

# Agenda before the Nation 2013 and Beyond (II)

[The first half of 2013 witnessed a reshaping of political dispensation with new governments taking the reins at federal and provincial level, following general elections of May 11 in Pakistan. While many of the issues the country is confronted with have continued through the tenures of successive governments, and IPS has been giving its policy-oriented input regularly, it is about time when a comprehensive academic discourse needs to be initiated as to what should be Agenda Before the Nation – in the short, medium and long run – and coming up with solid, viable policy proposals in this connection. It is in this background that *Policy Perspectives* is publishing this second episode of the written symposium presenting a set of priorities, actionable points and viable solutions for the new managers of the country in various fields. – Eds.]

## Objectives of the Future Educational Policy

*Anis Ahmad\**

Education is more than learning of skills, techniques and methods. It should lead to production and dissemination of knowledge, resulting in human capital formation and a holistic social development and change. It influences economic development and policies of a country with impact on global economic trends. Development of appropriate human resource becomes instrumental in meeting global challenges, delivery of goods and services.

Education helps in creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It dispels ignorance and lets truth (*haqq*) prevail over untruth (*batil*). It creates peace (*salam*) and harmony (*'adl, qist*) between the individual, the society, the cosmos and the Creator of humanity. In brief, education cultivates norms and values, and translates the value system and the worldview of a people into manners, attitude and ethical behavior.

The purpose of education policy, in general, is to introduce and develop a culture of learning, to promote talent and skills, to help learn strategic and critical thinking and to build national character. Keeping in view its limitations, uniqueness, and natural differences among the human beings, education offers equal opportunity for self-improvement and development of people in an egalitarian, ethical and moral milieu.

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## A Knowledge-based Society

The Qur'an visualizes a knowledge-based society. Therefore it classifies human beings as those who know and those who do not want to know. Those who try to improve their conduct, behavior, economy, civility and culture on the basis of *ilm* (knowledge), *fikr* (thought), *tafhim* (understanding), *dhikr* (knowledge), *tafaqquh* (deep understanding) and *tadabbur* (pondering) become the leaders of change. Those who resist living a meaningful, purposeful, and knowledge-based life are categorized by the Islamic sources as adamant rejecters (*kafirun*) not prepared to see and comprehend even what is obvious and evident. As stated in the Qur'an, "... they have hearts with which they fail to understand, and they have eyes with which they fail to see, they have ears with which they fail to hear; they are like cattle - indeed, even more astray. Such are utterly heedless".<sup>1</sup>

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Islam's insistence on culture of knowledge (*ma'rifah*), learning (*ilm*) and wisdom (*hikmah*) was a remarkable departure from traditional religious approach of dogmatism, limiting of knowledge to a class of the elite or the priests, common in pre-Islamic religious traditions. It is so unfortunate that today most of the Muslim countries lag behind in education and scientific development.

### Scope

The need to develop a new comprehensive education policy -- that is representative of Pakistan ideology and reflective of the challenges that we face today -- cannot be more emphasized. Election manifestos of most of the political parties in 2008 had assigned priority to education, but the track record of the political parties in power during the past five years shows post-budget cuts in education and gross mismanagement of what meager amount was allocated. Election manifestos for the recent general elections too were not different but it may be hoped that future performance would exhibit some improved features.

The fact of the matter is that a knowledge-based society, which subscribes to global ethical and moral values alone, can help in reduction and alleviation of poverty, ill-health and low standards of living.

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<sup>1</sup>*Al-A'raf* 7:179

A clear distinction, however, should be kept in mind between “knowledge economy” and knowledge-based society. Knowledge economy essentially originates in a capitalist economic paradigm in which universities respond to industrial needs of a technology regime. If the industry needs five thousand chemical engineers to meet economic goals, the universities are expected to cater to this need. The success of educational policy in knowledge economics has a correlation with production of skilled technician and experts.

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A knowledge-based society, on the contrary, focuses on total development of man; taking care of his social, economic, cultural as well as spiritual needs. Universities and educational institutions, in a knowledge-based society, produce visionary leaders, top economists, and political leaders with commitment to their social and global responsibilities.

In case of Pakistan, our national education policy should inculcate universal Islamic values which are not specific to Muslims; they are relevant to all human beings. These values provide basis for a humanistic socio-political order where economic activity and scientific research and development is founded on ethical norms. Islamic ethical values, by their very nature, are universal and not specific to any space, time, people, gender or race. These values, such as honesty (*ikhlas*), truth (*haqq*), fairness and equity (*'adl*), steadfastness (*sabr*), industry (*sa'i*), excellence (*itqan*), provide foundations for a responsible society and non-exploitative economic and political system.

A national education policy alone, integrated with ethical and moral values, can revolutionize the society and create a sense of social responsibility and solidarity in the people.

Excellence in science and technology is a prerequisite for economic development. Nevertheless, pure economic development does not help in creating a socially responsible society. It is only through moral and ethical consciousness that science and technology can become life friendly. Integration of ethical and moral values in social sciences and applied sciences is a serious challenge. It requires an ongoing dialogue between experts in physical, natural sciences and moral thinkers.

Education policy, besides focusing on technological advancement, should also provide for quality assurance (QA) of academic programs. Necessary tools for measurement of educational targets and quality of education shall have to be developed. It should

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encourage research culture in educational institutions and create environment of intellectual freedom.

Before we talk about the agenda for the future and features of a new education policy, let us have a look on the earlier National Education Policies:

In 1947, the first Educational Conference was held. It recommended incorporation of Islamic tradition and modern science and technology in the policy.

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The Commission on National Education in 1959 tried to define educational philosophy and identified the national objectives, besides meeting individual and collective needs, to make people productive and to develop skills needed for leadership role in a progressive and democratic society. Major

targets emphasized included:

- a. Education must play a fundamental part in the preservation of the ideals which led to the creation of Pakistan, strengthening the concept of it as a united nation, and striving to preserve the Islamic way of life;
- b. Education should inculcate in the people the Islamic principles of truth, justice benevolence and universal brotherhood;
- c. The moral and spiritual values of Islam combined with freedom, integrity and strength of Pakistan should be inculcated through educational system;
- d. Education should play an important role in creating unity and nationhood among the people of Pakistan;

With regard to the role of Islam, the following paragraph from the Report is significant:

“National unity and religious values have to be translated into deeds in a manner that all our citizens can accept them and join in the common effort. Islam teaches honesty in thought, in deed and in purpose. It lays emphasis on social justice and active participation in the removal of distress and poverty. In short it seeks the identification of those who know, with those who do not know; of those who have, with those who do not have; of those who are powerful with those who have no power. These are tasks which can unite all of us, and it is through identification of all our problems and all our citizens that we shall find real unity.”

The Education Policy of 1972-80 highlighted the preservation and inculcation of Islamic values as an instrument of national unity and progress. It also focused on decentralization of educational administration but policy regulation was to be done by the Federation.

The 1979 National Education Policy defines its objectives among others as follows:

- a. To foster in the hearts and minds of the people of Pakistan in general and the students in particular a deep and abiding loyalty to Islam and Pakistan and a living consciousness of their spiritual and ideological identity there by strengthening unity of the outlook of the people of Pakistan on the basis of justice and fair play;
- b. To create awareness in every student that he/she, as a member of Pakistani nation is also a part of the universal Muslim Ummah and that it is expected of him to make a contribution towards the welfare of fellow Muslims inhabiting the globe on the one and to help spread the message of Islam throughout the world on the other;
- c. To produce citizens who are fully conversant with the Pakistan Movement, its ideological foundations, history and culture so that they feel proud of their heritage and display firm faith in the future of the country as an Islamic State;
- d. To provide and ensure equal educational opportunities to all citizens of Pakistan and to provide minorities with adequate facilities for their cultural and religious development enabling them to effectively participate in overall national effort;
- e. To impart quality education, and develop fully, according to their capacity, each individual's potentialities, through training and retraining and to develop the creative and innovative faculties of the people with a view to building their capability to effectively manage social, natural and productive forces, consistent with the value system of Islam;
- f. To provide a minimum acceptable level of functional literacy and fundamental education to all citizens of the country particularly the young, irrespective of their faith, caste and creed in order to enable them to participate productively in the total national efforts;
- g. To create interest and love for learning and discipline among the youth and to ensure that every student is imbued with the realization that education is a continuous and a lifelong process; and
- h. To promote and strengthen scientific, vocational and technological education, training and research in the country and to use this knowledge for socioeconomic growth and development thereby ensuring a self-reliant and secure future for the nation.

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The National Educational Policy of 1992 maintained nearly same objectives.

The National Education Policy of 1998-2010 practically summarizes the earlier objectives with more clarity. It begins with emphasis on purpose and objective of the Pakistan Movement and emphasis on universal primary education. It further says:

- a. To make the Qur'anic principles and Islamic practices as an integral part of curricula so that the message of the Holy Qur'an could be disseminated in the process of education as well as training. To educate and train the future generation of Pakistan as true practicing Muslims who would be able to enter the next millennium with courage, confidence, wisdom and tolerance;
- b. To achieve universal primary education by using formal and non-formal approaches to provide a second opportunity to school dropouts by establishing basic education community schools all over the country.

The above overview of national policies have several common aspects. The most obvious is the role of Islamic values as a major unifying force among the people. It needs to be in line with the ideals of the nation, objectives of the country and interests of the Ummah. However, it has to be realistic and viable. It must reflect three basic points, namely, Islamic ideology, Pakistan's sovereignty, security, unity and solidarity of the country. It should also be fully reflective of the common culture and values on which our society, community and country is founded.

Sectarianism, religious hatred and violence constitute one major national challenge. Use of force by the State is no solution to the problem. A carefully prepared National Education Policy can help in removing hate and misgivings

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between the people. It appears that there are two major reasons for the existing gap of communication and misperception among the following of various *masalik*. The first and foremost is the lack of first-hand information about different schools of thought. The second one is the lack of knowledge of The Qur'an and the Prophet's *sunnah*. National electronic and print media could have played a vital role in mending the differences.

This gap, mistrust and misperception can be removed with a very simple and pragmatic strategy. Social cohesiveness and national solidarity can be easily achieved if it is made mandatory to teach the

entire Qur'an nationally agreed Urdu translation by Mawlana Fateh Mohammad Jalandhari from grade 5 to grade 12 in all public and private schools. Similarly, the abridged version of Bukhari (*tajrid al-Bukhari*) or *Sahih* of Muslim should be used for learning one *hadith* every day in all the classes. This will inculcate in them the feelings of love, peace and brotherly behavior, which is the major concern of The Qur'an and the Prophet's *sunnah*. The Qur'an calls the Prophet "a blessing for the mankind". It is only when we internalize his conduct as our role model we can overcome sectarian hate and conflict.

