

ANALYZING ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY GOVERNMENT (2008-2013)

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the present research paper is to critically analyze the key achievements and policy initiatives of the Pakistan People's Party government from 2008 to 2013 while using a qualitative approach, and analyzing government reports, policy documents, and secondary data, the study suggests the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) government (2008-2013) made significant strides in various sectors, despite facing national and international challenges. Under the leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari, the PPP restored the 1973 Constitution to its original form, transferring powers to the prime minister, and introduced the 7th NFC Award, ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources among provinces. The government successfully rehabilitated millions displaced by the 2009 Swat military operation and addressed long-standing grievances in Baluchistan through the Baluchistan Package, which included political, economic, and administrative reforms. Additionally, the government initiated several energy projects to tackle the country's electricity and gas shortages, including a gas import treaty with Iran. In the social sector, the Benazir Income Support Programme was launched, benefiting four million low-income families. These achievements highlight the PPP government's efforts in political, economic, and social reform during a critical period in Pakistan's history. The research recommends that the government should prioritize long-term energy sector reforms to prevent recurring power shortages and ensure sustainable development in future administrations.

Keywords: Pakistan People's Party, 2008-2013, 1973 Constitution, 7th NFC Award, Baluchistan Package, Benazir Income Support Programme.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan People's party Government introduced the Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Baluchistan package to mitigate the feeling of deprivation and depression in the people of Baluchistan. The constitution of Pakistan was parliamentary in nature. But the arbitrary amendments incorporated in the constitution during the military regimes have definitely altered the nature of the constitution and shifted the weight in the hands of the president of the Pakistan. This shift of powers resulted in political instability in Pakistan during the decade of 90s. Restoring the originality of the constitution is definitely a big achievement and the credit of this achievement to the visionary leadership of President Asif Ali Zardari. Further, the abolishing the concurrent list of the constitution has also

resolved the long-standing issue of provincial autonomy. The territory of Gilgat-Baltistan was given more autonomy by giving it the status of like a province and the name of the North West Frontier Province was renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa keeping in view the demands of the local residents. Benazir Income Support Programme was initiated to support the low-income people of society. Pakistan agro-based economy suffers greatly due to the unjust fixation of the commodities. PPP coalition government fixed support price for cotton, wheat and rice. The salaries of government employees and armed forces personnel were raised. Most of the working women in Pakistan face innumerable problems at their work places. The rights of women were violated and the cases of

harassment at work place, domestic torture and acid throwing were rising rapidly and the accused were released from the courts because there was no legislation to punish the criminals. Comprehensive legislation was made not only to safeguard the women but also to severely penalize the criminals. The restoration of deposed judges was another achievement of PPP Government (Khan, 2012).

Research Questions

RQ1. How did the Pakistan People's Party government's restoration of the 1973 Constitution and implementation of the 7th NFC Award contribute to strengthening provincial autonomy and political stability?

RQ2. What were the long-term impacts of the energy projects initiated by the PPP government, including the gas import treaty with Iran, on Pakistan's efforts to address electricity and gas shortages?

Research Objectives

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Pakistan People's Party government's initiatives, such as the restoration of the 1973 Constitution and the implementation of the 7th NFC Award, in promoting provincial autonomy and enhancing political stability during the period of 2008-2013.

2. To analyze the socio-economic impact of the Benazir Income Support Programme and the Baluchistan Package on the livelihoods of marginalized communities, as well as the overall development of the regions affected by these policies.

Material and Methods

This qualitative research employed a comprehensive approach to analyze the achievements of the Pakistan People's Party government from 2008 to 2013. Data were gathered from various sources, including government reports, policy documents, and secondary literature, to understand the impact of initiatives like the restoration of the 1973 Constitution, the 7th NFC Award, and the Benazir Income Support Programme. Thematic analysis was utilized to identify key trends and patterns in the data, providing insights into the socio-economic and political reforms implemented during this period.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of the Pakistan People's Party government's tenure from 2008 to 2013, highlighting the critical reforms and initiatives that shaped the country's political, economic, and social landscape. By analyzing the restoration of the 1973 Constitution, the implementation of the 7th NFC Award, and social welfare programs like the Benazir Income Support Programme, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the challenges and achievements faced during a transformative period in Pakistan's history. Furthermore, the findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and scholars regarding the effectiveness of governance strategies in addressing regional disparities, promoting provincial autonomy, and enhancing the welfare of marginalized communities, thereby informing future governance and development efforts in the country.

