why We Seem to Go Along it* (Columbia University Press, 2001), 9; George F. Bishop, *The Illusion of Public Opinion: Fact and Artifact in American Public Opinion* (Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 3.
3. Pierre Bourdieu, "Public Opinion Does not Exist", *Communication and Class Struggle*, vol. 1, eds. Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelau (New York: International General, 1979), 124-129.

Visitors and Activities

April 7, 2011

CPPG arranged a seminar with Dr. Charles Kennedy on [Assessing Judicial Activism in Pakistan](#).

April 11, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited as a guest speaker by Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA) for the launching ceremony of [SMEDA Research Journal](#).

April 13, 2011

CPPG arranged a seminar with Mr. Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Secretary Livestock & Dairy Development, [Punjab on Livestock Development: A New Public Management Approach- Application and Challenges](#).

April 21, 2011

CPPG arranged a seminar with Professor Francis Robinson on [Crisis of Authority, Crisis of Islam?](#)

April 29, 2011

CPPG arranged a seminar with Dr. Michael Dawny on [Higher Education Policy](#).

May 5-6, 2011

The Director, CPPG presented a paper in the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) Conference on [Development Challenges Confronting Pakistan](#), Islamabad.

May 11, 2011

CPPG in collaboration with the English Department, FCC arranged a seminar with Dr. Kaveri Qureshi on [Punjabi soldiers in the World Wars: Militarization and Diasporic Citizenship in Britain](#).

May 11, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited as a guest speaker by the National Management College to speak on [Provincial Autonomy: Issues of Governance and Service Delivery](#).

May 19, 2011

A delegation of the American Council of Young Political Leaders visited CPPG for a discussion on the [Role of Military and Intelligence in Pakistan](#).

June 7 - 9, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited by the Centre for Civic Education Pakistan to present a paper at a conference on [Regional Conference on Diversity in Kathmandu, Nepal](#).

June 28-29, 2011

The Director CPPG was invited by the Hanns Seidel Foundation for a conference on [18th Amendment Revisited](#).

July 6, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited by NIPA as a Review Panelist for RAG-3 presentation titled [Committee on Enhanced Role of Council of Common Interest \(CCI\)](#).

July 13, 2011

U.S. Coordinator for Economic and Development Assistance in Pakistan [Ambassador Robin Raphel](#) visited the Centre for a discussion on development issues with students and faculty.

July 23-25, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited as a panelist by LEAD International to be a Panel Discussant on [Dynamic, Cross-Sectoral, Knowledge Sharing](#).

July 28, 2011

CPPG arranged a day long Policy Dialogue on [US withdrawal from Afghanistan and Pakistan's Strategy](#).

July 31, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited by the Centre for Civic Education, Pakistan to the [3rd meeting of Citizens](#).

September 8, 2011

The Director, CPPG was invited by Action Aid for a consultative meeting on [What are we teaching to our children](#).

September 29, 2011

Mr. Patrick Anger (EU Monitoring Programme - Asia and Central Asia), Rana Shafiq-urRehman (Secretary General PNCC), Abdul Shakoor Sindhu (RDPI) and Ranga Pallawala (Practical Action) visited the Centre for a discussion on the [18th amendment](#).

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: **Kamran Rasool**, former Chief Secretary Punjab, Federal Defense Secretary and Chairman PIA.

: **Babar Sattar**, LL.M, a Rhodes Scholar who writes on social, political and legal issues and runs a law firm AJURIS.

: **Dr. Shafqat Shehzad**, Associate Professor Comsat University, Islamabad and former Research Fellow at SDPI specializes in health economics.

: **Dr. Ayesha Siddiqua** is a security studies expert specializing in defense decision-making and civil-military relations in South Asia.

: **Dr. Rukhsana Zia**, Director, Directorate of Staff Development (DSD), Punjab specializes in curriculum and management issues in education.



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