The National Education Policy should also address the issue of character building and personal development of the students and professional training of the teachers in public and private sectors as well as in *dini madaris*. Teacher's role and mindset is the most crucial factor in building character and personality of students. Heavy investment in teachers' personal development and their ideological orientation is the key to success of educational policy. Unity, peace and harmony can easily be achieved if ethical teachings of The Qur'an and the *sunnah* are integrated in curriculum and in teaching methodology. Better qualified and ideologically committed teachers are the real motivators for a systematic societal change.

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### Essential Features of National Education Policy

- a. **Basic Working Draft:** The Education Policy of 1998-2010 and earlier educational policies should become the basic working draft for the new policy formulation. Education can play a pivotal role in national integration and marginalization of provincialism, sectarianism and culture of violence. Due to this central role of education, it was placed in our constitution in concurrent list. With the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the situation has changed and now it has become a provincial subject. For each province, the national coordination strategy needs to be adopted for a consistency of vision and objectives and standardization of the contents as well as for managing human and financial resources for this gigantic task. The new National Education Policy must address this vital issue.
- b. **Need for Harmonization:** The Council of Common Interests (CCI), which has the representation of all four provinces and the Center, has the mandate to formulate and regulate policies in relation to matters enlisted in Part II of the Federal Legislative List. Since it is important to ensure national identity and solidarity amongst all the members of Pakistani nation, the Education Policy should be made a part of the second part of the Federal Legislative List. Even if a

constitutional amendment is not made to this effect, the current mandate can also be used through a National Education Commission with representation of all provinces. Education may remain a provincial subject but there should be effective coordination and harmonization at the federal level in the best

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interests of national solidarity and quality of education. The National Education Commission may be tasked with proposing national education policy within a specific time frame. It should determine national education vision, direction, national needs, priorities and create mechanism for common benchmarks, quality and standard of education. The Commission should include senior educationists of the country. The proposed National

Education Policy should be placed before the Parliament.

- c. **Consensus Based Curriculum:** The Education Policy should be passed as an 'Education Act' and a consensus targeted between all political parties in the Parliament. This will bring consistency for the next few years at least.
- d. **Uniform National Curriculum:** A uniform national curriculum based on global ethical values and moral teachings should be introduced in both public and private sectors. The sociocultural divide caused by variance between the public sector educational institutions and the private sector A & O Levels system must be removed.
- e. **Four Basic Features:** The Education Policy should reflect four basic feature of our Constitution. A lack and neglect of these features has led us to sectarianism, extremism and violation of human rights of our people. These are: (1) Supremacy of Islam; (2) Parliamentary democracy; (3) Federal character; and (4) Realization of an Islamic welfare state.
- f. **Tri-language Strategy:** We need to strengthen our national unity through use of our national language as medium of institution. Needless to say China, Korea, Japan and Russia, despite a large number of ethnic and linguistic communities, use only one national language in their schools, colleges and university. This helped them in their scientific and technological development. Urdu should be introduced at all levels as medium of instruction. Importance and significance of mother tongue too cannot be denied. Formulation of basic concepts takes place in mother tongue and children learn more quickly and easily in a language they are already familiar with. Language spoken at home reinforces the learning. Using mother tongue for early years of education should be given serious consideration. More languages having essential



commercial or market value should be offered as optional. These may include functional Arabic, English, Chinese and French. This initiative shall open markets for our skilled as well as less skilled workers in the developed and fast developing countries.

- g. Investing in Education:** Several developing nations have invested heavily in education to become leaders in economy in their region. Malaysia, Singapore and Qatar are the examples of making education a national priority. In our case, a minimum of 4% of GDP should be allocated within the next five years and no cuts should be allowed on education. The resources needed for education may be linked either to an existing tax where collection should go straight to an Education Fund from which it is distributed among the provinces or the allocation for education be made a distinct category in the NFC Award.
- h. Interfaith Harmony:** It is important to learn about basic religious and cultural norms of members of a pluralistic society. Our education goals and targets should also address inter-faith harmony. It will be appropriate to have the study of world religions and cultures from grade five to bachelor degree for all students, Muslims as well as non-Muslims, as an integral part of curriculum particularly focusing on ethics in practice in personal, social, economic, political and legal matters in major world religions.
- i. Inculcating Pride in Islamic Heritage:** Education should ensure that the society is not infected by tendencies of sectarianism provincialism, linguistic nationalism or separatist tendencies. It should inculcate national ideals given by the Quaid-i-Azam, i.e., Faith, Unity and Discipline. It should lead to a consensus on national objectives and pride in our Islamic, cultural, intellectual, social, scientific and legal traditions. One major cause of our lack of development is loss of confidence and pride in our Islamic heritage.
- j. Teachers' Training:** The National Policy should give due importance to continuing education and training of teachers. This will require a national network of institutions in the public sector with most modern educational aids and heavy content of national ideology. Professionally qualified teachers with full commitment to Pakistan ideology can help in improving our standard of education and national integration.
- k. Quality Assurance in Madrassah Systems:** The national policy should also look into our Madrassah system and develop mechanism for ensuring quality in standards of education, teachers' qualification and library resources. It may also facilitate exchange of information among the recognized Wafaq and Tanzim of Madaris in order to let them review and update their syllabus without any interference from the government. Institutions which maintain excellence in their quality of teaching, library resources, living facilities, class room environment, sports facilities etc. may be given national awards in order to encourage them in building harmony between different sects through educational exchange programs. While public and private sector institutions should have a heavy

content of ethical and moral teachings, *dini madaris* be encouraged to include courses in social and applied sciences.

- l. Humanities as Part of Courses in Applied Sciences:** Our natural and physical sciences education does not have a component of humanities. For this reason we produce technicians and specialists who are not fully aware of the ideology and philosophy of the country nor have proper knowledge of human psychology, social environment and ecology. Syllabi of applied sciences should include basic knowledge of social sciences and humanities. Programs, specifically in social sciences, should include basic knowledge of physics, biology and mathematics.
- m. Culture of research and innovation:** Economic development and technological advancement is directly linked with research and development in science and technology. Our colleges and universities have to play a key role on this count. The National Education Policy should encourage and recognize research and innovation. Special awards may be created to encourage culture of research and innovations in our students, teachers at undergraduate as well as postgraduate levels.
- n. Uniform examination system:** In order to improve quality of education a uniform standard of examination shall have to be introduced. This will require restructuring of present examination boards. Only national examination centers be allowed to conduct examinations.
- o. Harmonizing Existing Education Systems:** National Education Policy may lead to gradual interface of three parallel systems that exist today in the country. The public sector education, O and A levels education and the *dini madaris* system without influencing their structure should fully reflect and re-enforce Islamic ideology, Islamic social, political and economic institutions. They should not lead in three different directions. In fact bridges should be built between the three systems so that students from one stream could go to the other at definite entry points. This will lead to greater harmony between the present systems which are producing three different types of personalities.
- p. National Curriculum:** It is primary responsibility of the federation to ensure projection of national ideology in curriculum design, in text book's writing and in teaching methodologies. The future national curriculum should therefore be developed at Federal level with full participation of the provinces. We must ensure that national identity and national ideology is fully reflected in national curriculum.
- q. Task Force on Education:** Recommendations of the Council of Islamic Ideology have to be sought in formulating national education policy. CII is a constitutional body and its advice should be sought in vital national issues.
- r. Developing Consensus:** A task force of vice chancellors in consultation with HEC should be created to develop a consensus on national higher education policy goals and priorities. A public debate

at national level involving think tanks should take place before we formulate our national education policy.

## **Economy and Wellbeing**

*Fasih Uddin\**

### **Introduction**

Economic issues were among the fore-front tasks that the newly elected government of PML (N) had to address urgently. The government was expected to focus the budget 2013-14 on these issues, frame economic policies and macroeconomic targets and present them to the Parliament. This paper contains two sections. The first section discusses the issues in the backdrop of current situation and the party manifestos (in particular of PML-N) highlighting the need to developing a framework with short, medium and long term dimensions. The purpose is to generate dialogue and debate that may facilitate the new government in devising sound economic policies. The second one outlines a framework stressing upon a shift in paradigm from growth to wellbeing.

### **I. Economy – Putting the House in Order**

#### **Background**

The economy was in a difficult state when the new government assumed office in early June 2013. The low economic growth averaging three percent of the past five years was not likely to show visible improvement in the year 2012-13 as well. Inflation, which peaked in 2009 (21 %) was estimated around ten percent. The fiscal deficit remained at a high level of 8.8% and current account deficit about two percent of GDP. Despite persistent rise in workers' remittances, the official foreign exchange reserves fell from the peak of \$ 14.8 billion in July 2011 to \$ 6.7 billion in April 2013, raising serious payment problems. The total public debt continued rising, surpassing Rs. 15 trillion (68% of GDP). Gross fixed investment declined to 10% and domestic savings to less than 9% of GDP. Similarly the tax-GDP ratio came down to less than 10 percent. Unemployment (in particular of youth) was high (over 6%) and the level of poverty was rising.

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**Economic issues  
confronting the  
country should occupy  
a prominent place in  
strategies of the newly  
elected government.**

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The energy crisis deepened, presenting a paradoxical situation. While generating capacity was reported over 2000 MW, tariff rates were adjusted upwards at regular intervals and government was heavily subsidizing the sector, actual generation remained far below demand, resulting in nation-wide long hours of load shedding. The circular debt was mounting despite injections of government money. The issues of line losses, energy theft and outstanding bills continued unabated.

The working of the public sector enterprises (i.e., Railways, PIA, Steel Mills, WAPDA, Gas Companies, etc.) deteriorated, resulting in poor service, heavy losses and burden on the government budget. The quality and availability of social services (health, education, sanitation and water supply, etc.) gone down. The adverse impact of these economic difficulties on the life of the common man was compounded by law and order situation, mismanagement, corruption and terrorism.

### **Political Parties' Economic Agenda**

Economic issues occupied a prominent place in the political parties' Election Manifestos. They spoke about reviving the economy, accelerating economic growth, raising investment, efficient utilization of existing productive capacity, controlling inflation, reducing fiscal and current account deficits, reforming tax system and civil service, containing current expenditure, reducing dependence on external

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resources, reforming public sector enterprises, and encouraging and facilitating private sector. They contained suggestions for future policies relating to agriculture, industry, mining, trade, communications, health, education and other sectors. Development of human resource and physical infrastructure was also highlighted. They also spoke

about creating job opportunities, poverty alleviation and special programmes for targeted groups. Commitments were also made on taking effective measures to resolve the energy crisis in the next two to three years. The issues relating to responsive governance, accountability, eradication of corruption and rule of law were also dealt with. Some parties suggested specific macroeconomic targets for the five-year tenure ending in 2018 also.

Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), which emerged as a majority party and formed the new government, assigned top priority to the revival of the economy. Its Election Manifesto outlined policies and macroeconomic targets for the next five years. It proposed to attain comprehensive and sustained economic growth by utilising human and

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physical resources and technology; formulating sound macroeconomic policies; supporting rule of law and democracy; and eliminating of corruption, misuse of authority, tax evasion and inessential expenditure. It suggests targets for key macroeconomic indicators for the year 2018, namely:

	2012	2018
GDP Growth	3%	6%
Investment (% of GDP)	10	20
Inflation	10	8
Fiscal Deficit (%of GDP)	7.5	4
Tax GDP Ratio (%)	10	15

The thrust of policies was on deregulation and simplification of rules and procedures; facilitation and building of trust and confidence of foreign and domestic investors; facilitating and encouraging national savings; strengthening regulatory institutions; and tax and financial reforms. The public sector development programme, along with public-private partnership, would be used for building physical and social infrastructure (energy, dams, mineral development, motorways, urban development, low cost housing, health, education and training). The public sector enterprises are to be restructured, professionally managed and privatized, where feasible. The Manifesto also contained proposals for solving the energy crisis and aiming at regular availability of energy at affordable prices. It also proposed creating three million job opportunities and poverty alleviation fund.

The Manifesto also spoke about the long term objective of turning Pakistan into one of the leading economies of Asia through persistent economic policies. For this purpose it suggested building consensus on a 'National Economic Agenda – 2025'.

### **The Task Ahead**

The Manifesto of PML-N provided broad elements on which a medium-term framework of economic policies and measures can be constructed. A lot of work, however, remains for building a consistent, comprehensive and integrated medium term phased plan of action. It would have been ideal if this task was initiated along with the coming year's budget. As time available was short (about four weeks), the government took the easier route of basing budget and economic policies, with cosmetic changes, on the caretaker government's preparatory work rather than taking the issues upfront, picking up critical elements and presenting an outline of medium term plan and policies in light of the party's Manifesto. This action plan should have also addressed other areas (e.g., inflation, unemployment, corruption, law and order and terrorism) that motivated the people to support the party. The next year's budget and economic plan should have also reflected on the long term policies and plans of the government.

Notwithstanding the need for a comprehensive and integrated medium term framework, there are some critical issues which needed immediate attention. These are discussed below.

**Building Foreign Exchange Reserves:** The level of foreign exchange reserves is a sensitive indicator of the internal resilience and external strength of an economy. Pakistan's official reserves dipped to a precariously low level of \$ 6.7 billion in April 2013 from an all time high of \$14.8 billion in July 2011; the reserves may have depleted further by end June as some heavy amounts were due for payment to the IMF

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and other creditors. As this would have serious consequences, the first major challenge for the new government was how fast it was able to replenish the reserves to a comfortable level, say around \$10-12 billion. The possible options included expatriate Pakistanis, residents' financial holdings abroad, friendly countries, global

capital market and IMF and other international financial institutions. The first three options had been explored in the past without much success<sup>2</sup>. The global financial market is in turmoil, and the credit rating does not make Pakistan an attractive proposition. Though all options should be explored, the last option seemed more feasibly provided Pakistan agreed to the IMF conditions (including 'prior actions'). An agreement with IMF would ensure quick disbursement of over \$ 5 billion, supplemented by additional resources from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. The agreement may envisage a medium-term programme of stabilization and growth with specific commitments on reduction of fiscal deficit through revenue expanding measures (including modified GST, strengthening income tax, withdrawing tax exemptions and institutional tax reforms), reducing subsidies and inessential expenditure while protecting most vulnerable; prudent monetary policy to contain inflation; resolution of energy crisis; and rehabilitation and privatization of public sector enterprises<sup>3</sup>. The Caretaker Finance Adviser had already held initial discussions with IMF team in Washington, D.C. in Mid-April, 2013.

The Manifesto and IMF measures covered almost same areas. However there were difference in depth, sequencing and timing of the measures. These differences have been ironed out through intensive consultations and negotiations that were conducted between the Finance Minister and the IMF team in late June paving the way for a new Agreement. The Agreement is likely to be approved by the IMF Board in September envisaging disbursement of over \$ 5 billion of IMF

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<sup>2</sup>National Debt Retirement Scheme by Nawaz Shareef Government in early 90s and 'Friends of Pakistan' Initiative by PPP Government in 2008.

<sup>3</sup>Public Information Notice No.12/135 dated November 2013' IMF

resources coupled with funds from World Bank and ADB. Now the challenging task for the government is to meet to targets and conditions set out in the Agreement. Pakistan's track-record in this behalf is not satisfactory and, therefore every effort should be made to implement the Agreement in letter and spirit and to establish government's credibility. In addition, the IMF arrangement should be conceived within a long term comprehensive framework of socio-economic development to be formulated by the government with the aim of ensuring sustained and inclusive growth and greater self reliance.

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**The IMF arrangement should also be considered as a temporary measure aimed at ensuring greater self reliance over time.**

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**Resolving Energy Crisis:** Another area needing urgent attention is the energy crisis. The various elements of the malaise are well known – power generation falling far short of production capacity and demand; circular debt (receivables of power entities far exceeding their payables –Rs 503 billion as against Rs. 275 billion in July 2011); persistent heavy load shedding; high tariff despite heavy government subsidy to the sector (one trillion rupees in four years - 2009-2011); low recoveries (even from government departments); line losses and theft; and mismanagement and corruption. Efforts made in the past had failed miserably.

The new government has initiated a comprehensive action plan with immediate and long term measures. The government has decided to settle the circular debt within 60 days (i.e., mid-August 2013) and finalized the energy policy to be approved by the Council of Common Interest shortly. An effective solution of the energy crisis will go a long way in reviving the economy, establishing government's writ and providing relief to the people.

**Reducing fiscal Deficit and expanding Revenues:**The third priority area is fiscal discipline. The fiscal deficit has to be brought down from 8.8 % to less than 5% of GDP in the next few years by substantial expansion in revenues and containment of current expenditure. The tax-GDP ratio has declined to less than 10% of GDP and the PML-N's Manifesto proposes to raise it to 15% of GDP in five years, i.e. about one percent of GDP each year. A beginning has been made in 2013-14 budget with fiscal deficit set at 6.3 percent of GDP through additional tax revenues along with substantial austerity measures. The tax measures are patch-work, mostly adjustments of current rates (e.g., raising GST, revising income tax rates and excise duty) and some action to broaden the tax base. It lacked the comprehensive fiscal policy warranted to create growth-oriented discipline as promised in the Manifesto. This required revenue and expenditure reforms, broadening the tax base, reducing subsidies and inessential expenditure, while

protecting the poor and vulnerable groups of people. The Medium Term Budgetary Framework (2013-14 to 2015-6) presented to the Parliament in response to the Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act 2005 also falls short of the targets visualized in the Manifesto.<sup>4</sup>

**Containing Inflation:** An area of serious concern is the high rate of inflation averaging 14% per annum during last five years (2008-2012). This has serious economic and social consequences. A major challenge before the government is to take effective monetary and other

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**An area of major concern is the high rate of inflation averaging 14% per annum during last five years (2008-2012). This has far reaching economic and social consequences.**

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measures to bring the rate of inflation to more reasonable limit (say around 5-6%). As against this the budget sets the inflation projection close to 10% while the PML-N's Manifesto proposes a target of 8% by 2018 - considering the heavy burden of cumulative inflation of earlier years these are on the high side and will have serious economic and social consequences. The

government should consider taking effective measures for reducing inflation.

**Accelerating Growth and Investment:** In the past five years the economy grew at a slow pace of about three percent per annum; and this slow growth also contributed to other serious socioeconomic problems - unemployment, poverty, social unrest, deteriorating civic services, crime, lawlessness and terrorism. An important task before the new government is to take short and medium term steps to ensure high, sustainable and inclusive growth. In the short term the focus should be on effective and efficient use of existing productive capacity by ensuring availability of critical inputs (energy, credit, raw materials, water, transport, access to market, etc.), removing barriers to trade and industry and creating conducive environment for private initiative. The growth target for 2013-14 has been set at 4.4% which is marginal improvement over the previous growth of 3.6%. The growth target for 2018 suggested in PML-N's Manifesto is also on the low side and is inconsistent with its declared objective of making Pakistan one of the leading economies of Asia. A desirable and feasible target would be to take the growth rate into two digit (over 10%) and raising total investment to 25% of GDP (most of it to be contributed by domestic savings) in 2018 (Experience of emerging economies, like China and India, supports this proposition).

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<sup>4</sup>Finance Division: Medium Term Budget Statement, 2013-14 - 2015-16



**Revamping Social Development:** Measures should also be undertaken to ensure that the growth is sustainable and inclusive, providing opportunity to all citizens to participate and benefit from it. It should also cover improvement in social services (human development, education, health, sanitation, water supply and environment). It is desirable to raise the level of government expenditure on education and health from 1.8% and 0.5% of GNP in 2011 to 4% and 2% of GNP in 2018 respectively. The expenditure should mainly be incurred on elementary education and basic health in pursuance of specific targets (physical facilities, enrolment, quality of service, infant mortality, mother's health, etc.) In addition, the poverty reduction and employment generation programmes should be strengthened and made more effective and transparent focusing on marginalized groups and regions. A coordinated approach involving Federal and provincial governments, civil society and private sector may be pursued.

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**The scope of the National Economic Agenda 2025 should be extended to all aspects of human life, material, moral and spiritual.**

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**National Economic Agenda – 2025:** A desirable initiative of the PML-N's Manifesto is building consensus on the "National Economic Agenda - 2025". It may be mentioned that economy, though important, covers only one aspect of human welfare. To be more meaningful, the scope of the Agenda should be extended to all aspects of human life, material, moral and spiritual. The objective should be the maximization of human well-being in all these dimensions. A 'Welfare Development Paradigm' is given in the second section of this article. This may be considered as a basis for further work.