Baluchistan Package: Strengthening the Federation

Federation implies division of powers through constitution between the center and the constituting units. The Indian Act of 1935 was enforced as the interim constitution of Pakistan. Subsequently, three constitutions were promulgated on different times in the country. All these constitutions including the India Act of 1935 was federal in nature. But the federal structure of the constitution has been very problematic for Pakistan. During the initial years of the country the amalgamation of powers rest with the center. It was expected that with lots of power at its disposal the center would achieve the goals of national integration and nation-building. But the central government badly failed in achieving its goals. Establishment of Bangladesh in 1971 (formerly known as East Pakistan) was an example of the utter failure on the part of the center in structuring a federal system. Baluchistan is another case of troubled federalism in Pakistan. The long deprivation and alienation from the political matters of the country are some of the reasons of the Bloch resentment (Rais, 2009).

Baluchistan is situated in the southwest of Pakistan and constitutes 44% of the land mass. Geographically, it is the biggest of the four provinces. It occupies an area of 347,190

kilometers but its share in the population is only 5%. Administratively, it is divided into 30 districts. The three main ethnic groups in Baluchistan are Baloch, Pashtoon and Brahvi, Hazars are the fourth ethnicity group and they are called “settlers”. Hostility between the Baluchistan and the center is as old as the history of Pakistan. The accession of Balochistan aroused an armed struggle against the state of Pakistan by the brother of Khan. The declaration of one unit was severely criticized by the Baloch nationalists. The dismissal of provincial government of Sardar Attaullah Mangel aggravated the already fragile relations. In recent history the military operation and killing of Nawab Akbar Bughti in Pervez Musharraf era resulted in the latest insurgency (Bakht, 2008).

The province of Balochistan is located in the south-west of the country. It is the largest province by area and covers more than 40% of the total land. Balochistan has a long border of 625 miles with Afghanistan in its northwestern side and 475 miles long border with Iran to its western side. Makran Coast of the Persian Gulf also situated here. Balochistan has all the potent of becoming an energy corridor in the future. Central Asian states emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. These states have abundant energy resources but being landlocked they could not utilize their potential effectively. They need a route to transfer that energy and for international trade. Any insurgency or unrest in the region would have domestic and regional repercussions. The nationalist movement in Balochistan would create problems for Afghanistan and Iran because they claim some bordering parts of Iran and Afghanistan for the formation of “greater Balochistan” (Javid, 2010).

Considering the underdevelopment and the feelings of deprivation among the Balochistan people, Pakistan people’s party government presented a programme for development for Balochistan. The Parliamentary committee after conducting long deliberations and interviews with the top Baloch leadership of drafted a bill and presented that in the parliament. The parliament approved that bill and implemented. The package is popularly known as Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Baluchistan (Beginning of the rights of Baluchistan). This package addresses the demand of the Bloch people. The Baluchistan package is a very comprehensive package and it will definitely

improve the current scenario of affairs in a positive direction. The basic proposals can be classified into the following headings.

- I. Constitutional matters
- II. Economic issues and natural resources
- III. Political matters
- IV. Administrative matters
- V. Monitoring mechanism

The main proposals relating to the constitutional issues are the abolishing the concurrent list in the constitution of Pakistan and doing away with the Police order 2002. The concurrent list is a big hurdle in provincial autonomy. The formula for distribution of resources through NFC award should be revised and the features of the small provinces like inverse population ratio, backwardness, poverty, and source generation should also be given priority in deciding this formula. The Council of common interests would be made more powerful and effective. Certain articles of the constitution are proposed to be implemented in latter and spirit. Proposals relating to the political matter are that the federal government after consulting with the provincial government chalk out a plan to release the political workers and deal with those according to the book who would be charged with terrorism and heinous crimes. To resolve the issue a dialogue must be started between all the stakeholders and the federal government. The hurdle in the process of dialogue was that the leaders of the Baloch are either not in the parliament are living in exile. The participation of all the stakeholders is necessary for a fruitful dialogue. The provincial assembly has passed resolution from time to time. The implementation of these proposals also falls within the preview of demands of the Bloch people. Democracy at the higher level can be successful with the democratic institutions at the- grassroots level therefore the local government ordinance must be amended by the provincial government in view with the needs of the province. The administrative proposals are almost the same as political proposals. The military operation by the federal government should be stopped and only those should continue that are against terrorism. The issue of missing persons should be resolved immediately and innocent must be set at liberty and those who are charged with crimes must be punished according to the book. The idea of constructing two cantonments at Sui and Kohlu should be delayed for an appropriate

