

# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

# OBSERVER

Newsletter by National Assembly of Pakistan

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## A Quarter of Diplomatic Success

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## Kashmir Issue Echoes during the Conference of Speakers of Parliaments in Istanbul

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## Speaker opens the doors of the Lower House to Public

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### MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

Since my posting here in National Assembly, I have been endeavouring to make this institution more transparent and accessible for maximum outreach under the patronage of the Honourable Speaker.

This institution, the National Assembly of Pakistan, is the central pillar of democracy where members work tirelessly to fulfil their mandate of representation and oversight through House debates and Committees. Unfortunately, the dynamism of this institution does not reach to a vast majority which leads to their mistrust on democratic norms. This newsletter is one such initiative to convey to our readers the work being done in this institution day and night by their elected representatives.

I express my full support to the team behind this initiative and hope it will thrive into a notable publication chronicling the history being made within the corridors of power. Looking forward to your feedback and suggestions. Happy reading!



## DIPLOMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS

### Speaker Congratulates MNA Shandana Gulzar Khan on being elected as the Chairperson of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and Acting Speaker Qasim Khan Suri congratulated Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, Member National Assembly on being elected as the Chairperson of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP).



The new Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians was elected for a three-year term at the CWP Business Meeting held at the sixth triennial conference of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), that took place in Kampala, Uganda as part of the wider 64th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference. The newly elected Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), Hon. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA of the National Assembly of Pakistan has pledged to renew the effort to increase women's representation and political participation in Parliaments across the Commonwealth.



"It is a matter of great pride for the country on winning the slot of chairperson of International forum of CPA. It is indeed an important victory for the country. Her election will provide an excellent approach to take the

issue related to women rights on International forum", said Speaker Asad Qaiser

"Women Parliamentarians have played a vital role for strengthening of the democracy in the country. I am confident that she would work for the empowerment of women in CPA region countries. It is heartening to note that majority of the CPA women parliamentarians reposed confidence in her leadership" Qasim Khan Suri

### Senator Raza Rabbani Elected as Member of IPU Executive Committee

14<sup>th</sup> October 2019



In a major development, Senator Raza Rabbani emerged victorious after India withdrew the candidature of Congress member of the Lok Sabha, Shashi Tharoor for a slot in the prestigious executive committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), a global inter-parliamentary forum aimed at political multilateral negotiations during the 141st general assembly of IPU in the Serbian capital.

Of the 34 members of the executive committee, Asia has three seats and two of them are already held by China and Thailand. The term of the executive committee's member is three years. Pakistan fielded former Senate chairman Mian Raza Rabbani for the coveted slot and his candidature was being vigorously pursued by Pakistan's parliamentary delegation led by NA Speaker Asad Qaiser. It may be noted that Speaker Qaiser is Chairman of the Asia Pacific Group for the current year.

Asia Pacific Group unanimously elected Senator Sherry Rehman to the prestigious bureau of the IPU's Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, Trade and Finance. Senator Javaid Abbasi was also elected to the IPU's Drafting Committee. With these elections, Pakistan's parliament has got the prestigious presence of its seven members in different committees of the IPU.

## SPEAKER'S ENGAGEMENTS

### Kashmir Issue Prioritized

In the wake of India's reckless decision to unilaterally scrap Articles 35-A and 370 from the Indian Constitution on August 5, 2019 and subsequent coercive occupation of Jammu Kashmir by India, the Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser made it his top priority to highlight the issue of Indian Occupied Kashmir and the plight of the people of Kashmir on numerous occasions.

#### Meeting with Speaker of Malaysian House of Representatives

1<sup>st</sup> October 2019

Speaker Asad Qaiser during his meeting with Tan Sri Dato Mohamad Ariff Bin Md Yusuf, Speaker of Malaysian House of Representatives stated that 57 days of lockdown in Indian Occupied Kashmir had converted the valley into a virtual jail and the situation in Kashmir valley was at the verge of a human catastrophe. He asked for Malaysian support for resolution of Kashmir issue in accordance with the aspirations of people of Kashmir and the United Nations resolutions.

