

~ (Test 4) ~

Date _____ 20 _____
MTWTFSS

~ (Q#01) ~

Formation Of New Provinces

Introduction:

The debate on creating new provinces has recently gained attention after the renaming of NWFP under the 18th Amendment. Over time, political parties and social groups have demanded the creation of new provinces. Media discussions and political commentary have demanded that Punjab should be divided into smaller units. Moreover, Hazara, South Punjab and Urban Sindh should also be given the right to create a new province. Supporters argue that creating new provinces will bring governance closer to people, improve representation and solve the grievances of marginalized regions. Opponents argue that it would cause unsustainable costs, increase ethnic divisions and divert the state from more urgent issues like counter terrorism, and economy economic recovery.

History of Administrative Units in Pakistan:

Date	No. of Provinces
14 th Aug, 1947	5 (East Bengal, NWFP, Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan)
21 st Mar, 1948	6 (East Bengal, NWFP, Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, Tribal Areas)
Oct Nov, 1955	2 (East Pakistan, West Pakistan)
30 th Mar, 1970	5 (East Bengal, NWFP, Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan)
16 th Dec, 1971	4 (Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, NWFP)

Rationale of New Provinces

(1) Large Size of Existing Units

Pakistan has only four provinces with over 241.5 million population. Punjab with 110 million population is the 13th most populous province of the world. It is greater than 181 UN countries. Even Balochistan is greater in size and population than many many countries. Because of large size of existing province, it is necessary to divide them to improve governance efficiency.

(2) Disparity amongst provinces

Punjab has ~~over~~ 173 seats in the National Assembly while Balochistan

has only 20 seats. Similarly in NFC (National Finance Commission), Punjab's share is about 51.74% while Balochistan's share is only about 9.09%. Although Balochistan is the largest and most resource rich province of Pakistan. So creating new provinces would solve the grievances of Baloch ethno-nationalists.

(3) International Best Practices

Smaller administrative units are the norm globally. Turkey has 81 provinces which is a huge number. It divided its provinces based on administrative needs rather than ethnic or political needs. Moreover, India has 28 states. These states were formed after long discussions and a special commission was formed to address this issue.

(4) Performance of Former Princely States

Former princely states performed brilliantly. Khairpur was the first one to give universal franchise election in 1950. Similarly, it used to spend 22% of its GDP on education. It used to give free hostels and books to students. Moreover, it tripled

its literacy from 1941 to 1961. This shows that governance and literacy will improve by creating new provinces.

(5) Disgruntlement of Citizens

Citizens have to often travel hundreds of kilometers to reach provincial capitals for a small issue. This travel cost increases the financial burden on students citizens.

(6) Backwardness of remote areas

Many regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan have governance gap because of which militancy increases in the region. So improving governance could be done by creating new provinces.

Hurdles in Creating New Provinces

(1) Economic Cost:

Creating new assemblies, courts and secretariats require billions of rupees. For a country already facing fiscal deficit, this would be an additional burden. Even renaming of NWFP to KP took Rs. 8 billion

(2) Floodgate for More Demands

Creating new provinces would happen open a floodgate for more demands. For instance, the Hazara Movement after renaming NWFP is the clear example of this. So, this solution may worsen the political instability.

(3) Intra regional Instability

Creating a new province may empower the majority but may ignore the grievances of the other minorities. For example, creating a south Punjab province may empower Seraiki speaking population, but may ignore the other minorities.

(4) Administrative Hurdles

Dividing assets and posting civil servants across the new provinces is a time-consuming task which may disrupt the service delivery and cause bureaucratic hurdles or confusions during the process.

(5) Political Gridlock:

Constitutionally, creating

a new province requires a two-third majority under Article 239(4) in that respective provincial assembly. In the second stage, a constitutional amendment under Article 238 ~~may~~ should be passed in both Houses of the Parliament. Reaching this consensus is difficult and may elongate the process.

(6) Fate of Existing Agreement:

Agreements like National Finance Commission (NFC) Award, ~~an~~ Council of Common Interests (CCI) and National Economic Council (NEC) were finalized after detailed discussions so by creating new provinces, government will have to start from scratch to finalize these agreements.

Recommendations

(1) Local Government Empowering

Government need to strengthen the local government system. Health, education, population planning, sanitation and infrastructure should be controlled effectively by the local government according to Ishrat Hussain. In the constitution

proper functions of local government should be mentioned. Strengthening local government is the cheapest and most effective solution to this problem.