time. FC should replace Pakistan army in discharging law and enforcing duties gradually. The check post constructed outside the territorial limits should be demolished. The amount promised for the flood affected areas of the province should be released as early as possible. The field of education is much neglected in Balochistan therefore; special quota of scholarship should be given to the students from Balochistan by the Higher Education commission.

A judicial inquiry must be conducted for finding the facts responsible for the death of Nawab Akbar Bugti. In the economic field the basis proposal is to prepare a formula for the distribution of royalty of gas. Due representation should be to the local in the boards PPL, OGDCL and Sui Sothern Gas. While giving contracts of the mega projects local contractors should be preferred over the foreigners. At the Gwadar port all the non-gazetted posts, as far as possible should be filled from the local residents. This is a very comprehensive package for healing the wounds of Baluchistan and it will also bring them into main stream of national politics. The real test would be the implementation of these proposals. In this package a mechanism is also proposed for monitoring the progress of the work. It is proposed that all the concerned agencies, federal and provincial governments would monitor the progress of this package and federal and provincial parliaments would present a report after every three months before the house on the state of implementation of the proposals (Khan, 2012).

Consensus approval of 7th NFC Award

In its manifesto Pakistan People’s party promised not only to decentralize the political powers but also the fiscal powers. The concept of decentralization emerged with the growth of globalizations. The policy of decentralization is very beneficial for the smooth working of a

federation. Its strengths the relations between the federating units and the central government and also reduces the workload on the central government. The national finance commission is a constitution obligation upon the government for the sharing of resources among the provinces and the center. Under the Article 160 of the constitution Pakistani government is bound to distribute the financial resources among all the provinces and the central government. Most of the taxes are collected by the federal government and then these taxes are pooled together and redistributed among the provinces horizontally and between federal government and provinces vertically. Judicious and equal distribution of the resources is one of the prerequisites of the consolidation of the federation and it also discourages the centrifugal forces. Inequitable distribution of resources was one of the major causes in the secession of East Pakistan in 1947. All the federating units of Pakistan differ sharply in their features and want to exploit their unique feature. Punjab, being the most populous have always insisted on a criterion based on the population. Balochistan is the least populated of the four provinces and it demanded that the distribution may be made on the criteria of backwardness and inverse population density. All the customs are collected in the province of Sind so it demanded its share in this collection. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa strongly claimed that distribution be made considering its role as the most effected province in the war against terrorism. The distribution may be made on four indicators namely, population, revenue, backwardness and inverse population density. Population carries 82.5 weight, poverty/backwardness 10.3%, revenue generation/ revenue collection 5% (revenue generation 2.5%, revenue collection 2.5%).

Revenue Sharing Formula for the 7th NFC Award, 2009

| Indicators | ht | Weig | Punja | Sind | KP | Balochist |
|-------------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| | | | b | h | K | an |
| Population Share | | 82.0 | 57.36 | 23.7 | 13.8 | 5.11 |
| Poverty/Backwardness | 10.3 | | 23.16 | 27.82 | 27.82 | 25.61 |
| Revenue Generation/Collection | 5.0 | | 44.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 1.0 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Inverse Population density | 2.7 | 4.34 | 6.54 | 6.54 | 81.92 |
| Total Share | 100 | 51.74 | 14.62 | 14.65 | 9.09 |

Source: Mustafa, U. (2011). Fiscal federalism in Pakistan: The 7th National Finance Commission Award and its Implications. *Pakistan Institute of Development Economics Working Papers*, pp, 1-10.

