

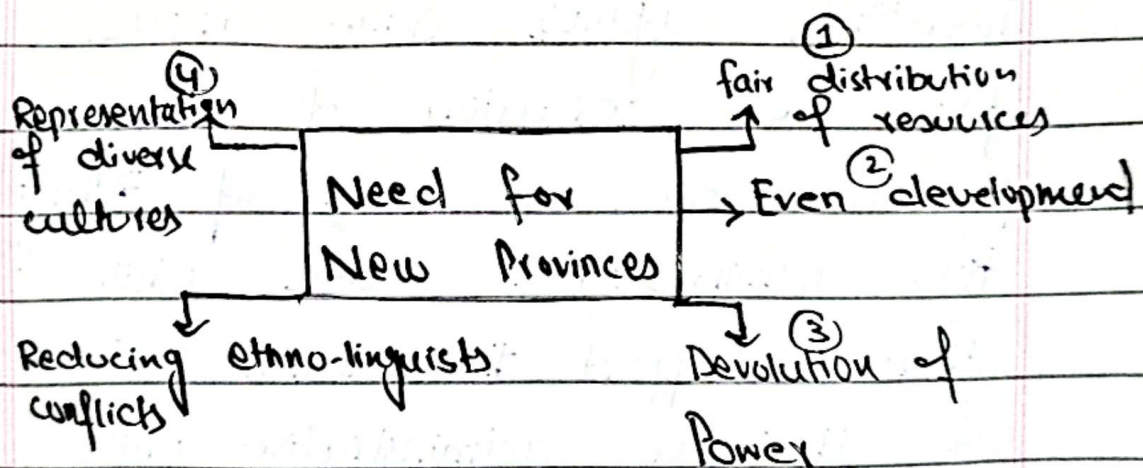
New Provinces in Pakistan

Introduction: From time to time,

debate regarding the creation of new provinces sparks in Pakistan. Pakistan has been facing many problems since its inception. Among many other recommendations, the creation of new provinces was also suggested to tackle the problems of governance, uneven development, concentration of power in few hands, etc. Recently, the debate came to headlines again. Some argue for the creation of new provinces on the basis of thirty two administrative units while others support the reintroduction of twelve administrative units in West Pakistan at the time of independence. However, there are some challenges and the dire need is to balance any new developments with the current socio-political and economic situation of the country.

Need of Creating New Provinces

Provinces: Those who argue that new provinces should be created to overcome political, economic, and governance crisis of the country, often states that it would bring stability by ensuring fair distribution of resources, devolution of power from few hands to the people, and better opportunities for citizens in terms of health, education, and political participation.



Challenges:

There are many challenges in creating new provinces in Pakistan.

To make new provinces, a two-thirds majority is required in the house, while looking at the history of Pakistani politics

one can clearly states that it is very difficult to build consensus among different political parties. The second concern is that the timing for any such development is not ideal as the country is undergoing serious problems in economic, political and security domains. Moreover, the creation of new provinces would require redefining boundaries which is also a difficult task.

New Provinces and the Case Study of India:

Some analysts cite the example of India while debating about the creation of new provinces.

India increased its states to twenty eight after independence, but this development was a result of longterm planning.

Just like Rome was not built ~~or~~ in a day, in the similar way, proper planning and keeping in view the

socio-economic situation of a country is essential for creating of new states and provinces:

India, for example, created States Reorganization Commission in 1953, the commission worked for 21 months and issued its report in 1955. On the basis of this report, States Reorganization Act was passed in 1956. So, creating new provinces is a complex task and needs serious and longterm planning. Furthermore, the creation of new states in India was a result of violent linguist movements while in Pakistan no such movements are present currently. In the past, Saraiki National Movement and some other such movements appeared but currently there is no such movement. Redefining boundaries in India was easy but in

case of Pakistan, it is a complex issue as first the country is a federation. Moreover, the country's economy is not on secure footing and the creation of new provinces will further ~~be~~ create burden.

Strengthening Local Government is key to inclusive governance and devolution of Power in Pakistan:

The two mostly ~~city~~ cited purposes for the creation of new provinces are the devolution of ~~power~~ and the empowerment of people. If one looks at the constitution of country then it is found that a clear people-friendly governance structure is mentioned in the 1973 constitution. Article 140-A of the constitution states that every province must create local governments with

political, economic, and administrative powers, but it seems like the clause is only for existence and not for implementation. Take the example of Pakistan's largest province, Punjab where the local government elections were last held in 2015. Even though the council was created but the budget remained under deputy commissioners control and no powers were transferred to the mayor. Same is the case in other provinces of the country.

Analysis and the Way

Formulation: Creation of new provinces is not the solution to tackle the country's social and political problems. It will create burden on the country's already fragile economy. The need is to strengthen local government system. When the constitution provides

proper structure for devolution of power then that should be implemented too. United Kingdom is a unitary state and it governs effectively by strengthening the local governments. So, effectiveness is the key and not just increasing the number of provinces.

Conclusion: Different factors, and purposes are cited for the creation of new provinces in Pakistan. Challenges exist in this domain. The need is to empower people and devolution of power which can be done through empowering local governments. The country's current economic condition is not ideal for any such development and so are the social and political situation. So, the goal is to put the country on both social and economic development path and ensuring that local governments have authority and they work

in accordance with the constitution.

To sum up, the country does not need new provinces, it needs the empowerment of local governments along with social, political, and economic developments.

which is the main idea