Tan Sri Dato Mohamad Ariff bin Md. Yusuf, Speaker of Malaysian House of Representatives assured his counterpart Mr. Speaker Asad Qaiser to resolve the issue in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions and international commitments. He said that our bilateral relations had been historically tied together with deep-rooted friendship, brotherhood and goodwill and stressed on opening new vistas of parliamentary cooperation between two brotherly countries.



#### Speaker Asad Qaiser writes letters to IPU, CPA to inquire into human rights abuses in IoK

7<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser wrote letters to the Secretary General of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Acting Secretary of General Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) demanding an inquiry into the continued abuse of human rights and constitutional freedoms in Indian occupied Kashmir (IoK). He proposed dispatch of fact-finding missions

comprising the parliamentarians from IPU Member Parliaments and CPA Branches without further delay.

The speaker, in his letter to Acting Secretary General of CPA recalled decision of Pakistan as host of the 61<sup>st</sup> proposed CPA Conference to not extend invitation of participation to the legislature of IoK as matter of its legitimacy.

The speaker said that in view of the aggravated situation in IoK, on behalf of the National Assembly of Pakistan, as an esteemed Member of the IPU and CPA fraternities, he demands inquiries into the continued abuse of human rights and constitutional freedoms in the Indian Occupied State of Jammu and Kashmir by the IPU and CPA.

#### Meeting with the Ambassadors of Japan and Portugal

8<sup>th</sup> October 2019



The Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser stressed upon the international community to assert diplomatic pressure on the India to end oppression against the innocent Kashmiri people. The Speaker expressed his views in separate meetings with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Kuninori Matsuda and Ambassador of Portugal Mr. Paulo Neves Pocinho Portugal in Parliament House.



## Third Conference of the Speakers of the Parliaments on Countering Terrorism and Strengthening Regional Connectivity

12 October 2019



The Speaker National Assembly reiterated at the Third Conference of the Speakers of the Parliaments on Countering Terrorism and Strengthening Regional Connectivity, held at Istanbul, to address the prevailing grave human rights and humanitarian situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJ&K) as well as to uphold the inalienable right to self-determination of the Kashmiris. The Conference was also attended by the Speakers of the Parliaments of Turkey, Afghanistan, and Russia, as well as Vice Speaker of Chinese National People's Congress. The Speakers' Conference is a platform conceived and established by the Parliament of Pakistan, with its inaugural meeting held in Islamabad in 2017.

Terming connectivity as one of the foundation stones of the regional peace and prosperity, the Speaker highlighted the progress being made by Pakistan under the flagship China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

The conference, at its conclusion, endorsed the Islamabad and Tehran Declarations of 2017 and 2018 respectively, which among other things call for the resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. The outcome document also underscored the need for all States to avoid politicization of the UN Sanctions regime as well as the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

Led by the Speaker National Assembly, Pakistan's Parliamentary delegation to the Conference also comprised of the Deputy Chairman Senate, Saleem Mandviwalla; the Chairman of the National Assembly's Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir, Syed Fakhar Imam; former Speaker National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq; Senator Lt. General (Rtd) Abdul Qayyum; Senator Mian Muhammad Ateeq Shaikh; Senator Rana Maqbool; Chairman of National Assembly's Foreign Relations Committee, Malik Muhammad Ehsan Ullah Tiwana; and Ms. Shazia Marri (MNA)

An important breakthrough in the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan took place when the speakers of assemblies from both sides decided to hold bilateral talks at a parliamentary level to promote cooperation and understanding as well as to evolve a trust-based strategy for fostering people-to-people contacts.

### Strengthening Pak- Afghan Ties

12<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Speaker Asad Qaiser extended an invitation to the



Afghan speaker Mr. Rahman Rahmani for leading a parliamentary delegation to Pakistan to discuss the outstanding bilateral issues including relaxation in the visa regime as well as the expansion of trade and commerce activities between the two countries. The development took place when National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser met with his Afghan Counterpart on the sidelines of the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Belgrade, Serbia.

While informing the Afghan delegation about Indian brutalities in occupied Kashmir, Qaiser urged Rahmani to play his role in normalising the situation in the held valley which was under siege for the last 72 days. The maiden meeting between the speakers of Pakistan and Afghanistan proved instrumental in paving way for continued cooperation through parliamentary platforms.