Provinces were getting Rs. 550 billion in the recent years. But with the implementation of the 7th NFC Award, 2009 formula, the share of the provinces will rise to Rs. 850 billion. In the coming years, the provinces will be receiving approximately Rs. 1250 billions. Considering the role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as the front-line province and most affected province in the ongoing war against terrorism additional 1 percent has been given to the province. Pakistan People’s party led government in December 2009 amicably resolved the long-standing issue of the distribution resources which was controversial for the last 19 years. Consensus approval of 7th NFC award is another feather in the cap of PPP’s government. Balochistan is the most benefited of the award. All the three provinces Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan felt the extraordinary requirements and underdevelopment of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and decided to give extra 83 billion 9.09 percent of the provincial pool. The consensus approval of the 7th NFC Award after a long interval of 19 years is certainly a big accomplishment in the history of Pakistan. It was appreciated both at national and international level (Mustafa, 2011).

Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline

Over the years, energy has become the basic necessity of human being. It is required in industry, institutions, hospitals, and communications and in houses. Energy demands of the developing countries of the South Asian region has increased due to the industrialization and the rising population at a phenomenal rate.

Pakistan had been suffering from the acute shortage of energy for last three decades. Pakistan has limited oil and gas resources particularly oil resources. Pakistan has suffered from energy problem in one of the other ways. Pakistan has not been able to fulfill the demands of electricity. Besides, the gap continued widening during the last three decades. So, a gap between demand and supply had consistently existed in our country. A

recent example in this regard is the year of 2006-07. During this year the gap between demand and supply of electricity emerged in its most awful form and soon this problem shaped into the most horrible energy problem in Pakistan. In the previous few years, the government entirely failed to provide any kind of relief to the helpless people and they were bearing eighteen hours of load-shedding. One reason for this miserable state of affairs is the rapid increase in the electricity consumers with the unprecedented growth of population. The electricity consumers have increased from 7.9 million in 1992 to 19.9 million in 2008 and Wapda supplied 7237 Mega Watts of electricity against the demand of 11509 Mega Watts, in addition to it the shortage of Gas and disproportionate increase in the number of consumers had further aggravated the situation. The ministry of petroleum and natural resources revealed that though the production of gas has improved from 3837 MMCF to 3973 MMCF in 2007-08, but the consumption increased by 4.4% (Nawaz, A., Begum, T., & Seher, M. 2001).

Keeping in view the terrible predicament of electricity failures PPP-led government decided to import gas from Iran. Initially the idea of importing gas from Iran was presented by a Pakistani civil engineer Malik Aftab Ahmed Khan in his article “Persian Pipeline” that was published by Military College of Risalpure. But its more refined shape was presented by Rajeddra K Pachauri and a previous foreign affairs minister of Iran Mr. Ali. Pakistani and Iranian governments have long deliberations until in 1995 that an agreement was signed between the two countries. India was also desirous of joining the IP gas project. So, a similar kind of agreement was concluded between Iran and India. Historically, USA has concern over the nuclear programme of Iran. USA was very unhappy with this agreement between the two countries. India did not want to annoy USA. Therefore, she found a good alternative in signing a civilian nuclear pact with the US and backed out

from IP gas pipeline. The origin of gas pipe line will be the south Paris field situated in the Bushera province in Iran. It will travel 2775 km through Iran, Balochistan, Sindh, and reach in Multan from where it could further be extended to India. The initial capacity of the line would be 22 million cubic of natural gas per anum and this quantity would be increased gradually. This project will cost \$ 7.5 billion (Shahid, 2011).

Pakistan has other options for importing gas from Turkmenistan, Qatar and China but from cost and benefit analysis point of view IP project is the most suited and beneficial project to Pakistan. Turkmenistan has a large quantity of gas reserves and it stands on the third position after Iran and Russia in terms of gas reserves and is already exporting gas to Russia and China. But the biggest hurdle in this project is that a long portion of the line will go through the territory of Afghanistan and unpredictable situation there would definitely affect this project. Import of LNG from Qatar through the Iranian water or overland is another option for Pakistan.

