

Question no : 01

Creation of new Provinces

Introduction:

The debate on the formation of new provinces resurfaces whenever issues of governance, representation and resource distribution intensify. While administrative decentralization is globally associated with improved service delivery, Pakistan's political, constitutional and ethnic complexities make this process highly contentious. As Aristotle said,

Equality consists in the same treatment of similar persons,

However, in Pakistan, uneven development and political competition hinder rational consensus on new administrative units.

1. Is there really a demand for new provinces?

There has been a persistent demand in Pakistan for new provinces.

→ Jimnahpore → demand of Urdu speakers — in Karachi, Hyderabad & area b/w two.

→ Bahawalpur province

During one unit formula, East and West Pakistan were one unit, Bahawalpur was a sovereign state, later merged with western unit.

- Persistent demand of this new province.

→ Saraiki province

People of Southern Punjab demand a separate province, it's demand a recurring phenomenon.

→ Hazara province

Under 18th amendment, NWFP renamed as KPK in 2010.

Hindku speakers were not given representation.

- FATA to be a separate province. There is an increasing demand for a separate province.

2. Basis of demanding new provinces

In Pakistan the creation of new provinces is demanded on ethnic and linguistic basis.

Jinnahpur) → Demand of urdu speakers, identity on basis of languages.

Saraihi) → Demand on language based

Hazara province) → on Ethnicity and language basis

3. Hurdles in making of new provinces :

a) Centre is hurdle

Central government military and civil bureaucracy ^{are} a hurdle in the way of formation of new provinces because;

→ basis of demand is faulty.

Centre is of the view that demand is on the basis of language and ethnicity. It is considered as a first step towards disintegration of the state.

Also, civil-military bureaucracy oppose it.

b) Political polarization

Every party's manifesto remained the formation of new provinces. A divided opinion exists among the political parties, each supporting its own province.

For instance,

→ Punjab-based parties doesn't want division of Punjab as it might threaten their vote bank.

Similarly,

→ Sindh-based parties not in favor of Sindh division.

c) Economic hurdle

Creating new provinces is a serious expensive phenomenon. Overall new infrastructure is to be established for secretariate - i.e. judiciary, legislative, education, health, policing, new recruitment or provincial assemblies. All this requires heavy financial cost, which Pakistan cannot bear at the moment.

d) Constitutional procedure for making new provinces

On the matter of formation of new provinces, provincial assemblies of each province is to be divided

and passed with 2/3 majority.

Central parliament would ratify the resolution with 2/3 majority. Making of new provinces must be enacted as per resolution passed in provincial assembly. So, Creation of new provinces must be initiated by the central assembly of province being divided.

e) Fear of domino effect

Demand for one province triggers demands for others. After South Punjab, Hazar, FATA and Karachi groups would amplify their claims. Political parties fear opening a Pandora's box of new divisions. Provinces worry about fragmentation of administrative coherence.

4. Recommendations for formation of new provinces

a) Strengthen local governments to reduce pressures

Empower the local governance structure under article-140A. By devolving fiscal, administrative, and political authority, new demand of provinces will be minimized. District-level administration will address their grievances.

b) Developing a financial transition framework

A clear fiscal plan is essential for the viability of new provinces. This includes formulating a time-based transition framework for NFE award adjustments, development funds, and infrastructure financing.

c) Promote political consensus through inter-party dialogue

Effective province-making requires national unity. The Council of Common Interest (CCI) can be used as a platform for structured dialogue. Inclusive negotiations can prevent province-making from becoming an electoral tool.

d) Administrative capacity building

Before creating new provinces, Pakistan must enhance administrative readiness through capacity building measures. This includes training civil servants for governance transitions, and improving district-level planning.

e) Conflict management and ethnic harmony initiatives

New provinces should be framed on administrative — not ethnic grounds. Government-led dialogue forums can help bridge divides between ethnic groups in contested regions. Historical grievances, particularly in Baluchistan and Sindh, must be addressed through service delivery.

Conclusion:

The formation of new provinces in Pakistan is a complex issue shaped by constitutional limitations, ethnic politics, fiscal pressures and governance inefficiencies. While the hurdles are significant, a politically-inclusive approach can address provincial grievances alongside strengthening federalism.