## **Kashmir day observed in Parliament House**

25<sup>th</sup> October 2019

In a bid to draw attention towards the plight of people of Indian Occupied Kashmir and express solidarity, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser observed Kashmir Day outside the Parliament House and urged the international community, especially United Nations (UN), to play its role in protecting the innocent Kashmiris from Indian barbarities. The National Assembly, Senate, the government and the opposition actively participated and pledged to become the voice of Kashmiri people and plead their case at different levels. Chairman Kashmir Committee Syed Fakhar Imam was also present at the occasion.

## **Visit of ASEAN Parliamentarians**

5<sup>th</sup> November 2019

A delegation comprising of members of the Parliament from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Region led by Dato Muhammad Azmi Abdul Hamid, President of Majlis Perundangan Islam, Malaysia (MAPIM), met Speaker Asad Qaiser in Parliament House. The Members of the Parliaments of Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and Singapore visited Pakistan to get insight of the Kashmir issue.

The ASEAN Parliamentarians termed Kashmir dispute, a global issue and have assured to raise the predicament of Kashmiris at international and regional forums till its resolution. They condemned the Indian oppression against innocent Kashmiris depriving them of their human rights and identity.

## **NA Speaker Asks Swiss Parliamentarians to Raise Voice Against Worst Human Rights Abuses in Kashmir**

6<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser while talking to Mr. Jean Rene Fournier, President of the State Council of Switzerland accompanied by a five-member delegation in Parliament House asked the Swiss Parliamentarians to add their voice against the worst human rights abuses being committed by the Indian forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The Speaker said that leaving the Kashmir issue unresolved would put the security and peace of the region at stake.

Mr. Jean Rene Fournier, President of the State Council of Switzerland said that his country strongly believes in human rights and civil liberties and would certainly raise their voice against the infringement of human rights in Indian Occupied Kashmir. He said that Switzerland strongly supports resolution of Kashmir issue in accordance with the UN Resolutions and aspiration of people of the State of Kashmir. He said that Switzerland also attaches importance to its relations with Pakistan and wants to further enhance them through interaction

of Political leadership and business community. He agreed that immense potential exists in Pakistan and that Swiss investors would certainly come and invest for mutual benefit of both the countries.

## **Saudi Arabia extends support for holding international Parliamentary Conference on Kashmir**

5<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Kashmir issue warrants an immediate resolution otherwise would lead to a human catastrophe. Saudi Arabia supports the early resolution of the issue in accordance with the aspiration of people of Kashmir and UN resolution. This was stated by Dr. Abdullah Bin Mohammed Al- Sheikh, Chairman of the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in Parliament House along with a delegation comprising Members of the Saudi Shura Council. It was agreed that the International Parliamentary Conference would be held early next year in Islamabad.



Speaker National Assembly and Chairman Saudi Shura agreed for enhancing parliamentary interaction between both the legislative bodies. Saudi Shura Chairman suggested for active interaction between Standing Committees on Commerce, Trade and investment for suggesting ways and means for enhancing bilateral commercial, investment and trade activities. He said that immense opportunities exist in Pakistan and Saudi investors would certainly like to participate in the commercial activities for mutual benefit of both the nations.

Speaker Asad Qaiser suggested for enhancing quota for Pakistani manpower in Saudi Arabia. He also expressed his gratitude to the Saudi Government for release of prisoners jailed in Saudi Arabia on petty issues.

## **Parliamentary Interaction to Strengthen Bilateral Ties Between Iran And Pakistan**

9<sup>th</sup> November 2019

A Parliamentary Delegation consisting of the members of Pakistan-Iran Parliamentary Friendship Group led by

Syed Naveed Qamar, Convener of the group in the National Assembly of Pakistan visited Iran at the invitation of the Head of Iran-Pakistan PFG from November 8-12, 2019. The visit was aimed to further strengthen the bilateral Parliamentary relations as well as overall bilateral relations between two brotherly countries.

