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MOVEMENT FOR THE RESTITUTION OF BAHAWALPUR PROVINCE IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract:

The main objectives of this research are to investigate the provincial status of Bahawalpur State, implications of the one-unit scheme on Pakistan and especially on Bahawalpur State, and the role of movement for the restoration of Bahawalpur province. It also examines the present situation and current political achievements. Today in Pakistan, the issue of the formation of new provinces has become very hot and serious. Nearly, many movements are working for the new provinces on ethnic and lingual bases, but the Bahawalpur province movement is working for the restoration of Bahawalpur province on administrative grounds only. The people of the region want to restore the provincial status of Bahawalpur so that the backwardness and deprivation of the region could be removed and the region like its glorious past, once again become the cradle

of peace and development. It is not possible to lift the region out of poverty without a fair distribution of resources and devolution of power.

Introduction:

Bahawalpur is a part of Punjab province and exists in the southern side of the province. Area wise is the largest division out of nine divisions of Punjab. It consists of three districts like Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Rahimyar khan and fifteen (15) Tehsil. It lies between latitudes 27.42 north and 30.25 north and longitudes 69.31 and 74.1 east (Javaid, Bahawalpur State: Effective Indirect Participation in Pakistan Movement, 2009, pp. 191-201). Its length East to West is nearly 450 km and its width north to south is just about 175 km.



Figure 1: A map of Pakistan, in which Bahawalpur Division has been shown in red color. Now it is part of Punjab Province of Pakistan.

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9c/Bahawalpur_map.png (accessed date December 11, 2018)

Its width in mid is large (Malik, 2011, p. 31). In the south, its long boundary meets with Rajasthan and eastern Punjab (India). The land of Bahawalpur Division is very fertile (Ateeq Ur Rehman, 2017, pp. 449-452), and mostly people have linked with agriculture, but the southern part of Bahawalpur division consists of desert called Cholistan. It is the second largest desert of Pakistan (Malik, 2011, p. 32). Total area of Bahawalpur Division is 45588 Sq. km and population is 11464031 according to the census 2017 (Statistics, 2018). “Bahawalpur is the size

of Denmark lying between the Punjab and Sindh (Moon, 1964, p. 97).” Population of Bahawalpur division has been increasing since 1947 continuously.

Table 1: Area and Population of Bahawalpur Division (Government of Pakistan, 1951-1998, 2017)

(Population in Thousands)

Districts	Area Sq. km	1951	1961	1972	1981	1998	2017
Bahawalpur	24830	528	736	1071	1453	2433	3668
Bahawalnagar	8878	631	823	1074	1374	2061	2982
Rahimyar Khan	11880	664	1016	1399	1841	3141	4814
Total	45588	1823	2575	3544	4668	7635	11464

The oldest name of the Bahawalpur’s language is “Sraily” which meaning language of Sardars (Heads of tribes or nations). Now, its name is Saraiki that is spoken in the region vastly. In writing, first, Dr. Trump declared the Saraiki as standardized language of Sindh. After it, George Garrison used the word Saraiki in the meaning of language in his book “Linguistic Survey of India” (Malik, 2011, pp. 45-47). Present day, Saraiki language has become very popular in Pakistan (Ahmad, Khurshid, & Asdullah, 2020). The people of the Bahawalpur region speak and understand this language clearly.

In Bahawalpur Division, Saraikis are in majority, but Punjabis have a significant population in the area. Urdu and other linguistic groups have also their important presence in the region.

Table 2: Population ratio by mother tongue of Bahawalpur Division (Pakistan G. o., 2003)

Administrative Units	Saraiki	Punjabi	Urdu	Others	Total
Bahawalpur	64.3	28.4	5.5	1.8	100
Bahawalnagar	1.2	94.6	3.7	0.5	100
Rahimyar Khan	62.6	27.3	2.9	7.2	100

According to the census districts reports of 1998, Saraiki speakers have sufficient majority in the two districts like Bahawalpur and Rahimyar Khan 64.3% and 62.6% respectively but in Bahawalnagar the Punjabis have 94.6% population.

Bahawalpur was a princely state, which was formed in 1727, ended in 1955 which had a history of 228 years of rule by the Abbasi Nawabs. During this long period, Abbasi Nawabs had played vital role for the development of the people of the region. People were very happy and prosper in the Nawabs dynasty. But, after the merger into the Punjab as Division, this region has

become the hole of poverty, underdevelopment, economic and political deprivations. In the past, Bahawalpur was one of the richest states in the subcontinent but now it has become the most backward area of Pakistan. These common issues have brought the people of Bahawalpur closer to each other, which led them to demanding for a separate province. Bahawalpur province movement has been struggling since 1970 for restoration of provincial status, but still she could not success in her mission. In general elections of 1970, the movement was at its peak and flourished the grievances of the region successfully, but after it, she lost her plea and strengthens due to the tragedy of separation of East Bengal. (Javid, 2009, pp. 41-57). But, despite all the difficulties and obstacles, the Bahawalpur province movement is moving towards its destination.