## **Conclusion**

Pakistan's economy is poised for a structural change. While some issues warrant immediate action, it is necessary that the new government urgently starts work on a comprehensive, integrated and consistent medium term plan of socio-economic development. The IMF arrangement should be considered as a temporary measure aimed at ensuring greater self reliance over time. This should be supplemented by measures in other non-economic spheres (governance, security, law and order, corruption, malpractices, terrorism, etc,) which will reinforce the development efforts. This should be accompanied or followed by a Roadmap with priorities, benchmarks, signposts, and mechanisms for review, modification and evaluation. The whole exercise should be conceived in a comprehensive and inter-related context and in short (one year), medium (5 years) and long (10-15 years) timeframe. Simultaneous work should also be initiated on fostering consensus on a broad based "National Welfare Agenda -2025."

## **II. Beyond Growth – A Paradigm for Wellbeing**

Development is normally viewed as a process of economic growth – the pace at which a nation expands the output of goods and services. It is considered as a game of creation and distribution of wealth. Historical and empirical evidence shows that, though economic growth is important, it is not 'the-be-all and end-all' of development; it has other inter-related dimensions also. Development signifies human wellbeing and therefore it should pervade all aspects of human life. Attempts have been made since seventies to bring other areas, like social and environmental issues, under the 'development umbrella'. Specific human development targets have been set and indices to measure and compare them across nations also devised.

Pakistan's development planning is also based on this approach; focusing on economic growth with people's welfare depicted as a fallout effect. The whole edifice is built on economic factors, neglecting a host of other equally important ones. The result is disillusion and disappointment. This paper attempts to broaden the scope of 'development' by bringing under its 'umbrella' the key elements of human life. It takes into account the current situation and genesis of Pakistan, and outlines a 'wellbeing paradigm' by bringing in the critical dimensions of life within its fold.

### **Overview – Development Paradigm**

In the post-War II era development was focused on economic growth. The national plans, as well as external assistance, were geared to raising domestic output. This approach was based on the premise that growth in national output will eventually trickle down and lead to economic and social wellbeing of all citizens. Even education, training

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**Historical and empirical evidences demonstrate that though economic growth is important, ignoring other aspects of human life could lead to devastating social and political implications.**

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and health programs were seen primarily as inputs to boost economic output. Historical and empirical evidences, however, demonstrate that, though economic growth is important, ignoring other aspects of human life could lead to devastating social and political implications; negating the very purpose of economic development. Experiences of many countries, including Pakistan, show that economic growth tends to enlarge the

rich-poor gap; the gains and opportunities being usurped by the elite. Over-emphasis to economic progress at the cost of other important

aspects of life (social, political, security, freedom, justice, fairplay, etc.) has led to social and political unrest.<sup>5</sup>

The seventies and later decades saw a gradual change. Education, health, social safety nets, environment and poverty reduction were added to the priority areas in the national development plans. The donor agencies revamped their strategies. The emphasis of UN, World Bank, IMF, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and others shifted to poverty alleviation, social development and environment. The 'Washington Consensus' among International Financial Institutions (IFIs) was revised in 1990 to bring poverty alleviation, health and education in priority areas of assistance<sup>6</sup>. The IMF Extended Fund Facility was renamed as 'Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility' (PRGF) in 1999. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) launched the Human Development Report along with the Human Development Index (HDI) under the initiative of late

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Mahboobul Haq in 1990. The UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in 1995 setting targets for eight areas (poverty, universal primary education, gender equality, child mortality, mother health, HIV/AIDS, environment sustainability and global preparedness) for 2015. Attempts have also been made to measure and compare human welfare across nations. In addition to HDI (which is based on life expectancy, primary education and income), other indices have been constructed to measure socio-economic wellbeing and quality of life. For instance, the Quality of Life Index (QLI) quantifies a nation's affordability for its average citizen and includes six areas (with weights), i.e., health (20%), education (20%), wealth (20%), democracy (15%), peace (15%) and environment (10%)<sup>7</sup>.

Thus the purview of 'development' is being expanded not only to socioeconomic aspects but to other areas of human concern as well.

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<sup>5</sup>Examples:

- 'Decade of Development 1958-68' celebrated by the Ayub regime ended with nationwide turmoil and takeover by the army chief General Yahya Khan.
- The 'White Revolution' of the Shah of Iran ended in Islamic evolution of Imam Khomeini.

<sup>6</sup>Among the main elements of consensus include 'reordering public expenditure in favour of social sectors like education and health'.

<sup>7</sup>The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has also devised the QLI with nine elements: material wellbeing, health, political stability, family life, community life, climate and geography, security, political freedom and gender equality.

## **Pakistan's Experience**

Pakistan has achieved reasonable economic growth of over 5% per annum, along with manifold expansion in the infrastructure and other facilities in the past six decades, yet the progress is not considered impressive (by some not even satisfactory). Three factors count in this behalf: (a) being born as an ideological state, the socioeconomic aspirations of the people are pitched high; efforts and performance could not match these expectations; (b) its performance is usually compared against rapidly progressing economies (such as Korea, Malaysia, China, Singapore) and this comparison reinforces the impression that Pakistan has not done well; and (c) the gains of progress are not shared equitably and widely, some fundamental socio-economic and political issues remain unattended and prosperity is confined to elites while the rest of the populace remains deprived and even disillusioned.

The country is beset with serious problems today in all dimensions – economic, social, infrastructure and basic services, justice, law and order, security, governance and others. Many reasons have been advanced for this state of affairs; most of them are partial and only focusing on a few elements while ignoring a host of others.

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**Life is an integrated whole and unless all aspects – economic, social, cultural, political, emotional and ethical – are taken into account, progress and development will remain distorted and imbalanced.**

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They tend to be apologetic and defensive, devoid of proactive thinking. They often look to issues in isolation and seek remedy in one or two measures. Such approaches are flawed. Life is an integrated whole and unless all aspects (i.e., economic, social, cultural, political, emotional and ethical) are taken into account, progress and development will remain

distorted and imbalanced. In the past, the development strategies were structured around medium-term plans focusing on economic growth with social dimension added subsequently. The limitations of this approach are obvious; the emphasis is on economic growth whereas peoples' welfare is depicted as a fallout effect. The whole edifice is built on economic factors and host of equally important non-economic factors are neglected. Governance, justice, law and order and similar other aspects are no less significant for development. Thus there is an urgent need to broaden the scope and bring all aspects of human life under the 'development umbrella'. It is also essential to keep the objectives of creation of Pakistan in view while formulating the new paradigm.

## From Growth to Wellbeing Paradigm

Pakistan is based on an ideology; and an ideology often carries a specific *vision*, i.e., foresight for a better future and a persistent movement towards the *vision*. Pakistan's development vision should be founded on its genesis (Islam) and the thinking of the father of the nation as reflected in his various statements. The focus of development in Islam is on human being, the advancement of man and his physical, economic, social and cultural environment. The concept is comprehensive in character and includes material, moral and spiritual aspects. The objective is the optimization of human wellbeing in all these dimensions as they are inseparable. The aim is not merely welfare in this world but also in life hereafter. According to the contemporary concept, it is the physical environment — natural and institutional — that provides the real area for development activities. Islam insists that the area of operation relates to human beings, within *and* without.<sup>8</sup>

The development perception of the father of the nation, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, as enunciated in his various statements, covers the following: Islamic social justice, wellbeing of masses and poor, justice, fair play, equity, law and order (protection to life, property and religious beliefs), equal opportunities, rights, privileges and obligations for all citizens; unity, faith and discipline; eradication of corruption and nepotism; democracy, human rights and gender equality; moral building, scientific and technical education; and progressive and industrialized state. Synthesizing these pieces together one can construct a broad consensus vision statement as under:

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The aim should be the realization of the *vision* of developing an Islamic, just, equitable, enlightened, progressive and prosperous nation.

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### **'Developing an Islamic, Just, Equitable, Progressive and Prosperous Nation'**

This vision contains five inter-related dimensions; (i) economic, (ii) social, (iii) governance, (iv) strategic, and (v) moral and ethical. Each dimension can be transformed into measurable time-bound (say 2014-2025) goals and targets. This timeframe is indicative as improvement is a continuous process. The five elements should be seen as an integrated whole, each inter-acting with the other in a mutually supportive manner. The aim should be the realization of the *vision* of

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<sup>8</sup>Ahmad, Khurshid, 'Islam and the Challenge of Economic Development', *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, Edited by John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, Oxford University Press, 2006.

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developing an Islamic, just, equitable, enlightened, progressive and prosperous nation. This proactive interaction can be illustrated as under.

'Man is commanded to enjoin *right* and forbid *wrong*. This ethical command pervades all human activity and should be considered as the *Centrum* of the other four elements, namely economic, social, governance and strategy. Its foundations are laid in the rule of law, justice and fair play, rights and obligations, confidence and trust, tolerance and patience, reward and punishment, and human respect and dignity. Whichever way one looks at it, the ethical and spiritual aspect seems to pervade all actions; the *Centrum* promoting mutually reinforcing relationship in other elements. It provides the principles and rules of the game for others'.

'The two sides of governance and strategy should set out legal, institutional and operational framework for development. Based on the *Centrum* of ethics and the broad framework provided by the pillars of governance and strategy, the edifice of economic and social development and the well being and welfare of the people should be raised. The economic, political and social conduct of the people and authority should be based on the values set in the *Centrum* and facilitated and promoted by appropriate policies, strategies, laws, rules and institutions.'

The inter-relationship between the five elements is illustrated in the following diagram:



The operational plan containing objectives/targets and mechanism/instruments for the realization of the *vision* in respect of its five elements is outlined as follows:

## **1. Economic**

### **Objectives/Targets:**

One of the main objectives is to develop a progressive and prosperous nation. This objective could be realized by ensuring sustained, inclusive and broadbased economic growth, along with reduction in socioeconomic disparity and unemployment and food security for all citizens. Specific targets for 2025 may include:

- A sustained, broad-based high economic (7-8%) and per capita income (5-6%) growth
- Reduction in income disparity (by raising the share of 20% Low Income Group in national income from 7% to 15%),
- Reduction in unemployment rate (from 8% to less than 5%),
- Bringing down the rate of inflation to less than 5%, and
- Ensuring access to essential food items for all citizens.