On the directives of the Honorable Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Syed Fakhar Imam, Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir also accompanying delegation to present gratitude to the Parliament and government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their consistent support for cause of Kashmiris. He apprised Iranian side regarding ongoing situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir especially after 5th August. On behalf of the Speaker National Assembly as well as Members of National Assembly and Senate of Pakistan, Syed Fakhar Imam presented great gratitude to Iranian side for standing and supporting principles of justice in case of Kashmiris.

The Pakistan's Parliamentary Delegation includes Syed Naveed Qamar, Syed Fakhar Imam, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Sajida Begum and Muhammad Aslam Bhootani. Syed Naveed Qamar and Fakhar Imam interacted with Tehran base Media Channels and newspapers and highlighted importance of visit for lobbying in Kashmir and improving bilateral relations between Pakistan and Iran.

**Saudi Arabia Supports the Position Expounded by the OIC on Kashmir**

24<sup>th</sup> December 2019

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. His Majesty, King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz, received the Honorable Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser his delegation at the Royal palace. He recalled the close and fraternal ties between the two countries, and termed Pakistan a true friend of the Kingdom.



The Speaker briefed the King on the plight of Muslims in the Indian Occupied Kashmir, which continue to face oppression from the Indian armed forces. He also raised the issue of the discrimination meted out to the Muslims in India under the new citizenship law. King Salman said that the Muslim countries needed to discuss these

developments at the OIC platform. He said that the Kingdom supported the position expounded by the OIC on Kashmir, as well as the relevant international resolutions on the dispute.

**CPEC Diplomacy & Economic Revival**

**CPEC & the role of Kyrgyzstan**

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019

Speaker Asad Qaiser met with Mr. Erik Beishembiev, the Ambassador of Republic of Kyrgyzstan in Islamabad and expressed his view that CPEC is the key to economic future of Pakistan and the region and that Pakistan attaches immense importance to its relations with Kyrgyzstan which were intertwined in eternal bonds of religion, history and culture. He suggested that



Kyrgyzstan could play an important role in linking Euroasian Economic Zone and Europe with CPEC.

**Pakistan Desires to Further Solidify Parliamentary and Economic Cooperation with Belarus: NA Speaker**

26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Speaker Asad Qaiser met Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus H. E. Mr. Andrei Dapkiunas in Islamabad. Speaker shared that Pakistan considered Belarus a valuable friend and desired to further solidify the bilateral relations through enhanced parliamentary and economic cooperation with Belarus.



While mentioning about the importance of CPEC in the region, NA Speaker expressed his hope that CPEC would prove a harbinger for success and development for the region and for the world in coming years. This project will pave way for enhancing mutual trade and it will open new avenues for employment. He said that Pakistan is determined to complete this project at the earliest so that its positive impact be spread in other countries of the world. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus H. E. Mr. Andrei Dapkiunas said that Belarus values high its relations with Pakistan and wanted to further strengthen the existing relation through economic and diplomatic relations. He said that Pakistan is one of the first countries among those which recognized the independent status of Belarus after dissolution of Soviet Union. He mentioned that inter-parliamentary relation between both nations would cement the mutual ties between both states.

**NA Speaker emphasizes the need for close contacts between the Parliaments of Pakistan and Korea**

20th November 2019

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser invited Korean investors to invest in Pakistan in diverse sectors especially in tourism, agriculture and manufacturing sectors. He said that Pakistan values its friendly relations with Korea and wanted to further expand them by promoting cooperation in diverse fields. He expressed these views while talking to Korean Ambassador in Pakistan Mr. Kwak Sung-Kyu who called on him on 20th November 2019 at Speaker’s House, Islamabad.

Korean Ambassador Mr. Kwak Sung-Kyu said that Korea attaches great importance to its friendly relations with Pakistan and wants to further solidify existing relations. He said that his government was keen to work with the incumbent government of Pakistan and wanted to promote cooperation in socio-economic sectors between the two countries. He agreed with the proposal of promoting relations between the parliaments of both the countries. He said that parliamentary and people to people contact can play an important role in bringing the two nations closer. The Korean Ambassador assured the Speaker that he would play his role to increase the quota of Pakistani workforce and scholarships for Pakistani students.



**Regional Dialogue on Role of Parliaments in Cementing Regional Integration; Dialogue to Focus on Exploring Shared Prosperity through CPEC**

18<sup>th</sup> December 2019



The National Assembly of Pakistan hosted a regional dialogue on the “Role of Parliaments in Cementing Regional Integration” on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS), Islamabad.