Historical View of Bahawalpur Princely State:

The Bahadur Khan 2nd founded the state of Bahawalpur in 1690 (Naz, 1991). On administrative basis, formation of the state was done in 1727 in Mughal period (Malik, 2011, p. 86) and Sadiq Muhammad Khan 1st made the first Ameer (Head) of the state in 1727 and Allahabad formed the first capital of the state in 1728 (Malik, 2011, p. 27). Bahawal Khan 1st laid foundation of Bahawalpur city in 1748 (Punjab, 1904, p. 54) on the bank of river Sutlej and later this city made the capital of the Bahawalpur State. On 24 February 1833 (Malik, 2011, p. 72), Nawab Muhammad Bahawal Khan 3rd signed states' first agreement with the British in which assured to Nawab the states' independence. Another a written agreement was signed with the British on October 5, 1838 (Malik, 2011, p. 94) that consisted of seven provisions in which the British completely controlled over the foreign affairs of the state. A friendship between Honorable East India Company and His Highness Nawab Bahawal Khan, the ruler of Bahawalpur State was also announced in this document. According to this agreement, Nawab would be completely independent in the internal affairs of the state. The British accepted the responsibility of defense of the state (Muhammad Ashraf Gurgani, 1899, pp. 215-216).

Annexation of Bahawalpur State to Pakistan:

On 3rd October 1947 the Ameer of Bahawalpur declared to accede to Pakistan (Javaid, Bahawalpur State: Effective Indirect Participation in Pakistan Movement, 2009, pp. 191-201) and India tried her best to consent the Bahawalpur state but failed. In this way, two political ladies (Vijay Lakshmi Pundit and Maharani Amrit Kore) that belonged to congress met with the Ameer of Bahawalpur and presented to him more autonomy and powers compared to other states. But Ameer of Bahawalpur gave a short answer to the ladies and said; "Bahawalpur is a Muslim State I will accede to Pakistan" (Malik, 2011, p. 81). On October 3, 1947, Sadiq Muhammad Abbasi (Ameer of Bahawalpur State) acceded his state to the Dominion of Pakistan, and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah the Governor-General of Pakistan accepted this instrument of accession on October 5, 1947 (Malik, 2011, p. 95).

After the death of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, another Supplementary Instrument of Accession was signed between Government of Pakistan and Ameer of Bahawalpur Nawab Sadiq Muhammad Abbasi 5th in October 1948. Ameer of Bahawalpur signed the agreement on October 1, 1948 while Khawaja Nazim-ud-Din the Governor General of Pakistan accepted it on October 4, 1948. According to this agreement, powers of legislation about the states' defense, foreign affairs and communication were transferred to the government of Pakistan. On 2nd September 1949, one another agreement was signed between the both about the reforms in the Bahawalpur State. In this accord, it was settled that Ameer of Bahawalpur would be the constitutional head of the state in future (Malik, 2011, pp. 96-97).

Provincial Status of Bahawalpur State:

On 29th April 1951, Government of Pakistan and Ameer of Bahawalpur state made 2nd Supplementary Instrument of Accession. According to this agreement, State of Bahawalpur got the same status with respect to legislation and administration that was given to the provinces in the Government India Act 1935. According to this, Government of Pakistan got the right to make the legislation about all federal subjects of the state, but the provincial legislation affairs remained the responsibility of the Bahawalpur State. According to this agreement, a separate status of administrative unit or province was given to the Bahawalpur state. Ameer of Bahawalpur had gained the same powers that had been given to the Governors of the Provinces of united India (Malik, 2011, p. 99). Dr. Mehmood Hussain the Minister of States Affairs of Pakistan of that time explained the agreement of 1951 in detail and said, "Provincial status has been given to the Bahawalpur State", and further said that the application of this agreement and strategy would be only on the Bahawalpur State (Jang, 1951).

When Bahawalpur State got the provincial status in 1951 by the Government of Pakistan, then all national and international newspapers published this news. Civil and Military gazette Lahore published this news with the heading, "Status of Province for Bahawalpur Ruler Signs Supplementary Instrument" (Gazette, 1951). The Pakistan Times published it as "Pakistan Government's Pact with Bahawalpur State put on provincial footing" (Times, 1951). The Dawn Newspaper gave the heading of provincial status of Bahawalpur State as "Bahawalpur on par with provinces, Ameer signs new agreement federal laws applicable." In this way, a foreigner daily newspaper, "The States Man" Calcutta and Delhi also published this news as "Provincial status for Bahawalpur" (Man, 1951). In short, according to this Agreement, which was done between Ameer of Bahawalpur and Government of Pakistan, Bahawalpur State had gotten the provincial status.

Under the Bahawalpur Government interim constitution act 1952, in May 1952, first elections for provincial assembly held in the state. According to this act, numbers of constituencies were 49 and total voters were 863217. Muslim League secured 35 seats and Hassan Mehmood took oath the first Chief Minister (CM) of Bahawalpur Province. Muhammad Afzal Laghari and Rao Hafeez-u-Rehman also took oath as finance minister and education minister respectively. The event was held in Sadiq Garh Palace Ahmadpur East under the presidency of Ameer of Bahawalpur Sadiq Muhammad Abbasi fifth (Malik, 2011, pp. 115-116).