(2) Opening Regional Offices

Provinces should open regional offices in the far flung areas so that citizens do not have to travel large distance for a simple issue.

(3) Preferential Treatment to less development area:

Preferential treatment should be given to less development area to reduce their grievances.

(4) Introducing E-Governance:

E-Governance would solve many problems. Court hearings, visas application and other problems could be solved by using e-governance.

(5) Fair Allocation of Funds

Local government should be given financial autonomy. Similarly, funds should be allocated

fairly.

(6) Metropolitan status

Lahore and Karachi should be given metropolitan status like Islamabad. Funds should be allocated independently. This would improve service delivery in the urban center.

Conclusion

The idea of creating new provinces is a valid idea, but at this point of time when Pakistan is facing a lot of problems, this idea should take a step backward. Improving local government system can prove to be an effective fix for this problem and in future when Pakistan would recover economically creating new provinces could be done after careful planning and without political interests.

~(Q#02)~

Revival of Militancy in KP and Balochistan

Introduction

Militancy in Pakistan is one of the most serious challenges to national security and development. However, the nature of militancy is different in Balochistan and KP. In KP, it is mostly ideologicistic and jihadist and in Balochistan it is mostly ethno-nationalist. In recent years, there is a sudden rise in militancy. In 2024 alone, KP experienced 702 attacks with 1363 casualties and Balochistan saw 938 attacks with over 1000 casualties. To control militancy in the region, it is necessary to address the grievances of people.

Reasons for Revival in Militancy

1) Historical Causes

including the Pashtun belt Since independence, KP and former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were not under the control of the central government. It was mostly used control by colonial

area FCR (Federal Crime Regulation) and tribal leaders called maliks were responsible for it. So this power vacuum created governance gaps which led to the militancy in those area. Similarly, Soviet invasion in 1979 militarized Pakistan's tribal belt. Similarly, after the ~~Soviet~~ in US intervention in Afghanistan after 2001 further led to the militarization of the region.

(2) Political and Administrative Causes

~~After~~ FATA merger in KP in 2018 was a major step forward but because of weak local government it did not prove to be much successful. Corruption and mismanagement became common and because of the absence of the state writ, militancy grew and now it is challenging the writ of the state.

(3) Economical Causes

Economic underdevelopment and poverty are one of the most main reason for revival of militancy. High unemployment rates, low

wages is compelling individuals to join militant groups who promise them money, adventure and fulfil their other needs.

(4) Religious Causes:

Religion alone is not the cause, but alongside it is adding fuel to the fire. Some militant groups brainwash individuals into believing that their version of Islam is true which is causing the survival of militancy.

(5) Afghanistan Factor:

Afghanistan is providing a safe haven to Pakistan's militant groups. Pakistan has repeatedly told Afghan to take strict actions against TTP (Tehreek-e Taliban Pakistan) and other militant groups but Kabul has done nothing on it. In the past, Pakistan used to blame Afghanistan's NDS (National Directorate Security) for supporting militant groups.

~(Balochistan)~

(6) Political Exclusion

Baloch nationalists believe that they are always politically excluded from the important matter because they occupy only 20 seats in the National Assembly. So this is causing them to form a coalition called BRAS (Baloch Raj Aajoi Sangar) who coordinate attacks on railways lines, CPEC ~~but~~ infrastructures and is disturbing regional peace. BRAS is a coalition of Baloch Liberation Front, Baloch Liberation Army, Baloch Republican Guards and other groups.

(7) Economic Exclusion

Balochistan is resource rich, but ~~because~~ it is still poor. There is no proper infrastructure in it. They also believe that their share in NFC Award is also very low.

Policy Recommendations

(1) Improving Governance Efficiency

By reducing governance gaps in these area will prove

be solving to be a solution to this problem. This is so government needs to strengthen local government in those areas. Preferential treatment should be given to the effected areas.

(2) Dialogues with Afghanistan

Pakistan's western peace is inseparable from the peace in Afghanistan so Pakistan needs to maintain peaceful dialogue with Afghanistan so both can work together to control cross-border terrorism.

Conclusion

The revival of militancy in KP and Balochistan is a serious issue which needs to be addressed. Military alone cannot solve this problem. Pakistan needs to improve the service delivery at the grassroots levels to control this issue.