Qatar in term of stocks of gas is at 4th number and she is willing to export it. Exporting LNG is a good and feasible option for Pakistan. China has offered Pakistan in the construction of two new nuclear plants yet this choice cannot resolve the electricity shortage problem of the country. The Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project has many benefits and advantages for Pakistan. This project will help Pakistan over-come the problem faced due to shortage of the electricity by easy availability of fuel for power generation companies. The approximate cost of this project is 3 billion dollars but the oil imports would be considerably reduced that are being used in generation of electricity. India and China have shown their willingness to join IP gas pipeline, therefore, Pakistan can earn huge amount in the shape of transit fee. There would be abundance of employment opportunities for the people of Balochistan and Sindh. This plan will prove very beneficial for Pakistan in maintain its local gas stockpiles that as per reports may likely to run out in coming few years. The construction work on the pipeline lying inside the Pakistani soil was initiated by the federal government in the month of March 2013. Both Pakistan and Iran have strongly disregarded US plans not to construct this pipeline. The length of

the gas pipeline inside Pakistan is 781 km (Munir, M., Ahsan, M., & Zulfqar, S. 2013).

Pakistan is an ally of the United Stated against the war on terror and recipient of the US aid despite this Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari went to Iran and attended inauguration ceremony of IP gas project in 2013. President Ahmadinejad said on this historical occasion “There are people who are against the progress of Iran, Pakistan and other countries. They have found an excuse – called the nuclear issue – to exert pressure on Iran and to prevent its progress.” He further said that gas pipeline has nothing to do with the nuclear energy and you cannot make atomic bomb with natural gas. President Zardari said on the inauguration ceremony “this project is very important for Pakistan and not directed against any country” (Marcus, 2011).

War against Terrorism: Successful Swat Operation 2009

Terrorism emerged as the most complicated problem faced by the Mankind with the beginning of the twenty first century. The decision of the Pakistani governments to join hands with the international community to eliminate terrorism from the soil of its neighbor country, Afghanistan resulted in a battle between the terrorist groups ant the law enforcing agencies within Pakistan. Swat is situated in the frontier region of the northwest of Pakistan just 100 miles away from Islamabad, the federal capital. It is administered by the KPK (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) government. Swat is a beautiful valley and a famous tourist’s destination abundant with natural beauty like rivers and the famous ski resort of Malam Jabba also place here. Swat is a multiethnic valley, including Kohistans, Gujars, Sikhs, but the dominant ethnic group in the Pashtun of Yousufzai tribe. Estimated population of Swat is to be 1.7 million and Pashto is the most widely spoken language. The people of Swat have a common history though they belong to different tribes and ethnicity (Fleischer, 2011).

Local residents of the Swat valley have been demanding the enforcement of Sharia law for quite a long time. Sirjuddin was the first to demand implementation of the Sharia law and Islamic judicial system in Swat and the adjoining areas. In his opinion, it was the only solution to the unrest in the valley. Sufi Muhammad launched a movement demanding the enforcement of the Shira law under

the banner of Tanzim Nifaz-e-Sharia-e-Muhammadi (Movement for the enforcement of Islamic Laws) in 1989 in the Malakind Division. The basis objectives of this movement were the implementation of Islamic law in Malakind division due to the prolonged judicial system in country. Before, 1990 Sufi Muhammad's struggle was peaceful and he even opposed the armed struggle against the army of Pakistan. But after that there was a complete change in his thinking and he even ordered his men to purchase arms to fight against the army. He persuaded the women to sell their gold ornaments to purchase the weapons. The slogan of the movement was "ya Sharia ya Shahdat" means either Shariat or martyrdom. The suicidal attacks on the army and the police and the killings of the innocent masses were the result of his anti-government speeches. In 1994, the government tried to appease the sentiments of the people by enforcing Nifa-e-Nizami-Adle in Provincial Administrative Tribal Areas (PATA) but that failed to convince the TNSM organizational members. The struggle of Sufi Muhammad was in progress that the USA attacked Afghanistan to avenge Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden for 9/11 attacks in USA. Sufi Muhammad and his son in law Fazullah even fought war against USA in Afghanistan (Ali, S., Skeikh, A., Shakoor, a., Wazir, A., & Saeed, M. 2013).

According to the demands of the cleric Sufi Muhammad and his companions, provincial government agreed to implement Sharia Law in Malakand, another peace agreement was signed in February 2009. Under this agreement the militants would lay their arm and dismantle their check posts in the valley. Initially, they vehemently supported the peace agreement but they were not in the favour of laying arms and demolishing their check posts. The killing of a district police officer and other personnel of law enforcing agencies spread terror in the valley. During the summer of 2009, militants claimed much of the control of the Buner, Dir and Swat. They enforced Islamic judicial system there like amputation of hands for barbers and shop-owners of cds, forbidden the education of girls (Khattak, 2010).