One-Unit Scheme and Eradication of Bahawalpur State:

On the one side, new democratic government of Bahawalpur had started the development activities in the state, but on the other hand issue of legislations in Pakistan had adopted a serious problem. Many governments eliminated due to this serious issue. Pakistan could not make her constitution in first nine years, but the India had made her constitution in first two years. On 24th October 1954, Malik Ghulam Muhammad the Governor General of Pakistan dissolved the first legislative assembly and emergency was imposed in the country by him and declared that this step was taken due to the political instability in the Pakistan. After one week of this step, Ameer of Bahawalpur also announced termination of provincial assembly and ministries of Bahawalpur State. And all authorities assigned to his senior advisor. Ameer of Bahawalpur used the article 47 of interim act 1952 of Bahawalpur State and gained all powers of the State himself (Kaynaat, 1972). Thus, process of development in the state had stopped due to the eradication of this public ministry.

For resolving the constitutional issue in the country, parity system was brought in Pakistan in which all the administrative units of western Pakistan amalgamated in one unit. Thus, Pakistan consisted of two parts like West Pakistan and East Pakistan and constitution of 1956 came into being under the leadership of Choudhary Muhammad Ali the Prime Minister of Pakistan. For this purpose, when all the provinces and administrative units announced the favor of the formation of one unit then Ghulam Muhammad the Governor General of Pakistan formed an administrative council for unitary Government in western part. In the light of decisions of this administrative council, it was decided to make a separate commissioner of Bahawalpur State. On 14th April 1955, Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani was made the first Governor of Western Pakistan and Mr. Dr. Khan Sahib was made first Chief Minister. On 14th October 1955, formation of one unit namely West Pakistan came into being. Bahawalpur Princely State amalgamated into one-unit (Province West Pakistan) on October 14, 1955 (Naz, 1991) and separate status of Bahawalpur State removed with this official announcement of one-unit and Bahawalpur State became the part of Western Pakistan as a division. And thus, rule of Abbasi dynasty (1727-1955) had eradicated in Bahawalpur State (Malik, 2011, p. 132).

Implications of One-Unit on Pakistan and Specially on Bahawalpur State:

One-Unit scheme was not successful for Bahawalpur as well as Pakistan. Due to the One-Unit scheme, the concept of separate nation as a linguistic based raised in Pakistan. In this regard, this scheme made the Multi-Purpose Society to Pakistan. The public of Pakistan divided into different nations like Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Pushto and Muhajir instead of Muslim nation. In this way, according to this progressive theory, the new concept raised in the name of language, culture and civilization. So, in the formation of Pakistan, the concept of Muslim nation was eradicated, and new concept of Multi-Purpose society raised (Malik, 2011, p. 185). When this scheme was brought then it was said by the proponent of this scheme that the formation of one Government rather than many, to save the national assets, eradication of regional prejudice, to unite the different linguistics groups, equal chances of development, eradication the problem of division of rivers water, easy in the completion of legislative process, division of the resources on equal basis, integrity in both wing, discouragement of Pakistan against elements etc. But, for the formation of one-unit the federal government did not do any comprehensive planning (Malik, 2011, p. 183).

Bahawalpur accepted to be including in one-unit herself like other provinces, but after the formation of one-unit, Bahawalpur loosed very much. Bahawalpur state was kept deprive in every field of life like politically, religiously, socially, economically and administratively during the one -unit. Before the formation of one-unit, the budget of Bahawalpur State was about more than 70 million and 25 million were kept for the development works of Bahawalpur State but after the formation of one-unit the development fund of Bahawalpur State had become very low than half (Shahab, 1977, p. 377). Already started development plans remained incomplete (Malik, 2011, p. 191). It is a notable detail that Bahawalpur merged into one-unit with provincial status (Abbasi, 1999, p. 188) but when one unit was wrecked on 30th March 1970 it was made the part of Punjab as division. But at the time of merger, a sympathetic was given to the Ameer of Bahawalpur that whenever one-unit will be dissolved then Bahawalpur State will be reestablished as a province (Abbasi, 1999, p. 204). In March 1970, General Muhammad Yahiya Khan announced to break the one-unit and curved out new four provinces in West Pakistan. But, Bahawalpur State was not restored as separate province and welcomed it into Punjab Province (Javid, 2009, pp. 41-57).

On 16th January 1956, Riaz Hashmi joined the “Anti One Unit Front” for the privileges of Bahawalpur. This front was set up under the leadership of GM Sayed in Karachi (Hashmi, 1972, p. 125). In the manifesto of this front, it was demanded that “The West Pakistan be divided into five provinces namely Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, North West Frontier and Bahawalpur” (Hashmi, 1972, p. 126). After the few months of the formation of one-unit, anti-one-unit movement started in the country. In this way, in September 1957, provincial assembly of West Pakistan passed a declaration against the one-unit and demanded four or more than four provinces in West Pakistan. Members of Provincial Assembly of Bahawalpur region Mr. Sardar Mehmood Khan, Mr. Allama Arshad and Mr. Muhammad Qassim supported the declaration. Politicians of Bahawalpur region also opposed this scheme and twelve members of assembly of the region unanimously gave a press statement that the “public of Bahawalpur will not accept the amalgamation of the state into another province. We are ready for fighting in every field for the restoration of our constitutional rights (Kaynaat S. , 1957).” Moreover, Sardar Mehmood Khan met with Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Hussain Shaheed Soharwardi and discussed about the Bahawalpur issue. PM of Pakistan ensured to Sardar Mehmood Khan that “if one-unit broken then Bahawalpur will be restored.” (Kaynaat S. , 1957)