Question no: 02

Revival of militancy in Pakistan

Introduction:

The resurgence of militancy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Baluchistan has once again threatened Pakistan's national security and regional stability. Despite major military operations Zarb-e-Azb (2014), Raddul Fasad, terrorist groups like TTP, ISKP, and Baloch insurgent factions have regained operational space. Pakistan's fragmented internal security and regional geopolitics have reshaped militant landscapes.

1. Revival of militancy in Pakistan Evidence

There is a history of recorded events depicting revival of militancy in Pakistan.

- i) Increasing number of attacks by ISKP, TTP and other terrorist organization

eg Dasu attack, Peshawar suicide bombing

(ii) Direct attack on security forces of Pakistan
Such as;

- CTD office Bannu attack
- Repeated attack on police in Lahi Maawat
- South Waziristan — Police heavy firing
- Kidnapping security personnel in Malakand division
- Military convoys attack on North or South Waziristan
- Imploded explosive devices (IEDs) attack on South Waziristan

2. Reasons of revival of militancy in Pakistan

i) Negotiations with TTP failed

After Taliban came into power, Pakistan negotiated with TTP. Taliban offered it between TTP and the government of Pakistan. However, negotiations failed because;

- demands of TTP were severe i.e. to release all Taliban prisoners.

✓ Reverse 25th amendment
and restore status-quo
in FATA

✓ TTP version of Shariah
to be implemented.

TTP abrupt increase in militant
attacks after negotiation failure.

(ii) Afghan soil as a launching
pad for terrorist attacks

TTP using Afghan soil as a
launching pad for terrorist attacks in
Pakistan. ISKP also using it for
terrorist attacks.

(iii) Border infiltration

Pak-Afghan border is not
completely sealed. Owing to hilly belt
areas, border management is a
slightly difficult, so led to
border infiltration by militant
groups.

iv) Security vacuum created by
Pakistan

After Zarb-e-Azb
operation, many of checkpoints whether

in tribal, Bannu and Malakand were handed over to either paramilitary or police by military.

Police not financed or properly military equipped, vacuum filled by TTP.

v) Terrain advantage of districts

The mountainous, forested terrain of KP's ex-FATA districts gives militants natural cover. Balochistan's rugged expanse, covering 44% of Pakistan's landmass, makes quick military response difficult.

vi) External funding of terrorist groups

militant groups benefit from external support aimed at destabilizing Pakistan, particularly through India based networks as repeatedly highlighted by Pakistan's foreign office and dossiers shared with the UN.

3. Recommendations to counter the revival of militancy

i) Reinforce border management

Strengthening the Pak-afghan border through fencing completion, advanced surveillance and joint border coordination is essential. Without curbing cross-border sanctuaries, internal security gains remain temporary.

ii) Rapid development of merged districts and Balochistan

Economic deprivation feeds militancy. Accelerating development in merged districts - schools, roads, health units - will reduce space for extremist recruitment in Balochistan.

iii) Political dialogue and reconciliation

The Baloch insurgency cannot be solved through force alone. Pakistan needs a political reconciliation framework involving elected representatives, tribal elders, youth and rights groups. Addressing

Enforced disappearances and increasing provincial autonomy will weaken insurgent narratives.

As Nelson Mandela said,

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy.

iv) Regional cooperation and strategic diplomacy

Pakistan should deepen counter-terrorism coordination with China, Iran, and Central Asian states. Diplomatic engagement with Iran can disrupt Baluch insurgent sanctuaries across the border. Through SCO platforms and joint exercises can strengthen regional intelligence against militant networks.

v) Strengthen civil-military coordination and national security policy

A unified national counter-terrorism vision is needed. Implementing the National Security policy with clear civil military roles ensure continuity across political transitions.

Conclusion:

The revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan is the product of internal weaknesses and geopolitical shifts. Weak governance, economic deprivation, and terrorist sanctuaries created fertile grounds for militancy. However, through coordinated intelligence, political reconciliation and regional diplomacy can reclaim stability.