### **Mechanism/Instrument:**

Adoption of policies and measures to:

- Mobilizing savings, raising investment (25-30 of GDP), and promoting exports
- Education and training and induction of technology and managerial skills
- Building efficient physical and social infrastructure
- Growth and employment oriented economic policies with emphasis on private sector initiative, productivity, quality and improvement in storage and distribution system

## **2. Social**

### **Objectives/Targets:**

- Non-discriminatory access to quality social services for all citizens, and
- Equality of opportunity
- Human development (access to education, health, sanitation, etc., facilities for all),
- Universal elementary education,
- Social safety net for targeted groups (widows, orphans, old, sick and handicapped)
- Egalitarian society
- Clean environment

**Mechanism/Instruments:**

- Building quality social infrastructure in public sector in complement with private sector accessible to all citizens
- Fiscal and other measure to reduce income and wealth disparity,
- Special public sector programs and institutions for special groups, in coordination with private philanthropic efforts
- Environment protection policies

**3. Governance**

**Objectives/Targets:**

- Rule of law, justice and fairplay,
- Protection to life, property and religious beliefs,
- Equal rights, privileges and obligations,
- Independence of judiciary, and
- Freedom of expression

**Mechanism/Instruments:**

- Judicial reforms aimed at prompt and inexpensive justice (strengthening and improving legal system, reduction of pending cases in courts, etc.)
- Elimination of corruption, victimization and administrative and political interferences (efficient and responsive police and public dealing departments).
- Strengthening democratic and representative institutions at all levels (representative and participatory governance)
- Setting up systems of monitoring, accountability and continuous improvement in all public offices (elimination of corruption, promotion of accountability, transparency and efficiency)

**4. Strategic**

**Objectives/Targets:**

- Political stability
- Sustained development
- Self reliance
- Regional cooperation
- Global equity
- Plurality of cultural and socioeconomic system

**Mechanism/Instruments:**

- Fair and free elections and establishing multi-tier democratic institutions
- Execution of integrated plans and policies



- Implementation of self reliant policies (including policies to promote ideology, defence and food security) and programs
- Strengthening close economic relations with neighbours and regional grouping, including ECO, OIC and SAARC
- Active participation in WTO and other international organisations to promote rule-based international economic and trading system
- Promoting ethnic and cultural understanding and harmony through dialogue, education and propagation

## **5. Ethical**

### **Objectives/Targets:**

- Enjoin right and forbid wrong
- God-fearing, honest, law abiding and tolerant society
- Human rights and gender equality

### **Mechanism/Instruments**

- Promotion of Islamic ideology and teachings (in particular tolerance, moral and social behavior)
- Emphasis on character building, honesty, tolerance and fairplay in education and training institutions
- Use of print and electronic media to promote religious values, respect for law, and other personal and civil responsibilities
- Establish systems of reward and punishment at all levels
- Inculcating positive and constructive thinking

The paradigm matrix is set out in appendix.

## **Conclusion**

The development strategy needs reorientation from growth centric to human wellbeing; from material gains to improvement of life in all dimensions. It should address such issues as wide spread disillusion and discontentment among the people, drift from the ideological base of Pakistan, heavy external dependence, erosion in ethical and human values, institutional decay and so forth. The proposed paradigm is intended to initiate dialogue and discussions and to build consensus on a long term strategy for national wellbeing.

A multi-sector and integrated approach with ethics at the centre, influencing and guiding other elements, (namely economic, social, governance and strategy) is more

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**A multi-sector approach with ethics at the center, influencing and guiding other elements, is more appropriate than the current growth oriented and sector specific policies and plans.**

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appropriate than the current growth oriented and sector-specific policies and plans. A desirable initiative included in the PML (N) manifesto is building consensus on the National Economic Agenda 2025. This agenda may be expanded and turned into an agenda for wellbeing in line with the above proposed wellbeing paradigm. Serious efforts should be made to build national consensus and transforming it into a roadmap and a time-phased action plan. The nation should be motivated by all means to contribute in realization of set goals and targets. The task though difficult, is worth the effort.

**Paradigm Matrix**

<b>Vision/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/ Targets</b>	<b>Mechanism/Instruments</b>
<p><b>1. Economic</b> Progressive and prosperous nation</p>	<p>A broadbased high economic (7-8%) and per capita income (5-6%) growth. Reduction in income disparity (20% low income share from 7% to 15%) Reduction in unemployment rate (8-5%). Food security for all.</p>	<p>Mobilize savings, raising investment (25-30 of GDP), promotion of exports. Education and training and induction of technology and managerial skills. Building efficient physical and social infrastructure. Growth and employment oriented economic policies with emphasis on private sector initiative, productivity and quality. Improvement in storage and distribution system.</p>
<p><b>2. Social</b> Non-discriminatory access to quality social services for all citizens Equality of opportunity</p>	<p>Human development (access to education, health, sanitation, etc. facilities for all), Universal elementary education, Social safety net for targeted groups (widows, orphans, old, sick and handicapped) egalitarian society Clean environment</p>	<p>Building quality social infrastructure in public sector in complement with private sector accessible to all citizens. Fiscal and other measure to reduce income and wealth disparity. Special public sector programs and institutions for special groups, in coordination with private philanthropic efforts. Environment protection policies</p>

<p><b>3. Governance</b>                  Rule of law, justice and fairplay,                  Protection to life, property and religious beliefs,                  Equal rights, privileges and obligations,                  Independence of judiciary, and                  Freedom of expression</p>	<p>Prompt and inexpensive justice (strengthening and improving legal system, reduction of pending cases in courts, etc.)                  Efficient and responsive police and public dealing departments.                  Representative and participatory governance                  Elimination of corruption, promotion of accountability, transparency and efficiency in public offices</p>	<p>Judicial reforms aimed at prompt and inexpensive justice.                  Elimination of corruption, victimization and administrative and political interferences.                  Strengthening democratic and representative institutions at all levels                  Setting up systems of monitoring, accountability and continuous improvement in all public offices.</p>
<p><b>4. Ethical</b>                  Enjoin rights and forbid wrong                  God-fearing, honest, law abiding and tolerant society                  Human rights and gender equality</p>	<p>Promotion of Islamic ideology and teachings (in particular tolerance, moral and social behaviour)                  Reward for good and punishment for wrong                  Inculcating positive and constructive thinking</p>	<p>Emphasis on character building, honesty, tolerance and fairplay in education and training institutions. Use of print and electronic media to promote religious values, respect for law, and other personal and civil responsibilities.                  Establish systems of reward and punishment at all levels.</p>
<p><b>5. Strategic</b>                  Political stability                  Sustained development                  Self reliance                  Regional cooperation                  Global equity                  Plurality of cultural and socioeconomic system</p>	<p>Strengthening democratic institutions                  Integrated policies and plans                  Policies to promote ideology, defence and food security                  Close economic relations with neighbours                  Rule-based international economic and trading system                  Ethnic and cultural understanding and harmony</p>	<p>Fair and free elections and establishing multi-tier democratic institutions.                  Execution of integrated plans and policies.                  Implementation of self reliant policies and programs.                  Strengthening ECO, OIC and SAARC                  Active participation in WTO and other international organizations.                  Dialogue, education, propagation.</p>

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## **Kashmir – Developing a National Narrative**

*Khalid Rahman and Awais bin Wasi\**

### **Introduction**

Election manifestos mirror the vision of political leaderships, defining their mindset and well thought out plans for the future on important and sensitive issues of national significance.

This article is an effort to look into the present approach of Pakistani political parties reflected in their respective manifestos on Kashmir, and, in the backdrop of Kashmir, on overall relations with India, and to make some suggestions for the future.

The study has also attempted to analyze the past manifestos of those parties which have been a part of political process in Pakistan as it would help understand the ebb and flow of the party postures towards this important national issue.<sup>9</sup> However, before discussing the manifestos the study starts with a cursory overview of public opinion based on the

recent opinion surveys in order to have an understanding of the overall environment in this regard.

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**Surveys stand evidence that Kashmir continues to be considered as an extremely sensitive and one of the most important issues for the nation, by the people of Pakistan.**

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**Public Opinion on Kashmir:** Since the time Pakistan came into being, Kashmir has remained the core issue, an unfinished part of the agenda of the partition of the subcontinent. From security point of view, too, it has been considered extremely sensitive and one of the most important issues for the nation; and to this day the people of Pakistan are in agreement on this point. A recent survey carried out by Gallup Pakistan stands evidence to this opinion.

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<sup>9</sup> Muslim League (Nawaz), Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam struck alliances (such as PNA, and IJI) together and therefore did not come out with individual party manifestoes in the years 1977, 1988 and 1990. So was the case with Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam in 2002 owing to their membership of MMA. Hence they were not included in this survey for respective years. Since polls 1985 were non-party elections, no party had released any manifesto on that occasion.

In the Gallup poll carried out November 18-25, 2012, to the question "In your opinion, how important is the resolution of the Kashmir issue?" 66% respondents said they considered it "Very Important", 25% considered it "Somewhat Important" while only 6% said they thought it was "Not Important at All."<sup>10</sup>

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Similarly, to the query "Do you think in order to establish peace with India it is important to resolve the Kashmir dispute or can peace be established with India without its resolution?" 76% responded that "It is necessary to resolve the Kashmir dispute first in order to establish peace with India" and 21% said "Peace can be established between Pakistan and India even without the resolution of the Kashmir dispute".<sup>11</sup>

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**Generally uniform approach reflected in public opinion surveys is not confined to the general public in Pakistan; this is also largely reflected in the manifestoes of the major political parties.**

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Apart from Gallup Pakistan, in a recently conducted Washington-based PEW Research Centre survey, 68% Pakistani respondents have opined that the situation in Kashmir was a serious issue for Pakistan and 79% declared India to be the "biggest threat to their nation".<sup>12</sup>

While the role of various governments of Pakistan, in the post 9/11 scenario, *vis-à-vis* Kashmir issue may not be termed as representing Pakistan's principled position on Kashmir and reflecting public sentiments in this regard, the above-mentioned recent public surveys do indicate a kind of unified stance on Kashmir issue and its significance in Pakistan-India relations. A related but distinct aspect of this issue is: besides its importance in terms of human and politico-geographical context, it is a matter of the right of self-determination of a nation accepted by the United Nations and embodied in Article 1 of its Charter.

**Manifestoes of Political Parties and Kashmir:** The generally uniform approach reflected in the above public surveys is not only confined to the general public in Pakistan, this is also largely reflected in the manifestoes of the major political parties, including the regional and religious parties of the country.

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<sup>10</sup>Gallup Pakistan National Survey, [www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com), 18-25 Nov. 2012; as cited in press release on 11 Dec. 2012.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Pakistani Public Opinion Survey, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/27/chapter-4-national-conditions>.