After imposing the constitution of 1962, when new assembly of West Pakistan came into being then the members belonged to Bahawalpur region were Mr. Choudhary Farzand Ali, Mr. Sardar Mehmood Khan, Mr. Sardar Ayub Khan, Allama Arshad, Mian Qasim Awaisi etc. These members raised their voice in the assembly about the deprivation of the region. First voice about deprivation of the Bahawalpur was raised by the Sardar Muhammad Ayub Khan in the provincial assembly of West Pakistan. He said that Bahawalpur was more affected region by one unit. Before the one unit, the total budget of Bahawalpur was more than 70 million rupees and 25 million rupees were consumed for the development works of the Bahawalpur State. But after the one unit, development fund of the state was also less than half. After the one unit, mostly development plans for Bahawalpur State had stopped and a few were completed. In July 1964, Allama Arshad said that if government did not change her behavior then our slogan would be that “Break the One unit and return Bahawalpur to us” (Malik, 2011, pp. 190-191)

Consequently, it all historical prospective, describes that Bahawalpur State has a separate provincial status in the past on which grounds the political leadership and the public of the Bahawalpur State want to rehabilitation of Bahawalpur province instead of new province. There are many movements are working for separate or new provinces in Pakistan, but Bahawalpur province movement is working for restoration of Bahawalpur province. In this manner, they claim that Quaid-e- Azam as Governor General of Pakistan had given the guarantee into the instrument of accession that was signed between Quaid-e- Azam and Ameer of Bahawalpur that the status of Bahawalpur State would be as a separate unit in the federation of Pakistan. Moreover, the first legislative assembly of Pakistan passed the Objective Resolution on 12th March 1949 in which basically this principal was accepted that the present provinces and states of Pakistan will be kept in hold (Malik, 2011, p. 128).

Movement for the Restoration of Bahawalpur Province:

The year of 1969 was a very important and revolutionary year for Pakistan. Ayub Khan's ten-year rule ended that year. On 28 September 1969, Chaudhary Farzand Ali, former Speaker of the Bahawalpur Assembly, said in an interview that if Bahawalpur was included in any other province it would be a 'second Radcliff Award' (Kaynaat, 1972). In the same year, it was decided to break the One-Unit and implement the Legal Framework Order (LFO) under which one man

one vote and to integrate Bahawalpur into Punjab. “The Bahawalpur Province Movement (BPM) began to take shape when General Yahya Khan's regime took the decision of dissolving One-Unit.” (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 103). On November 22, 1969, the different newspapers started open-handed material that the government would dismiss the demand of One Unit soon and the previous structure of provinces would be evoked. It was considered that Bahawalpur would not be granted a separate identity (Javaid, Federation of Pakistan and Creation of New Provinces: A Case of Bahawalpur Province, 2018, pp. 15-36).

Therefore, when it was decided in principle that One-Unit would be disbanded, the politician of Bahawalpur, including Allama Rehmat Ullah Arshad, formed the All-Party Action Committee (APAC), at Azad Manzil Bahawalpur on November 22, 1969. This meeting was attended by leaders of various parties including Chaudhary Farzand Ali (Council Muslim League), Raja Mukhtar (President Bar Association of Bahawalpur), Seth Obaid-ur-Rehman (Convention Muslim League), Sayyed Chirag Shah (Independent), Sayyed Meharban Shah (National Awami Party), Chaudhary Bashir Ahmad Cheema (Ex. Deputy Speaker of Bahawalpur Assembly) Maulvi Abdul Hameed (Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam), Mian Nizamuddin Haider (Council Muslim League), Munshi Muhammad Hassan Chughtai (Majlis Ahrar Islam), Altaf Qureshi (Convention Muslim League), Meer Anwar-ul-Hassan (Council Muslim League), Chaudhary Hashmat Ali (Pakistan Democratic Party), Chaudhary Rehmat Ullah (Pakistan Democratic Party), Maulana Ghulam Mustafa (Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam), Allama Arshad (Independent), Chaudhary Masood Ahmad (Pakistan Democratic Party), Maulvi Khair Muhammad (Pakistan People's Party), Chaudhary Barkat Ullah (President Chamber of Commerce). (Malik, 2011, p. 198). A ten-point unanimous resolution was passed by the leaders of all these parties at the meeting in which an attempt was made to convince the government, citing the provincial status of Bahawalpur that;

.... before the formation of One-Unit, Bahawalpur was a separate province. It had its own elected assembly and her own High Court. Therefore, in principle, after the dissolution of One-Unit, the old status of Bahawalpur should be restored (Shah, 1959) and if it is not restored, the people of Bahawalpur will start a movement for their rights (Mashriq, 1969).

More than a few pressures groups were shaped for the restoration of Bahawalpur province, in which a forum, Tehrik-e-tahaffuz-a-hakuk-a-Bahawalpur was designed in the same week. Ma'dud Qureshi was elected as its first president, while Shahid Sadiqui became the general secretary of this Tehrik (movement). Several groups for protecting the rights of the people of Bahawalpur and the restoration of its status as a separate province emerged, which included: Anjuman-e-tahafuze-hakok -e- Bahawalpur, Tehrik -e-tahafuz-e- hakok -e- Bahawalpur, Student's Mutahidda Mahaz (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 106). One of the powerful groups was the Bahawalpur Mutahidda Mahaz (Bahawalpur United Front-BMM), known as Mahaz. The most noteworthy creams of the crop of this Mahaz were Sardar Mahmud Khan, Mian Nizamud Din Haider, Farzand Ali and Tahira Masood (Javaid, Federation of Pakistan and Creation of New Provinces: A Case of Bahawalpur Province, 2018, pp. 15-36). BMM began since February 1970 onwards to arrange enormous community seminars and demonstrations in favor of the separate province of Bahawalpur.