The dialogue focused on exploring the corridors of shared prosperity through CPEC for Pakistan and the region. The dialogue was attended by

Parliamentarians, representatives of the Government, representatives from diplomatic corps, intelligentsia and development experts.

Speaker Asad Qaiser inaugurated the Dialogue with his key note address. The Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on CPEC Sher Ali Arbab and Chinese Ambassador in Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing also addressed inaugural Session of the regional dialogue and highlight the CPEC role in progress and development of the region.

The concluding session of the Dialogue focused on “CPEC- A Win Win situation for all”. On conclusion the Report on “Building Regional Connectivity for Pakistan” by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) was also launched.

## Concern for the People

### National Assembly to host comprehensive debates on Agriculture

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019



The Speaker National Assembly emphatically stressed the need for connecting Pakistani farmers with the global markets and projection of the 'Made in Pakistan' brand across the world. He stated that Pakistan was a producer of best quality agri-products; however, the lack of effective penetration in the global value chain precluded Pakistani farmers from higher productivity and profitability. He announced that the Special Committee on Agriculture Products was actively pursuing linkages with the global food outlets through partners and investors of international repute. He was speaking at the 5th meeting of the Special Committee on Agricultural Products at Parliament House, Islamabad.

The representatives of the SGS and Swiss Consulting Private Limited presented a comprehensive plan for integrating Pakistani farmers in the global value chain. An international Business Development Consultant on Agri Food Supply Chain from SGS Gevena Mr. Hans Peter Heus Peter briefed the committee on the successful implementation of the plan in China. The plan presented to the committee centered on leveraging a tech driven connectivity of the Pakistani farmers with the global food chain. The committee was informed that the entire plan of e-commerce-based access to the global market would be based on data management and self-assessment system where farmers would have wider access to buyers of their choice. The system indicates reducing the exploitative role of middlemen.

The meeting was attended by the Speaker Mr. Asad Qaiser, Sahibzada Muhammad Mehboob Sultan, Minister for National Food Security and Research, Mr. Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Minister for Aviation Division, Syed Fakhar Imam, Sher Akbar Khan, Shandana Gulzar Khan, Malik Muhammad Ehsan Ullah Tiwana, Muhammad Farooq Azam Malik, Mujahid Ali, Fazal Muhammad Khan Rao Muhammad Ajmal Khan,

Chaudhry Iftikhar Nazir, Nafeesa Inayatullah Khan Khattak and officials from the Ministry of National Food Security and Research, SGS and Swiss Consulting Private Limited.

### Protection of Rights of Specially-Abled Persons

3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser took an initiative to express solidarity with specially-abled persons by getting an exclusive ceremony arranged on International Day for persons with disabilities at the Parliament House. Speaker Asad Qaiser observed the day in a befitting manner ensuring active participation of the specially-abled persons as he believed they possessed immense potential and could play a vital role in the progress and development of the country if provided enabling environment.

The Speaker while addressing the ceremony pledged to bring them into mainstream and announced that a Parliamentary Committee would be constituted comprising members from the treasury and the opposition for proposing legislation for the protection of rights of the specially abled persons which would take up all issues which were hampering the active participation of people with disabilities in the national development. He asked Standing Committees to review the 2% quota reserved for jobs in public sector as well.



### Speaker Stresses Importance of Education

16<sup>th</sup> December 2019

The Speaker said that education was imperative for the progress and prosperity of the any country. He stressed the need for imparting quality education to children without discrimination as it was directly linked with the development of any nation. He further stated that 20 million children were still out of school and concerted efforts were required to bring those Children, back to school. He suggested that a uniform educational system throughout the country will bring rural areas at par with the urban areas. He also urged upon the Social Sector Organizations to come forward and supplement the

efforts of the Government. The Speaker suggested for incentivizing the educationists and enhancing their capacity for sustainable growth in the standard education. He termed children, the future and treasured asset of any country. He expressed these views while addressing a seminar “ILM Possible” organized by British Council in Islamabad.