In these circumstances, Pakistan army launched a comprehensive military operation with the name of Operation Rah-e-Raast (Right Path) in Swat after approval from The Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani. The Prime Minister also assured the

nation that peace would be restored in the valley and the internally displaced people would be helped through Benazir Income Support Programme and the Cabinet has also contributed 20 million rupees to the Prime Minister Relief fund for IDPs (Khalil-Ur-Rehman, 2011).

After the violation of Ilan-Swat, President of Pakistan with approval from all the parties ordered a military operation to eliminate the terrorists from the valley. Due to the pressing demands of the local residents a bill Nizan-e-Adal was implemented only few months earlier. According to the military resources the Pakistan Army has gained control of the most parts of Swat and Mangora. Another achievement of Pakistan People's party led government was the reforms package for the Northern areas. Therefore, it is beyond doubt that all these steps were taken for the prosperity and solidarity of Pakistan (Gilani, 2009).

The commander of the military operation in Swat Director- General, Ahmed Shuja Pasha told the press reporters that army has taken the control of the Swat valley and the militants have been removed from the valley. The army has cleared the valley from the militants. The commander of the Swat operation was hopeful that this success will end the atmosphere of terror in the valley. The networks of the militants have been broken and most of their supporters have been arrested. After the successful operation the army is engaged in rehabilitation activities. The government promised to compensate the families who lost their dear ones and the civilians who received injuries during the operation.

Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment

The restoration of the parliamentary nature of the 1973 constitution is another mile-stone Achieved during the Pakistan people's party government. The eighth amendment introduced during President Zia-ul-Haq regime shifted the balance of power towards the president and he was empowered to appoint and sack the Prime minister by dissolving the lower house of the parliament. An effort was made to create a balance between the president and the prime minister. But this equilibrium between the two offices proved very dangerous to the political stability in the country. After the restoration of the constitution in 1985 these powers were invoked many times to dismiss the elected prime ministers (Mohammad, 2010).

Pakistan people's party after establishing their government formed a parliamentary committee to do away with the dictatorial amendments and other arbitrary additions in the constitution of 1973. Almost all the political parties were given representation in this committee. Senator Mian Raza Rabbani was the chairman of this committee. On a few occasions the working of the committee was affected by a difference of opinion or a dead-lock in the committee but in the end the committee unanimously approves amendment to the 95 different articles of the constitution (Fakhu-ul-islam, 2013).

This momentous achievement has not only restored the central and legislative supremacy of the parliament but also has removed the dictatorial changes introduced during the regimes of Zia and Musharraf. The federal legislature enjoys monopoly in legislation through concurrent list as it gives the central superiority over the provincial legislature. Now the eighteenth amendment has taken a big stride towards the transfer of autonomy increase the ability of the provinces to have a self-governance by removing the concurrent list from the center and transferring those matters to the provinces. The Council of Common Interests has been made more effective by including the representative of both the central and provincial governments. The role of the National Economic Council has been made more effective by assigning it the authority to review and advise the governments regarding the over-all economic activity of the country. The rights of the small provinces in the distribution of resources through NFC have been safeguarded. The amount cannot be reduced beyond the amount paid in the last award to any province. Previously only the abrogation of the constitution of 1973 amounts to "High Treason". In order to discourage the military intervention in the country the definition of High Treason has been expanded. Now even suspending or any attempt in doing so would amount to "high treason". No court in Pakistan whether Supreme Court or high court cannot validate the military intervention. The amendment has empowered the parliament and has established the authority of the parliament. Now, the advice of the Prime minister with regard to the appointment of the provincial heads, heads of the armed forces, and the chairman federal public service Commission is binding on the president. The eighteenth amendment has

further transferred the federal authority from the president to the federal cabinet. The days of forming huge cabinets have gone now.

Eighteenth amendment has imposed a restriction on making or large cabinets. The numbers of ministers including ministers for state has been limited to 11%. That means 49 for the parliament and in case of the provincial assemblies the number shall not exceed 15 or 11%, whichever is higher. With the new amendment enforced it is now the responsibility of the state government to provide compulsory and free education to all the children from the age 5-16 years (Hanif & Khan, 2011).