The first meeting in connection with rehabilitation province movement in Bahawalpur was held in January 2, 1970, by Tehrik -e-tahafuz-e- hakok -e- Bahawalpur, a youth organization headed by Mahmood-ul-Hassan Qureshi and General Secretary Shahid Siddiqui. This was the

first regular meeting of restoration province movement in which local political leaders also participated and in this public meeting a demand was made to restore the provincial status of Bahawalpur (Malik, 2011, p. 203). The second meeting regarding the restoration of the province in Bahawalpur was held the chairmanship of Pirzada Mahmood Aslam, the curator of “Anjuman-e-Ishaat Sirat-un-Nabi”. The rally, which was held before the meeting, chanted slogans against Makhdoom Hassan Mahmood and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (Pakistan D. W., 1970). In this regard, the third major seminar was held in Bahawalpur under the chairmanship of Maulana Abdul Majeed, Nazim of Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam. In all these meetings, the provincial restoration of Bahawalpur was demanded (Daily Dastoor, Bahawalpur, 17th January 1970).

Apart from Bahawalpur, a meeting was also held on January 1, 1970 in Jinpur, a town in Liaquatpur Tehsil of Rahimyar Khan District in which all the communities of the area presented and unanimously presented a resolution for the restoration of the province. On January 2, 1970, a procession was taken in Khanpur under the leadership of Maulana Siraj Ahmad Din Puri, followed by meeting in which Makhdoom Shahab Uddin and Mian Muhammad Islam addressed. The provincial restoration of Bahawalpur was also demanded in this meeting (Daily Dastoor, Bahawalpur, 3rd January 1970). Similarly, on January 3, 1970, District Rahimyar Khan's students marched and demanded the restoration of Bahawalpur province (Daily West Pakistan, Bahawalpur, 4th January 1970). On January 5, 1970, three Lac refugees from Bahawalnagar District announced the formation of an All-Party Majlis-e-Amal and vowed to do everything possible to support a separate province (Malik, 2011, p. 204).

On 11 January 1970, the Lawyers Convention was held in Bahawalpur with the participation of representatives of Bar Association of the entire division. Raja Mukhtar Ali presided over the meeting while Chaudhry Farzand Ali acted as secretary. The resolution demanded that;

Constitutionally, historically and geographically, the former Bahawalpur had never been a part of Punjab ---. Bahawalpur is a self-sufficient unit in terms of population and resources and can run its own administrative affairs without any difficulty. ---On this basis, the all Bahawalpur Lawyers Convention urges the President of Pakistan to restore Bahawalpur as a province with its former boundaries if One-Unit is broken (Daily West Pakistan, Bahawalpur, Lahore, Sukkur, 12th January 1970).

Fifteen key members of the convention expressed their views on the issue, with twelve members supporting the restoration of the province while three members opposed it. In the end, the house unanimously passed the resolution.

A peaceful procession of Bahawalpur Muttahida Mahaz was also taken out on February 21 led by Chaudhry Farzand Ali, Allama Arshad, Mian Nizamuddin Haider and Seth Obaid-ur-Rehman. The people in the procession carried placards “make Bahawalpur a separate province”. Sardar Najumuddin Laghari published a pamphlet, Bahawalpur ka Muqadma, in which Bahawalpur was claimed as a separate administrative unit. A booklet was published by the people of Bahawalpur entitled “Bahawalpur Soobe Ka Muqadma” (the Case of Bahawalpur Province). Pakistan Leaguer Group also published a pamphlet entitled “Bahawalpur Ka Elehdah Sooba Kiun Nehi” (Why not a Separate Province of Bahawalpur). In the light of data in this pamphlet it was made clear that Bahawalpur has the potential to be established as a separate province (Malik, 2011, p. 211). The pamphlets “Bahawalpur Ka Sooba Kiun Aour Kis Liye”

(Why and for what Province of Bahawalpur) and “Bahawalpur kae tees lakh insan’uan ki awaz” (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 105) (The Voice of Three Million People of Bahawalpur) were published by Waliullah Ahad and Seth Obaid-ur-Rehman respectively. In which the demand of Bahawalpur Province was very effectively advocated. Chaudhry Farzand Ali, the president of BMM, also published a pamphlet entitled “The Choice of Bahawalpur”. This pamphlet also gave arguments in support of Bahawalpur province. Riaz Hashmi in his book “Brief for Bahawalpur Province” made similarly demands. This written front of the movement for the restoration of the province was well received by the local newspapers (Malik, 2011, pp. 211-212).

Prince Mamun-ur-Rasheed Abbasi, a prominent figure in the Abbasi family of Bahawalpur State, took to the field to take part in the province’s restoration movement. He formed a separate semi-political organization called Anjuman Dadputragan. The organization announced a collective movement for provincial restoration. Addressing a press conference in Multan outside Bahawalpur Division to resolve the issue of province rehabilitation, Mamun-ur-Rasheed said that “referendum should be held under the supervision of the army on the issue of making Bahawalpur a separate province and if our demand is not accepted, the general elections will be boycotted” (Daily Mashriq, Peshawar, Karachi, 15th April 1970). In short, hundreds of people participated in these processions and demanded the provincial restoration of Bahawalpur. These processions were very important in that they were attended by many people in addition to the leading members of the Abbasi family (Malik, 2011, p. 213).