Pakistan People's Party, for instance, says: "[We will] maintain full solidarity with the continued moral, political and diplomatic support of the Kashmiri People for realizing their legitimate aspirations."<sup>13</sup>

The party mentions regional stabilization as the cornerstone of its preferred policy but reiterates that it would not compromise on its stand on Kashmir dispute: "We will pursue the goal of stability and peace-building in the region as a specific policy priority without sacrificing our diplomatic and moral commitment to the people of Jammu & Kashmir."<sup>14</sup>

Likewise, Pakistan Muslim League (N) has also expressed its determination in its election manifesto "to resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in accordance with the provisions of the relevant UN resolutions and the 1999 Lahore Accord and in consonance with the aspirations of the people of the territory for their inherent right of self-determination."<sup>15</sup>

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**Inclusion of the Kashmir issue in manifestos of all the major political parties in Pakistan is a manifestation of the fact that the parties do realize the significance of this issue in overall national agenda.**

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) too, realizing the importance of resolving the Kashmir dispute, has included it among the four core national interests. The manifesto states that:

"Within the context of national interests at a minimum level Pakistan's core national interests can be identified as:

- (a) Territorial integrity and sovereignty
- (b) National cohesion
- (c) Socioeconomic development
- (d) The resolution of Kashmir dispute"<sup>16</sup>

Pakistan Muslim League (Q), committing in its manifesto to put the Kashmir issue as a test case for the international community, assures Kashmiris of its diplomatic, political and moral support and expresses for a proactive engagement with India in order to help them acquire the right of self-determination. The actual words in the party manifesto are:

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<sup>13</sup>Pakistan Peoples Party Election Manifesto 2013, p. 74.

<sup>14</sup>Pakistan Peoples Party Election Manifesto 2013, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup>Pakistan Muslim League (N) Election Manifesto 2013, p. 94.

<sup>16</sup>Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Election Manifesto 2013, p. 7.

"While pursuing the peace process with India with vigor, since it is conducive to a stable South Asia, Pakistan should also pursue proactive engagement which enables the people of Jammu & Kashmir to realize their legitimate right to self determination in accordance with relevant UN resolutions."<sup>17</sup>

Awami National Party (ANP) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) in their respective manifestos have also expressed their desire to resolve the Kashmir dispute. ANP holds that it is in favor of settling all the issues between India and Pakistan including Jammu and Kashmir through peaceful negotiations and open dialogue.<sup>18</sup> MQM, in its manifesto, also expresses its desire to solve the Kashmir issue through meaningful dialogue in the

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**Confusions witnessed at the highest level on principled stance on Kashmir during the last few years may be attributed mainly to the apologetic approach, defensive posturing and weakening standpoint of the governments in power.**

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following words.

"MQM wants to solve the Kashmir issue through meaningful, sincere and honorable dialogue according to the wishes of the Kashmiri people."<sup>19</sup>

Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Pakistan (F), while discussing matters of foreign policy, has stated liberation of Kashmir as a matter of prime and fundamental importance.<sup>20</sup>

Terming the issue of Kashmir as the cornerstone of party's foreign policy, Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, in its election manifesto, calls resolution of the dispute only through plebiscite in the light of UN resolutions and considers it their prime responsibility to extend full support to the people of Kashmir. The manifesto says:

"Kashmir cause will form the cornerstone of our foreign policy. We pay rich tributes to the freedom movement in Kashmir going on for the last seven decades. It is our firm faith that the sacrifices made for the Kashmir cause will not go waste. We believe that the only solution to the Kashmir problem lies in plebiscite in the light of the UN resolutions. To achieve the goals, we consider it our duty to extend our

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<sup>17</sup>Manifesto 2013 Pakistan Muslim League [Q] 2013, p. 38.

<sup>18</sup>Manifesto 2013 Awami National Party, p. 24.

<sup>19</sup>MQM Manifesto 2013, p. 94.

<sup>20</sup>Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Pakistan (F) Manifesto, 2013, p. 56.



full political, moral and diplomatic support to the oppressed Muslims of Kashmir.”<sup>21</sup>

The inclusion of Kashmir issue in the manifestos of all major political parties in Pakistan is a clear manifestation of the fact that the parties do realize the significance of this issue in overall national agenda. This, indeed, may be termed as a positive sign and quite satisfying. However, political leadership does not seem to be on the same page as far as the modus operandi of the resolution of the issue is concerned. Particularly when analyzed in the context of Pakistan’s position that has been historically stated at all international forums which emphasizes plebiscite according to UN resolutions.

Before deciphering the differences in the strategy reflected in the manifestos under study, it seems important to reaffirm here Pakistan’s principled position on Kashmir which is based on following four points.

1. The relevant UN resolutions, particularly those adopted on April 21, 1948 and January 5, 1949 provide a real, just, durable and honorable basis for the resolution of the dispute.
2. The right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people implies that this dispute is resolved according to their free will and aspirations.
3. Pakistan will continue its unabated support to the Kashmiris at moral, political and diplomatic levels, and keep raising voice against the Indian oppression in the Occupied Kashmir at the international forums to stop human rights abuses in the state.
4. In the context of developing bilateral relations with India, the Kashmir dispute will remain a core issue.

Keeping this principled position in view, a number of confusions have been witnessed at the highest level on Kashmir stance for the last few years; this may be attributed mainly to the apologetic approach, defensive posturing and weakening standpoint of the governments in power. This is also reflected in some election manifestoes. For instance:

In the PPP manifesto, there is no mention of the relevant UN resolutions which provide the actual basis for Pakistan’s standpoint on Kashmir dispute. It is true that this manifesto promises Pakistan’s continued assurance and support to the Kashmiris yet in the same breath it resolves that no single agenda will be allowed to become a snag in smooth sailing of India-Pakistan relations. In this regard, Indo-China détente has been pointed out as an example that the relations

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<sup>21</sup>Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Manifesto (2013), p. 16.

between the two countries can be promoted while freezing the issue of Kashmir.<sup>22</sup>

In 2013, Pakistan Peoples Party has included Azad Kashmir in its manifesto which is principally a welcome development, however, its reference is made along with the mainstreaming of FATA which indicates that the party also desires to give AJK the provincial status as it envisions for FATA that “[it] is to be mainstreamed as a provincial entity” (p. 56). To mainstream FATA as a provincial entity is the demand of the people of the region but the case of AJK is quite different as well sensitive in the context of Kashmir issue.

It is very important to give equal political, social and economic rights to the people of Kashmir, but AJK has a peculiar status under the UN resolutions. Giving AJK the status of a province may render the UN resolutions on Kashmir irrelevant and weaken Pakistan’s principled position on this issue. Besides adding confusion on Pakistan’s stance, this may cause to dilute the relevance of the issue on international forums.

Similarly PML (N), in its manifesto, expresses solidarity with the Kashmiri people and supports their struggle for freedom, yet it mentions resolving Kashmir dispute according to the Lahore Accord. This brings to the fore an option which lacks a national consensus.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>It would be interesting to note here that the shift regarding the strategy to resolve Kashmir dispute reflected in the current manifesto of the party is not traced in the earlier manifestos of the party. For instance, in 1970, the party manifesto said: “Towards India, a policy of confrontation will be maintained until the question of Kashmir, Farakka, Beruberi, and other pending matters are settled.” Similarly, the 1977 manifesto states: “the issue of the liberation of Jammu and Kashmir from alien subjugation was given priority and was the subject of one of the Foundation Documents of the Party.” It further says that “party makes a solemn pledge that it will continue to extend all moral and material support to the struggle of the people of the Indian-occupied Areas of the State to achieve their liberation.” In 1990, it maintained that “all possible help shall be given to the valiant Kashmiri freedom fighters in their struggle for self determination” and in the manifesto of 1993, besides extending moral, diplomatic and political support, the party says “It is calumny to accuse the Kashmiri freedom fighters of terrorism, [t]he violence in Kashmir, as in Bosnia, originates from the denial to the Kashmiri people of their legitimate rights and of the use of the most brutal repression against them by security forces. We call upon India to desist from a policy that is doomed to fail and can only increase bitterness and hatred in Kashmir and in the subcontinent as a whole.”

<sup>23</sup> If one studies the manifesto of the same party released for the general elections 1997, it turns out that the stance on Kashmir as well as its diction is more forceful as compared to the current manifesto. Cf: “Pakistan Muslim League considers it a sacred duty to support the right of self determination of the people of Jammu and Kashmir under United Nations Resolutions. In order to maintain good neighborly relations with India, Pakistan Muslim League believes in peaceful resolution of conflicting issues with India. However, in this connection, it will never compromise on the right of self determinations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan’s historical commitment to this cause.” (Pakistan Muslim League Manifesto [N]1997, p. 35)

Like PPP, PML (N) too has expressed intent to giving Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan the status equivalent to all four provinces of Pakistan. As pointed out earlier, giving equal political, social and economic rights to the people of Kashmir does not necessitate change in Azad Kashmir's present constitutional status. In fact, if there is genuine political will, this can be done by balancing the uneven relations between Azad Kashmir government and the Kashmir Council.

With reference to Pakistan-India relations, the Kashmir dispute does not appear to be given core importance in PML (N) manifesto, supporting the idea that the relations between the two countries could be normalized and mutual trade and economic relations restored without first resolving the Kashmir issue. For instance, it appears from the manifesto that rather than stressing a genuinely peaceful and sustainable solution by resolving the basic dispute, the party's greater concern is to meet Indian's energy needs by providing her access to the Central Asian Republics (CAR) and Arabian Sea. This is evident from the text of the manifesto:

"Pakistan is located at an important junction of South Asia, West Asia, and Central Asia. The country could be a bridge between energy rich Central Asia and Iran on one side and energy deficit countries like China and India on the other. Pakistan's coastal belt facilitates access to the warm waters and oil-rich Gulf, as well as international oil supply lines passing through the Strait of Hormuz. Pakistan can also develop a flourishing transit economy because it provides the shortest land routes from Western China to the Arabian Sea, through the Gwadar Port, while linking India with Afghanistan and CAR and providing land route from Iran to India and access to the Central Asian Republics to the Arabian Sea and India for oil/gas pipelines."<sup>24</sup>

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**Kashmir is too important  
to be put under the  
heading of "Ensuring  
Pakistan's Water  
Security."**

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Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) does signify the significance of Kashmir issue in the overall national agenda by including it in its four most important national preferences but there is no mention of resolving the dispute according to the UN resolutions on Kashmir. If one studies the 2002 party manifesto, it would be clear that the party's stand was much more forceful at that time; although there is no mention of the UN resolutions in this manifesto too, yet it discusses Kashmir as the jugular vein of Pakistan and regards it an unfinished agenda of the partition; it expresses its commitment for pushing an aggressive diplomatic campaign leading to help Kashmiris getting their right of self determination.

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<sup>24</sup>Pakistan Muslim League (N) Manifesto 2013, pp.92-93

In the current manifesto of PTI, there is no mention of Kashmir dispute being a core issue between Pakistan and India, yet under the heading "Ensuring Pakistan's Water Security", PTI declares that it wanted to resolve Indo-Pakistan water issues according to Indus Basin Treaty and in the light of international practices.