Gilgat-Baltistan Reforms Package 2009

By introducing reforms package for the Northern Areas in the term of PPP's headed alliance in 2009 is definitely another historical achievement. The new package has changed the name of the Northern Areas into the Gilgat-Baltistan and it has granted it the status of like a province. Under the new package the Gilgat-Baltistan would have its own parliament, chief minister and public service commission. The territory could not be incorporated into the federation of Pakistan as mentioned in the article 1 of the constitution of 1973 because of the pending resolution of the United Nations. This area has suffered more than Azad Jammu and Kashmir because latter has its own constitution, parliament and chief minister (Waseem, 2010).

Gilgat-Baltistan is situated in the north of Pakistan. It borders with Afghanistan, India, China and Tajikistan. Its population is 1.5 million and it covers an area of 72,400 square kilometer area. The area is comprised into two distinct entities of Gilgat and Baltistan. It is further divided into seven administrative districts of Gilgat, Ghizer, Hunza-Nagar, Astore, Diamer, Ghanche and Skardu. Some of the tallest mountains of the world like Hinukush, Himalaya and Karakoram are found here. The government of Pakistan introduced a lot of reforms after the independence in 1947 responding the demands of the local residents. Some examples of these reforms are Frontier Crimes Regulation, establishing a political agent and subsequently making a ministry for Kashmir affair and Northern areas. But this package introduced during the Pakistan people's party government in 2009 was a comprehensive package. The Prime minister of Pakistan constitutes a high-power

committee under the chairman ship of Minister for transforming this plan into reality. After approval by the federal cabinet the package was promulgated in August 2009. It is very much similar to the setup of Azad Jammu Kashmir. The offices of governor, chief minister and ministers were created. The Gilgat-Baltistan assembly was empowered with approving the budget. The assembly now has powers of legislations on 55 subjects (Hussain, 2009).

Gwadar Port

Pakistan People's party after assuming the responsibility of running the affairs of the government after the elections of 2008 paid special attention to the development of infrastructure like roads, rail and ports. The completion and of Gwadar port is another achievement of PPP. Gwadar in local language means "Gate of Air". Gwadar is a fishing village situated in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan. Baluchistan has a unique strategic importance in the region. It shares its border with the two countries Afghanistan and Iran. Pakistan has a very old desire to establish a deep-water port. The feasibility study started after recommendations by Worth Condrick who was deputed by the US Government to survey coastal areas of Baluchistan. Pakistan considering the future importance of the land and establishing a port there paid 3 million pounds to Oman in 1958 to buy this land for the Sultanate of Oman. This ended 200 years of Omani rule on Gwadar state. Pak-China friendship is considered higher than the Himalaya and deeper than the Indian Ocean. Pakistan has started many projects with the help of China and the construction of the Gwadar Port is another mile-stone in the bilateral relations of Pakistan and China. In March, 2002 an agreement was signed between the governments of the both countries. A Chinese company, Harbor engineering company has constructed the port. The completion of Gwadar port will definitely reduce the work-load on the already working ports of Pakistan. Central Asian states are abundant with energy resources and minerals but being landlocked they need a corridor to import their resources (Anwar, 2010).

Pakistan has a costal line of 1100 km, stretching from east to west. Pakistan annual trade is 38 million ton out of which 95% is carried through sea route. After the construction Gwadar Port, there

will be a phenomenal increase in trade of Pakistan. Pakistan has little strategic depth stretching from east to west. Gwadar port will add an additional 460 miles. This will reduce Pakistan's vulnerability from India. The location of Gwadar port will enable Pakistan to monitor the sea lines of communication starting from Persian Gulf to the Strait of Hormuz. The idea of constructing naval bases at Gwadar and Ormara by Pakistan will definitely check the Indian aspiration of dominating the Indian Ocean (Malik, 2012).

This port will not only prove beneficial for Pakistan but also for the central Asian countries and the entire region. Balochistan will enter into a new era of prosperity and development and there would be numerous employment opportunities for the Balochi youth. The construction of the roads that connects china with Gwadar port shows how vital this project is for her. Some analysts are of the opinion that Chinese ships travel more than 10000 km for the import of gas and oil through the route of Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Malika but Gwadar port will reduce this long distance to 2500 km. Gwadar port has established a direct link between the African countries and China. The economic growth rate for chine for last few years is 9 percent. Therefore, china is very eager to search ne buyers for its products (Malik, 2013).