From January 2, 1970 to March 28, 1970, the movement for the restoration of Bahawalpur province continued in various ways. Numerous political and social activists also continued to demand through their statements that the provincial status of Bahawalpur be restored. On February 22, 1970, many members of the United Front, led by Chaudhry Farzand Ali, met with West Pakistan Governor General Atiq-ur-Rehman and briefed him on the sentiments and feelings of the people of Bahawalpur. Earlier, on February 20, 1970, Air Marshal Asghar Khan had spoken in favor of restoration of a separate province Bahawalpur (Daily Mashriq, Peshawar, Karachi, 21st February 1970). On March 3, 1970, Allama Arshad made it clear through a press conference in Lahore that if Bahawalpur was forcibly included in the Punjab, there would be an element of distinction between local and non-local. He said that if Balochistan can become a province then why Bahawalpur cannot become a separate province. He further clarified that Bahawalpur had been declared a separate province in 1954 recommendations (Daily Mashriq, Peshawar, Karachi, 4th March 1970).

Meanwhile, on March 28, President Yahya Khan in his broadcast speech announced the inclusion of Bahawalpur in Punjab, which caused a wave of unrest in Bahawalpur. The United Front decided that from March 30, 1970, there would be continuous processions in violation of Martial Law and arrests would be made. Violations of Martial Law continued in Bahawalpur from March 31 to April 24, 1970, with various political leaders and activists presenting themselves for arrest. Meanwhile, the Ameer of Bahawalpur declared that “he is in favor of the movement for the people and not for his power and will talk to President Yahya Khan soon in this regard” (Daily Mashriq, Peshawar, Karachi, 15th April 1970). By March 23, 1970, thirty-two United Front leaders and political activists had been arrested. When the majority and workers of central leadership of the Bahawalpur United Front were arrested, the movement was intensified by the Anjuman Dadputragan, another group in the Restoration Province Movement. Moreover, on the behalf of the women of Bahawalpur, Begum Tahira Masood, daughter of Mian Nizamuddin Haider, announced a movement and regular processions of women wearing burqas

began to take place. All this continued from April 15 to 23, 1970. For the meantime, on April 17, the refugees from Bahawalpur also marched in favor of a separate province. According to newspapers, about forty-thousand people participated in it (Malik, 2011, p. 218).

April 24, 1970 is considered the most important day of the Bahawalpur Province Restoration Movement. The police opened fire on a march of the BMM, assassination two people and injuring more than a few others. The heartless tactic of the government added additional fuel to the fire (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 109). Mamun Rasheed had a heated argument with a police officer, so Mamun Rasheed slapped a ASI, which made the situation very tense. Suddenly, the police started moving, first charging batons and then throw gas shells. This caused a stampede among the people at Farid Gate and people started taking shelter in nearby buildings. After that regular firing started and worker Hafiz Shafiq standing the loudspeaker was shot. Some people picked up Hafiz Shafiq in an injured condition, but he died on the way (Malik, 2011, p. 221). The women's processions did not reach Farid Gate, as it was completely under police control at the time, and that night police launched a series of arrests and deportation orders were issued for Begum Tahira Masood. About sixty people were arrested in three or four days. On 25th April, a curfew was imposed in the city and handed over to the army (Dawn, Karachi, 25th April 1970). The leaders were sentenced by military court to various terms ranging from a maximum of one year to a minimum of three months (Malik, 2011, pp. 224-225).

Mamun Rasheed, who was sentenced to ten years in prison, but was released after the December 1970 elections. After his release, he reached Bahawalpur on December 27, 1970, where he was received by great welcome. Addressing on the occasion, he said that the constitutional responsibilities of Tehreek-e-Bahawalpur (Bahawalpur Movement) should be fulfilled. People, test your elected representatives, the people will find me steadfast in every affliction. The cold- blooded expression of Muttahida Mahaz leaders on the release of Mamun Rasheed reflects the fact that there was a lack of coordination among rival organizations in the province and there was an element of competition among them (Malik, 2011, p. 232).

The PPP won 81 out of 138 seats in the National Assembly from West Pakistan and 113 out of 181 seats in the Provincial Assembly while PPP could get only three seats from Bahawalpur State. PPP was the most opposition party of the movement for the restoration province in the former State. In Bahawalpur division, out of eight seats of the National Assembly, the BMM got four out of eight seats. The members elected included Mian Nizamuddin Haider, Prince Saeed-ur- Rasheed Abbasi, Makhdoom Noor, Mian Jamal Koreja. Syed Muhammad Rafiq, an elected MNA of the Qayum League from Bahawalnagar, also announced his support for the separate province. These five members got over 330000 votes from the area, and their opponents secured I 44 000 votes (Kaynaat, (Goli Number), Bahawalpur, July 3, 1972). The Mahaz also succeeded in winning the support of 18 members of the provincial legislature (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 109).

Table 3: Party Position of Bahawalpur Division in Elections 1970 (Pakistan N. A.)

