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"EMERGING DEMAND OF NEW PROVINCES"A. INTRODUCTION

The formation of new provinces is a recurring discourse in Pakistan as it has emerged again in recent years. The ethnic divide based on language, culture and caste has been a long non-traditional security threat to Pakistan. With the emerging demand of new provinces, the division of Punjab to separate South Punjab, similarly the division of Sindh, Hyderabad, and in total the demand of the formation of 12 provinces. Although, people in favor of the division of provinces argue that it would make government closer to people, better administrative systems

while opponents argue that it would further deepen the ethnic and regional divide in a country. However, there are significant hurdles of economic, political and administrative aspects, yet they can also be resolved through alternative steps.

B. NEED ANALYSIS OF NEW PROVINCES

New Provinces

Better
Governance

Reduce Regional
Marginalization

Ethnic
Stability

Effective Reach of
Administrative
Units to
Backward
Areas.

Equal representation
in Provincial and
National Assemblies

C. HURDLES IN THE WAY FOR THE FORMATION OF NEW PROVINCES

(i) HIGH COST — ECONOMIC HURDLE

Formation of new provinces require very large amount to set up administrative systems, provincial assemblies and appointment of office holders along with their salaries. The formation of new provinces create economic burden on the state. The 7th NFC Award constitutes 57.5% of provincial share, which needs to be increased creating financial burden to the centre to counter major expenses and debt servicing.

(ii) Political Representation

New provinces demand majority consensus in national and provincial assemblies. For instance, $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of political representation is required to agree on the formation of new provinces in Provincial and

national assemblies. Hence, this further escalates tensions between centre and province.

(iii) ADMINISTRATIVE DEADLOCK

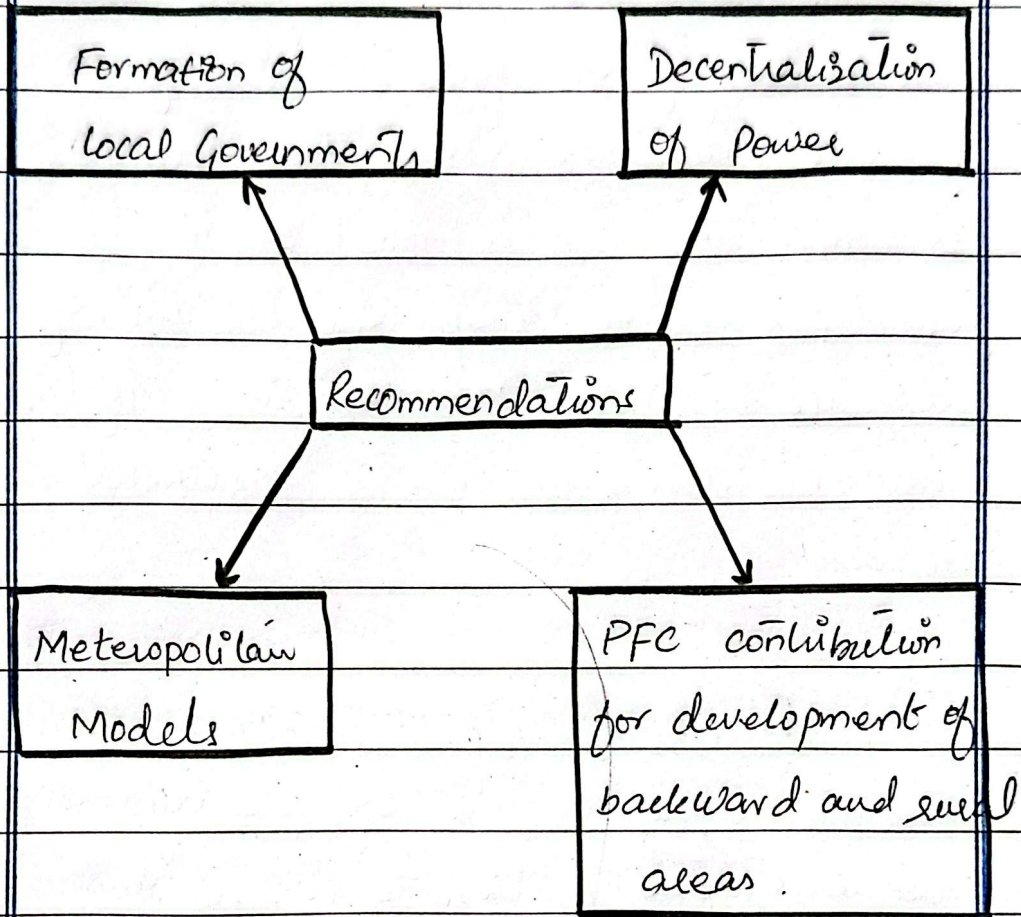
New provinces demand separate administrative units which creates deadlock in administrative efficiency of state. Feudal system in unregulated areas is very strong, they don't allow anyone to hold them accountable.

(iv) STRENGTHENING ETHNIC

DIVIDE

Opponents argue that ^{Pakistan still} faces strong ethnic division and upon the formation or on the way of formation of new provinces, it would further strengthen the regional and ethnic divide. This signifies a major hurdle in the formation of new provinces in Pakistan. As Punjabis didn't want South Punjab to get separated from Punjab.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS



(i) LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Formation and empowerment of local governments would contribute effectively to counter the demand of new provinces with reasonable policies. Local governments in provinces should be strengthened and decentralized to counter regional crisis of resources and effectively fulfill the demands

and basic necessities of local people.

(ii) FISCAL DECENTRALIZATION

The provision of resources is necessary to develop backward areas. For instance, 30-40% PFC can be spent on under-developed areas to counter the demands of separate provinces. Moreover, it would help to eliminate extremism in provincial matters.

(iv) ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Pakistan works on the decades ago administrative policies. To resolve the recurring debate of new provinces, effective administrative reforms should be made.

The hierarchy of administrative system is outdated as ~~they~~ it prevent locals to reach to the higher authorities. Pakistan needs to strengthen its administrative policies to counter arising conflicts and recent crisis.

(V) METROPOLITAN MODELS

Working for metropolitan models such as transport facilities, urbanization and access to basic necessities for the people of rural areas. These steps have the capacity to counter remaining disputes.

E. CONCLUSION

The arguments on the demands of new provinces are somehow valid and justified. However, their fulfillment creates many hurdles in the way of the Government of Pakistan. Although, they create economic deficits, regional conflicts, ethnic disintegration but on the other side, these demands and their fulfillment have the capacity to provide better lifestyle to the people of underdeveloped areas. It would help government to come closer to the people.

and listen to their demands. It also allows the Government to take certain steps as an alternative to protect national policies along with satisfying the demands of locals. Hence, an emerging demand of new provinces create problems, yet they can be overcome through significant steps needs to be taken by the government.