In the manifesto of MQM, the UN resolutions on Kashmir have found no mention while it expresses the desire to resolve Kashmir dispute according to the will and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.<sup>25</sup> ANP wants to find a solution to the dispute, along with other issues, through bilateral talks, without referring to the UN resolutions or right of self determination in the manifesto.

Similarly, JUI says that along with other important matters of foreign policy it would also give prime and fundamental importance to

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**The unanimously passed National Assembly Resolution on the hanging of Afzal Guru provides a strong basis to evolve and advance single national narrative.**

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the liberation of Kashmir in its manifesto; however, there is no mention of UN resolutions in it. The manifesto also states that safety and security to life, honor, property and economic security of Indian Muslims will be a preferred point in Pakistan's foreign policy<sup>26</sup>, and yet it does not point out

its policy framework with regard to relations with India and its vision to resolve the bilateral disputes.

**National Narrative and the Way Forward:** With this background, and in the present Pakistan scenario, when a new political leadership has just taken up the reins of power, the focus should have been on two important aspects simultaneously:

On the one side, there is a need to solidify and strengthen the existing consensus both at the political parties and popular levels on the vital importance and significance of Kashmir issue and on the need to resolve it. And on the other, the need is to evolve and advance a single national narrative on the approach and modus operandi to resolve this issue, casting off the clouds of confusions and lack of consensus as far as the strategy is concerned. The unanimously passed

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<sup>25</sup>However, in its manifesto released in 1998, "MQM gives full support to the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir and wishes the Kashmir issue to be resolved in accordance with the UN Resolutions and according to the will of the people of Kashmir. MQM condemns the human rights violations in Kashmir and is of the opinion that Pakistan must use her influence at every level to obtain peaceful settlement of this Issue." (<http://www.mqm.org/manifesto/manifesto-contents-1998.htm>)

<sup>26</sup>Manifesto [2013] Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Pakistan (F), p. 56.

National Assembly Resolution on the martyrdom of Afzal Guru on March 14, 2013 may provide a strong basis in this respect:

"This House expresses serious concern over Indian atrocities inflicted on the people in Kashmir, particularly after the execution of Afzal Guru. Condemning the state brutalities in Kashmir, the house stresses upon India that the body of Afzal Guru be handed over to his family members and it also calls upon India to stop bloodshed in Kashmir, withdraw its forces from the urban areas, repeal black laws, lift the curfew as well as media blackout, release Kashmiri leaders as well as thousands of other Kashmiri detainees, do not prevent people from exercising their religious obligations, stop locking up mosques, and allow the international human rights organizations to visit Occupied Kashmir.

"The House reaffirms that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are struggling peacefully for their fundamental right to self determination and their struggle is in line with the international laws, UN Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the resolution of Non Aligned Movement (NAM). Pakistan fully supports their legitimate struggle and assure them that they are not alone in this struggle, rather the entire Pakistani nation stands with them and it would continue with its unabated diplomatic, political and moral support at all levels.

"The House makes it clear that the Kashmir is a dispute under the UN resolutions whose settlement is pending and it is not an internal affair of India.

"The House appeals to the international community that rather being a silent spectator they should compel India to stop atrocities of Kashmiri people and take practical steps to implement UN Security Council Resolutions."<sup>27</sup>

No doubt the above mentioned unanimous resolution of the parliament may serve as a foundation document to formulate and advance national strategy on the resolution of Kashmir issue.

Besides mentioning the significance of this issue both at the popular and political landscape of the country it seems pertinent to state here that despite facing as many difficulties as one can imagine the people of Jammu & Kashmir have not only kept the freedom movement alive but transferred it to their next generation as is evident from the recent consecutive mass uprising particularly since 2008. The role of youth in this uprising figured prominently that has not only been

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<sup>27</sup>Translated from the original Urdu text of the resolution available at: [http://www.na.gov.pk/en/resolution\\_detail.php?id=92](http://www.na.gov.pk/en/resolution_detail.php?id=92)

admitted by the international media<sup>28</sup> but has resulted in favorable voices from inside India too.<sup>29</sup>

What is needed the most at this juncture of the national history is preparing a consensus national agenda on Kashmir, rising above all the political and other differences, safeguarding the fundamental

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**To evolve and advance a consensus on Kashmir, there is a need to have working harmonization among all the concerned national institutions.**

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human rights of the people of Kashmir based on all the relevant UN resolutions and universal principles of justice and fairplay. In order to evolve and advance such a consensus there is a need to have working synchronization among all the concerned national institutions which include defense institutions, ministries of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Water and

Power. Such synchronization and synergy among the concerned institutions will help in bringing up a single, mutually agreed and integrated approach instead of emerging a narrative of confusion.

While acknowledging the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, it is important to observe here that the people of Pakistan demonstrating their political consciousness and commitment to the Kashmir cause

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<sup>28</sup>Simon Tisdall, a noted analyst of international affairs, citing American journalist Barbara Crossette, observes: "The violence' is a reminder that many Kashmiris still do not consider themselves part of India and profess that they never will," she said. 'India maintains a force of several hundred thousand troops and paramilitaries in Kashmir, turning the summer capital, Srinagar, into an armed camp frequently under curfew and always under the gun. The media is labouring under severe restrictions. Torture and human rights violations have been well documented.' Comparisons with Israel's treatment of Palestinians were not inappropriate." ('India's blinkered policy', *The Guardian*, August 11, 2010).

<sup>29</sup>These voices among others include the noted Indian writer Arundhati Roy who expressed her support for Kashmiri right to self-determination and condemned Indian atrocities and human rights abuses in the state. In an article titled 'Azadi' published in *The Outlook* on September 1, 2008 she concludes: "India needs azadi from Kashmir just as much—if not more—than Kashmir needs *azadi* from India." On November 12, 2011 in a panel discussion on Kashmir in New York she says that "I think the people of Kashmir have the right to self-determination, they have the right to choose who they want to be and how they want to be" and remarks further that "I want to say unambiguously that I do not think any country that calls itself a democracy has the right to force people to remain in it in a militaristic way, the way that India is doing." Likewise, prominent Indian journalist Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar in his article titled 'Independence Day for Kashmir' appeared in *The Times of India* on August 17, 2008, observes "I was once hopeful of Kashmir's integration, but after six decades of effort, Kashmiri alienation looks greater than ever. India seeks to integrate with Kashmir, not rule it colonially. Yet, the parallels between British rule in India and Indian rule in Kashmir have become too close for my comfort." Other Indian writers and human rights activists such as Gautam Navalakha and Vir Sanghvi have also penned article in support of Kashmiris and against the presence of Indian military in the territory.

have contributed tremendously to keep the issue alive at the popular and political landscape of the country. This unflinching commitment demonstrated by the people of Pakistan did provide a support to the Kashmiri people. What is needed further is to proceed forward in a consistent, responsible and conscientious manner with the better sense of responsibility and the greater understanding of the challenges of the time.

### **Women and Society – Towards an Inclusive Paradigm\***

*Khalid Rahman and Nadeem Farhat Geelani\**

Feudalistic mindset — featuring the lust for power, authority and monopoly, capitalism — seeking multiplication of wealth, chauvinism characterized by employers and bosses in the West and tribal systems elsewhere are among the factors that give birth to approaches and behaviors depriving the women and others of their rights. Given the pathetic conditions of life for women in the social and legal history of most of the societies in the East and the West, the current discourse on rights of women does make sense. In a struggle for acquiring women their rightful status in the society, lessons have to be learnt from the experiences of other societies but the features of such a struggle in Pakistani society have to be substantially different from those in the West or any other society. Any change or modification here has to be in line with Divine law (*shari'ah*), which offers an altogether different paradigm and reconstructs a society on the foundation of social justice (*'adl*).

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**Lessons have to be learnt from the experiences of other societies but the features of the struggle for rights in Pakistani society have to be substantially different.**

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In Islamic terminology *'adl'* means "putting a thing at its proper place". Thus Islam prescribes a model where every member of society occupies the position and status best suited to him. Contrary to the contemporary Western approach of a competition, women and men in Muslim societies complement each other in domestic and public lives. Qur'an has termed spouses the source of comfort and peace for each

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\*This write-up has been derived from the foreword (by Dr. Anis Ahmad) and the concluding chapter (by the authors) of an upcoming IPS Study on the same subject. The study has made a detailed analysis of legislation regarding women and family in the parliament during 2008 to 2013.

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other,<sup>30</sup> while in a larger framework they share responsibility in building peaceful, harmonious and progressive society.

It is for this reason that Pakistan should have a 'social policy' and not a 'gender policy' for overall development of all sections of society. This social policy should be based upon the constitutional

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**The policy and initiatives should not be reactive; they have to be proactive and the legislators are expected to take initiative in identifying problems, finding solutions and putting them into operation.**

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principles enumerated in the Articles 34<sup>31</sup> and 35,<sup>32</sup> by virtue of which the State should not only ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life but should also protect marriage, the family, the mother and the child. It should also incorporate Article 25,<sup>33</sup> which guarantees equality of all citizens before law and entitlement to equal protection of law without any discrimination on the basis of gender but at the same time

encourages special provisions for the protection of women and children. In such a policy, however, the merit and balance should not be sacrificed. It has been noticed that in effort of proposing steps for the rights of women, such privileges are suggested that, if adhered to, would definitely entail a new kind of gender bias that would be as dangerous for society as the bias against women. Those framing the policies, laws, plans and strategies should thus remain mindful of the responsibility they have been endowed with, and must not entertain any ideas which are imbalanced and unjust.

All the members of society, and most particularly the leadership, must realize and remain mindful of the fact that family institution is the real source of strength in a society. The "protection of marriage, the family, the mother and the child" is among the Principles of Policy, to act upon and in accordance to which is responsibility of each organ and authority of the State and of each person performing functions on behalf of an organ or authority of the State.<sup>34</sup> This principle should reflect in the national policies and legislation. A recent (March 8, 2013) consensus resolution of the National Assembly has, in the same spirit, asked for ensuring the rightful place for women in all

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<sup>30</sup>Al-Qur'an 30:21

<sup>31</sup>Article 34: Full participation of women in national life: Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.

<sup>32</sup>Article 35: Protection of family, etc: The State shall protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child.

<sup>33</sup>Article 25: Equality of citizens: (1) All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law. (2) There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex. (3) Nothing in the Article shall prevent the State from making any special provisions for the protection of women and children.

<sup>34</sup>The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Article 29



spheres of life with an aim to strengthen family institution, empower communities and building nation.