Name Legislatures Institute	Total Seats	Bahawalpur United Front (BMM)	PPP	Qayyum League	Convention League
National	8	4	3	1	-

Assembly					
Provincial Assembly	18	8	6	2	2

Table 4: Bahawalpur United Front-BMM's Party Position after Gaining Support from other Parties (Malik, 2011, p. 307)

Name Legislatures Institute	Total Seats	Bahawalpur United Front (BMM)	PPP	Qayyum League	Convention League
National Assembly	8	6	2	---	---
Provincial Assembly	18	10	6	1	1

Consequently, it was the biggest success of BMM in the 1970 elections and the public of the Bahawalpur Division supported to their representatives for the restoration of Bahawalpur province. "All this suppressed emotion was expressed in the elections of 1970. Most seats went to the sympathizers of the Mahaz, whether they stood as independent or as candidates of a political party." (Rahman, 1996, p. 182). Movement for restoration Bahawalpur Province was its peak at the time of general elections of 1970. The candidates who contested the elections on the behalf of the separate province of Bahawalpur got almost 80 percent votes. The total number of votes cast in this election was 1037699 out of which 714400 votes were cast for the supporters of Bahawalpur province (Kaynaat, Bahawalpur, 5th January 1971). This was proof that the majority of the people of Bahawalpur were in favor of the province (Malik, 2011, p. 308). "These elected representatives issued statements and declarations in favor of a separate province and limited their activities to paying lip service to the cause (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 109)."

Chaudhry Farzand Ali, who was the convener of the front and was an elected Member of National Assembly in the 1970 elections on the platform of BMM, wrote to General Yahya Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in support of the separate Bahawalpur province, but he stopped at that. The core motive behind the loss of strength by the BMM seems to be the emergency created by East Pakistan. On December 16, 1971, Pakistan had broken in two separate parts in which one was the Bangladesh while second rest Pakistan. Even after suffering in 1971, the BMM did not consider it an appropriate to run the movement on the same level. The United Front felt that it was not suitable to put pressure on the government for a separate province at that time and at the same time, the front lost its unity and effectiveness (Javid, 2009, pp. 41-57). Many cream of the crop of the BMM claimed that the prolongation of this struggle would threaten the integrity of Pakistan which was going through a difficult period in its history (Khan H. A., 2004, p. 110).

During the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Martial Law government, an interim constitution was issued according to which he was declared the president of Pakistan and then he started the work

of drafting the constitution. At this stage, the Bahawalpur Front sent a memorandum in the service of President Z. A. Bhutto. The memorandum was signed by five elected members of National Assembly and ten elected members of the Provincial Assembly. In this memorandum, a request was made to the President of Pakistan that;

The election results have proved that most of the people here want the restoration of the former provincial status while the pro-accession candidates could not get a single seat---. The integration of Bahawalpur is a dark chapter in the present history which completely ignored our 300-year-old individuality, self-sufficiency and ability to carry provincial affairs---. We appeal to our democratic President of Pakistan and the leaders of the all political parties to make Bahawalpur the fifth province of West Pakistan (Kaynaat, 1972).

In the 1970s, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's smart strategies contained all separatist identity politics in the country. He crushed the Baloch nationalist movement by military action, and enacted a law imposing seven years severe imprisonment if anyone demanded a status of state for the provinces. Partly due to this, but mainly due to the badly organized Siraiki movement, it could not be fully mobilized, and limited itself to literary and cultural activities (Khan H. A., 2004, pp. 89-90). During the rule of Z.A. Bhutto and General Zia-ul-Haq, strict action was taken against these nationalist organizations due to which they did not get a chance to emerge. But after the era of General Zia-ul-Haq, when the democratic era came in the country, these organizations got a momentum to re-emerge.

The movement for restoration of Bahawalpur province lost its plea with the passage of time. However, the movement for Bahawalpur province has once more got impetus after the demands of new provinces by convinced local groups of Pakistan (Mushtaq, 2016, pp. 289-307). The movement for the restoration of Bahawalpur province led by Muhammad Ali Durrani, gained momentum in 2009 again. On the 18th Amendment in the constitution of 1973 of Pakistan at the beginning of April 2010, Muhammad Ali Durrani took the view that when Parliament was repealing all the illegal actions of the military rulers, so the same illegal LFO of Yahya Khan should also be erased from the Constitution under which Bahawalpur was declared a part of the province of Punjab (Qyadat, 2010).

The local political parties in Bahawalpur supported for the rehabilitation of Bahawalpur province. The political leadership of Bahawalpur in 2009 and 2010 not only awakened the people of the region but also presented the issue of restoration of Bahawalpur as a province in all forums in the country. They rose up their voice for the privileges of the people of Bahawalpur. Talking to Ishtiaq Baig, Nawab Salahuddin Abbasi said that he would never give up the legal and historical facts of restoration of Bahawalpur province. He further said that they have their own identity and never want to divide Punjab based on language. There is need of only one executive order to compensate the disparity of the people of the region (Baig, 2012). Ex. PPP MNA from Bahawalpur, Farooq Azam Malik said that, "In my meeting with Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, when she was in exile, she promised that she would restore the status of Bahawalpur as a separate province (Ayaz, 2011)."