Exceptional geostrategic position enables Pakistan to exploit these natural resources for its benefit. This port will create transit trade, coastal trade, industrial facilities and opportunities of economic development for Pakistan and for the countries of the region. Chinese company will be responsible for running the affairs of the port and will share the profits. So, it is crystal clear that all these steps were taken for the better future of Pakistan by President Asif Ali Zardari.

Pro-women Legislation

Women constitute half of the population in society but there are certain so-called social and religious constraints that have hindered their progress, especially in developing countries they are less privileged comparatively to the women of developed countries. Pakistani society being a male-dominated society and the cultural obligation upon women provides them few opportunities progress and excel in life.

On assuming the office of the executive, Pakistan People's Party government announced that it

would improve the status of women in society by introducing pro-women legislation. These laws would definitely safeguard the rights of women more effectively. The women in general and the women activists in particular were very pleased on the approval of the Domestic violence (prevention and protection) Bill in August, 2009 by the parliament. Their happiness proved to be short lived as Senate did not want it become law delayed the bill so much that it prematurely expired. Nilofar Bakhtar, a senator, in February 2012 introduced the same bill with minor changes. The bill was renamed as the domestic violence (Protection and Prevention Act 2012). The bill was passed with unanimous support from all the political parties including Jamiat-i-Islami (F) which had opposed the bill on the previous occasion. This is a very comprehensive Act and with its implementation the status of women would be definitely improved in society. It is very comprehensive act, the violence committed against women and children falls within the scope of the legislation. The Pakistan penal code was amended to effectively implement this act and to punish the delinquents. Another, historical bill "Abandonment of Anti-Women Practices" was passed during PPP's Government. The primary objective of the bill was to discourage the anti-women practices prevalent in our society like compelling women to marry against their will. The cases of heinous crimes of throwing acid on women were increasing rapidly. Sever penal and financial punishment will be awarded to the delinquent involved in these cases (Weiss, 2012).

Conclusion

The services rendered by the Pakistan People's Party Government during their five years tenure are definitely milestones in the history of the country. Pakistan was facing numerous challenges on the national and international fronts in 2008 when the coalition government of PPP established in Islamabad. President Asif Ali Zardari is a visionary leader and he fought all the challenges with such bravery that even his strong opponents admire his political insight. During the presidency of Asif Ali Zardari, Pakistan achieved a lot of milestones on the political, economic, constitutional, domestic and foreign fronts. Pakistan People's Party formed the government in 2008; the constitution of 1973 was lying in a subverted condition. Every politician

in Pakistan has tried to gain maximum authority. But President Zardari willingly handed over authority to the prime minister. The constitution was restored to its original shape through constitutional amendments. Due to the difference of opinion among the provinces over the issue of distribution of resources no NFC award could be reached in the last fifteen years. PPP government resolved all the difference of opinion amicably and adopted the 7th NFC Award with consensus. Now the provinces will get increased share in the federal budget.

Pakistan army had successful Swat operation in 2009. Millions of people were displaced as a result of the ongoing military operation. Their rehabilitation was an uphill task and the PPP government solved the problem of rehabilitation into their native locality immediately after the military operation.

Balochistan occupies a unique strategic location in the region. The enemies of Pakistan are involved in destabilizing and in anti-state activities. The previous governments in Pakistan are also responsible to this grim state of affairs that they allowed to develop a sense of deprivation in Balochistan. This capricious situation demands immediate attention from the government of Pakistan. Therefore, PPP government introduced Balochistan Package which includes constitutional, political, economic and administrative measures to appease the resentment of the Balochistan. Pakistan is suffering from the shortage of electricity and gas form the last two decades. Pakistan People's party government started a large number of projects under the instruction of President Zardari. In the coming five years the menace of load-shedding will be resolved for good. Pakistani government signed a treaty with Iran for the importation of gas. This project will fulfill the indigenous shortage of gas. In the social sector PPP's Government launched Benazir Income Support Programme. Approximately, four million needy families were benefited through this programme.

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