### **Desired Strategy**

There are many important issues that need attention of the people at the helm of affairs. Legislation and supportive actions under comprehensive and well-knit policies at national and provincial levels can bring immediate relief to women and strengthen family structure. Perhaps the most significant among them is provision of better health facilities in all rural and urban areas with special focus on preventing infant and maternal mortality, pregnancy-related problems and early detection and prevention measures for fatal diseases. Needless to say that health of women cannot improve unless food security and hygienic conditions for everyone are improved. Education for women, like any other person, may be counted as the second most important requirement after good health. This does not merely mean improved literacy rate, it should also mean provision of a knowledge that makes them better suited for the life ahead. Certain professions and jobs that allow respectable earning need to be identified and developed in a way to offer better opportunities for women who have to or want to work. According to the constitutional principle (Article 37e),<sup>35</sup> women and children should not be engaged in vocations unsuited to their age and gender. Work environment and conditions have to be made secure and women should be provided with necessary maternity benefits. Family laws scattered in over two dozen legislations need to be consolidated and made comprehensively codified.

To put it simply, the policy and initiatives should not be reactive only; they have to be proactive and the members of the parliament and provincial assemblies are expected to take initiative in identifying problems, finding solutions and putting them into operation. A culture of honoring the desires and opinion of the people has to be developed. A true democratic set up has to have the freedom of information. Every person, and more particularly women, should know the protection available to them in law, the avenues towards realization of these rights as well as plans and laws being formulated to regulate their lives.

The sacrosanctity of the marriage contract and the rights and responsibilities arising out of it need to be propagated and emphasized through all available channels. As expression of realizing the significance of family institution, all efforts should be made to resolve social issues through mechanisms available within the society. The Arbitration Council, as provided in the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961, is a good model for settling family feuds; it is not only closer

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<sup>35</sup>Article 37(e). [The State shall] make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work, ensuring that children and women are not employed in vocations unsuited to their age and sex, and for maternity benefits for women in employment.

Qur'anic model<sup>36</sup> but is also in accordance with the social structure of Pakistani society.

Current approach of giving enhanced representation to women in social, economic and political realms, in our view, will not mitigate the problems of women. It needs to be underscored that an important aspect which is often missing from quantitative researches on empowerment of women is the impact of public visibility and industrial participation on family life of women. The feminist movement in the West has underestimated and undermined the importance of role of women in family. The post-industrial revolution capitalist mind considers female workforce in factories and offices in terms of less

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**There are number of problems, particularly relating to women that emanate from factors requiring comprehensive reforms rather than mere legislation.**

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costly labor, while her family life, even if successful, is presented as economically unproductive. Later, when women in the West started struggling and arguing for their rights, they too encountered the same mindset and demanded equal wages instead of asking for the role they best suited in, i.e., nurturing the family. Family in Islam is not a commercial unit; it

is more than a place where food, residence and human interaction is provided without commercialization of benefits. Family is the basic unit of civilization and culture. It is through family that basic human values are transferred to coming generations. If family gets marginalized, civilizational process faces serious decline.

The slogan of equal political representation of woman in parliament and public sector jobs is based *prima facie* on the assumption that in a male-dominated parliament and public sector institutions, rights of woman cannot be realized and thus protected. In fact it is the question of values of a society and not of the proportion of representation. Rights cannot be guaranteed in a society where justice ('*adl*') does not dictate the actions of its members. Objectively speaking, this basic assumption that only proportionate representation of women in decision making institutions and public jobs would guarantee their rights is flawed. Would that mean that if in a society, women occupy more seats than men in the parliament (as in Rwanda),<sup>37</sup> such parliament shall not safeguard rights of men and shall always legislate against their interests. Should minorities, whether male, female or

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<sup>36</sup> "If you fear a breach between them (spouses), appoint one arbiter from the people of the man and one from the people of the woman. If they wish to have a settlement then God will reconcile them, for God is all-knowing and cognizant." The Qur'an 4:35

<sup>37</sup> Women constitute 56.3% of the lower house of Rwanda and 38.5% of the upper house of the parliament. Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, situation as of April 1, 2013) <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (June 6, 2013)

religious groups, always remain marginalized and oppressed in a democratic system based on a numerical majority?

### **Striving for International Pluralism**

While a paradigm shift is necessary, it is also a fact that all government initiatives and policies have to be formulated with international treaties, conventions and obligations of the country in mind which, in the current setting of international law, is based upon and is reflective of a particular paradigm of life based on the 'survival of the fittest' notion, which is contained, exhibited and proactively promoted by economically and militarily dominant West.<sup>38</sup> But, at the same time, it is also a fact that every society is different from others in its ideology, objectives and approach. Thus, in principle, international treaties, conventions and declarations should incorporate and reflect the approaches of all the different cultures and civilizations. They should address, or at least leave room for, indigenous interpretation for all nations — particularly in the context of social construct, family structure and gender perspectives. Since the Muslim societies carry a different paradigm as compared to the Western societies, there are occasions when these societies find it hard to relate the treaty provisions or articles of a convention to their faith or native culture;<sup>39</sup> the result comes out in form of the violation of either these treaties, or of norms of the society.

A better course of action for the world is to exhibit plurality and respect for all civilizations and cultures constituting the international conventions and treaties. Pakistan has signed many international treaties, conventions and other initiatives with certain reservations<sup>40</sup> and has voiced its concerns over some others<sup>41</sup> in realization of the gap between the vision it carries and the one that is upheld by that treaty or convention. However, instead of subscribing to the *status quo* and going along the things, even with reservations, Pakistan should take a lead in creating a pluralistic international society. As a first step, it should remain vigilant and active at international forums where a new treaty, convention, or protocol is being formulated or an interpretation is being discussed, and should stress its point of view on table in order to broaden the horizons, and to accommodate the Islamic and other

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<sup>38</sup>See for example Yasuaki, Onuma, *Towards Intercivilizational Approach to Human Rights*, Asian Yearbook of International Law (1998), vol. 7. p. 103; and Chaudhry, Muhammad Sharif, *Human Rights in Islam*, Lahore: All Pakistan Islamic Educational Congress, 1993.

<sup>39</sup>For example, the countries which had recorded reservations of the Convention on Eliminating all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) included a number of Muslim majority countries including Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Most of these countries had specifically cited Islamic *shari'ah* as the basis of their reservations.

<sup>40</sup>Like the Fourth Geneva Convention, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

<sup>41</sup>Like UNGA resolution of December 2007, calling for a moratorium on the use of capital punishment.

thoughts in them. In this exercise, it should also take along other states, organizations, lobbies, groups and scholars throughout the world. Such a move will, sooner or later, bring a healthy change, not only at global level but at domestic level as well. People of all nations will find convergence point in international instruments and will follow them while upholding and strengthening their own civilizations and cultures.

### **Integrating Voices**

Another significant dimension of contemporary policy-making that needs to be mentioned is the role of civil society organizations which has gradually increased during recent years. Many of such organizations are also concentrating on opinion-building, lobbying and policy-shaping in their respective areas of concern. In principle, such lobbying and advocacy campaigns are forms of public participation in the legislation. In all such cases, however, policy makers need to equip

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**In principle, international treaties, conventions and declarations should incorporate and reflect the approaches of all the cultures and civilizations.**

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themselves with proper understanding of issues, and the ability to analyze them in indigenous context. Unless they are deeply rooted among general public, and have a constant and effective connection with common citizens of the country, they are likely to fall to the campaign of any pressure group, which

simply implies that they are not only going to ignore the real problems of Pakistani society but will add to them as well.

### **Attending to Pre-Requisites**

It needs to be reiterated that the most important step towards guaranteeing the rights of all the sections of society is greater awareness, sensitization, education and counseling. Unless the members of society feel an urge from within, no set of laws can convince or even force them to respect the rights of others in true sense. The public representatives and political leaders have a major role to play in this respect; not merely through legislation and administrative action, but also by setting personal examples before the people. Once the rulers start honoring law, justice and rights of others, these norms will spread to the society, as a whole. If change has to be brought in the approaches, behaviors and mindset of the people, then law may not always be the first tool for the job. Law will do the service only when certain level of acceptance for it has already been achieved in the society. Attitudes, mindset and behavior patterns of people have to be transformed through an educational strategy and by building faith

on a rational basis. Only then a law would be able to find its followers amongst the people.

There are numerous problems, particularly relating to women, that emanate from factors requiring comprehensive reforms rather than mere legislation. Feudalism, for example, in the strict sense of the word, may have withered away from many areas, but it has created a mindset that prevails and reflects in the behaviors, rhetoric, and lifestyles, even in areas where it has apparently lost its existence. One fundamental characteristic of this mindset is the usurpation of authority, status and wealth; the lust for which denies and violates the rights of anyone who is weak and helpless, quite obviously including women. Appropriating the rights of women; denying their share in inheritance; marrying them off against their will; using them to settle disputes and liabilities in the name of honor, family tradition, custom or even religion are among the traits and manifestations of the feudal mindset. Unfortunately neither the realization of this core issue nor a political will to eradicate it has yet been noticed at public or government levels. Apart from the penal measures, all efforts should be made to establish a just system — particularly ensuring that education and employment opportunities are made equally available to inhabitants of all areas of the country and all sections of society, so that the people could be empowered to rid themselves of the clutches of feudalism and the society moves away from the feudalistic culture.

A crosscutting feature of all the problems is the poor governance. Codified laws are important for certainty, predictability and consistency, but legislation is not what brings the change; it is the *will* that does. It is extremely important to focus on the role of police, judiciary, and other public functionaries to build a responsible nation abiding by the rights of others.

### **Looking Forward**

Through 18<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment Act 2010, most subjects including many areas in criminal law, civil and criminal procedure, marriage and divorce, and social welfare have devolved upon provinces. It is hoped that the provincial assemblies will be able to legislate upon the problems faced by women within their own specific conditions and will set up more effective mechanisms. It is also hoped that legislators in the newly elected National and Provincial Assemblies will prove themselves more concerned, informed and vigilant in addressing the issues, problems, and difficulties in the society, and would restore the honor and respect of women which they deserve through the strengthened family institution and the ethical and moral characteristics.

However, legislation for the capital territory is still to be made in the Parliament even on the subjects which now fall under provincial jurisdiction. Hence, The Parliament should essentially take lead in all

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such issues so that it may set an example to be followed by the provinces, regarding legislation in certain areas. Along with reviewing structural flaws in our system of safeguarding and guaranteeing rights, due attention has to be given to reasons behind the existing approaches, priorities, mindset and behaviors in the society and then to addressing them through pragmatic initiatives within indigenous social and cultural framework.