Bahawalpur Awami Party has been planned to put forward the case of Bahawalpur province (Mushtaq, 2016, pp. 289-307). On May 3, 2018, Chief of Bahawalpur National Awami Party and Ameer of Bahawalpur, Nawab Salahuddin Abbasi gave a deadline for the restoration of the former province of Bahawalpur. He demanded that the province be restored before the

expiration of the term of the Pakistan Muslim League (N)'s government otherwise a resistance movement would be launched. He was addressing a joint press conference with former Federal Minister Senator Muhammad Ali Durrni, Pakistan Muslim League (Q)'s Secretary General Tariq Bashir Cheema MNA, Jamaat-e-Islami leader and Punjab Assembly Member Dr. Waseem Akhtar, Pakistan Muslim League (Functional) Punjab President Makhdoom Ashraf Iqbal and Prince Bahawal Abbas Abbasi (Jang, 2018).

He said, "The movement for this purpose will be launched after May 30, 2018." "If the resolution about restoration of Bahawalpur province is not implemented then full movement will be launched." He said more that "the province restoration is possible in just three days, 'rulers have not fulfilled promises made with us, people of Bahawalpur want to see their separate province, former State of Bahawalpur and our elders on every step had supported Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whenever budget of Pakistan fell short then Bahawalpur helped."



Figure 2: Dunia News Live on May 3, 2018, "Nawab Salahuddin warns of movement if Bahawalpur province not restored" and Jang, Lahore, May 3, 2018.

He more said that;

Unfortunately, recognition of this region was snatched away by Yahya Khan. Our demand is that promise and decision of the Quaid-i-Azam be implemented and people of Bahawalpur region be returned their recognition, this is constitutional, legal and historical right of this region, this is also question of respecting the promise of the Quaid-i-Azam, it is responsibility of all of us that these promises be honored and their implementation ensured (News, 2018).

Tariq Bashir Cheema, Member of National Assembly, supported the demand and announced his full support for the province restoration movement. He said that;

an impression is being given in Bahawalpur Division that entire Bahawalpur is demanding South Punjab province, 'we differ from this, our demand is for Bahawalpur province, South Punjab be made separate province, we invite South Punjab province people to launch movement jointly with us, Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif card is not acceptable now, during tenure of Ch Pervaiz Elahi local bodies representatives were powerful due to which sense of deprivation was reduced (News, 2018).

Muhammad Ali Durrani said that "people are not ready to accept any new fraud of those who have ruled for five years after winning election in the name of the province, they will go to any limit for their right, for their identity and implementation of the promise made by the Quaid-i-Azam." He more said that "if Mian Nawaz Sharif and Shahbaz Sharif did not restore the province prior to expiry of their government then people of Bahawalpur will not allow Muslim League (N) candidates to contest election and get their securities forfeited." Dr. Waseem Akhtar said: "We demand of the government to accept restoration of Bahawalpur province constitutional, legal, moral and historical right within 30 days in accordance with the law and said people of Bahawalpur will no longer accept further exploitation, injustice, oppression and denial of the province" (Jang, 2018). PML (F) Punjab President Makhdoom Ashraf Iqbal said that "patience of people of Bahawalpur should not be tested anymore" (News, 2018).

On April 12, 2018, addressing a news conference, the Movement for Restoration of Bahawalpur Province (MRBP) leaders rejected the idea of including Bahawalpur region in the planned new south Punjab province. They said that "We reject the idea furnished by the leaders of the recently-formed South Punjab Province Front." They articulated about the agreement between Quaid-e-Azam and Nawab of Bahawalpur that "There was an agreement inked between Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the then Nawab of Bahawalpur that Bahawalpur would enjoy the status of a province in the new country." They said more that "We are not opposing demarcation of new province, but we want restoration of Bahawalpur province," They said that restoration of Bahawalpur province and formation of new provinces would strengthen the federation (The News, Lahore, April 13, 2018).

In short, the political and economic deficiencies became the key sources that led towards the Bahawalpur Soba Movement. The state of Bahawalpur had always remained a very rich state with abundant resources, self-sufficient to satisfy its own requirement itself and not reliant on any other outside sources or states. "On March 25, 1955, Mr. A.B. Khan, the then Advisor to His Highness the Ameer of Bahawalpur presented a budget. The surplus of the Bahawalpur State budget after deducting the expenditure i.e. the net closing Balance was 1954-55 Rs.4,09,20,612/- (Four Crore Ninety Lakh Twenty Thousand Six Hundred and Twelve)." As mentioned above, the 1954-55 surplus net closing balance of the Bahawalpur was much higher than any other province of Pakistan and the East Pakistan as well (Javaid, Federation of Pakistan and Creation of New Provinces: A Case of Bahawalpur Province, 2018, pp. 15-36).

Conclusion:

The people of this region are facing similar problems which have made them economically and politically backward. The people feel that they are being badly exploited. These common issues have brought the people of Bahawalpur closer to each other, which led

them to demanding for a separate province. The demand for the formation of new provinces not only in Bahawalpur region but in the whole Pakistan is being raised by different regional movements based on identity, poverty, injustice, inequitable distribution of national resources, inadequate education and health facilities, lack of development and socio-economic backwardness. The struggle for regional autonomy in Bahawalpur emphasized economic and administrative grievances, while in Multan it led to Saraiki. If proper and timely steps are not taken in this region, then the politics of regionalism in this region can become very serious problem.

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