## Speaker's Common Man Initiative

5th October 2019



In a bid to provide access to 'Right of Information' to the citizens, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser opened the doors of the lower house to the general public through his "Common Man Initiative". The speaker inaugurated the gallery and a well-equipped reception is established at the entrance of Parliament House.

NA Speaker Asad Qaiser stated that the basic idea behind the opening of the doors of the National Assembly is to provide ease to the citizens to reach their public representatives. It is the first time in the parliamentary history of the country that proceedings of the lower house of the parliament are open for the masses.

## 16th December declared Black Day

16<sup>th</sup> December 2019

The Speaker termed 16th December 2014 a black day in the history of Pakistan whereby a brutal attempt was made to disrupt the peace and educational activities in the country by attacking innocent children of Army Public School, Peshawar. He said that, the gruesome attempt inflicted irreparable wound, however, the resilience of the students, teachers and parents of the martyrs gave a new spirit and zeal to the nation to fight against enemies of the country. He said that despite the catastrophe, the educational activities continued with same enthusiasm.

## Managing Affairs

### Appointment of Members of ECP

29<sup>th</sup> October 2019

A meeting between Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjarani was held in Parliament House to discuss the appointment of Members of the Election Commission of Pakistan in light of the orders of the Islamabad High Court. The Minister for Law and Justice Mr. Farogh Nasim, Mr. Azam Swati, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Secretaries of National Assembly, Senate, Ministries of Law & Justice and Parliamentary Affairs were also present. After discussion, it was decided to continue further consultation for determination of the issue in question in accordance with Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Rules of Procedure of the Parliamentary Committees and observations of the Hon. Islamabad High Court.



## ACTIVITIES AT GLANCE



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser Chief Guest at the Ceremony on “Reviving Commitments on Child Rights” organized by National Parliamentary Task force on Sustainable Development Goals at Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services-PIPS on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019.



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser was invited as Guest of Honor at "ILMPOSSIBLE SUMMIT 2019". ILM Possible in collaboration with the Parliament of Pakistan intends to reframe the education policy to ensure the access of education to every child.



Parliament House Building turned Blue on the occasion of International Children Day to create awareness about Children Rights and the provision of better health and education facilities to them on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2019.



Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri at the National Conference on "Linking Human Rights with Pakistan SDGs 2030 Agenda" at Islamabad with Federal Ombudsman Kashmala Tariq and other members on 9-12-2019.



Speaker Asad Qaisar as the chief guest alongwith guest of honour Umar Ayub, Minister for Energy, Ambassador Yao Jing, Chairman of Pakistan China Institute, Senator Mushahid Hussain, Sher Ali Arbab, Chairman, Parliamentary Committee on CPEC in an event organised by Pakistan-China Institute along with Power China on 21-1-2019



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri addressing the participants of inaugural Session of the National Conference on Education on "Generating a National Response to the Educational Challenge" in Islamabad on 04.12.2019



'Empowered Pakistani Women' jointly organised by UN Women Pakistan and WPC on Dec 4, 2019



Hon. chief guest Mr. Asad Umer, Secretary WPC Ms. Munaza Hassan, Women Parliamentarians and Country Representative Westminster Foundation for Democracy Mr. Mujtaba Zaidi group photo with winners of “Jamhoriyat Hum Se” competition

## LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

A total of three sessions were held during the last quarter. The 15<sup>th</sup> session was conducted between 30<sup>th</sup> Sept to 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct for three days, 16<sup>th</sup> Session between 7<sup>th</sup> Nov to 15<sup>th</sup> Nov for 9 days and 17<sup>th</sup> Session between 4<sup>th</sup> Dec to 16<sup>th</sup> Dec for 13 days. The National Assembly actively worked in the House for 24 days during the last quarter in total.

**Resolutions:**  
National Assembly passed 6 resolutions

	Resolutions	Date
1	The National Assembly unanimously condemns the India's Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, a discriminatory law	December 16, 2019
2	The National Assembly unanimously condemns the legislation passed by the Indian LOK Sabha	December 10, 2019
3	This House strongly condemns the disgrace of the Holy Quran in Norway	December 4, 2019
4	The National Assembly resolves to extend the National Counter Terrorism Authority Ordinance, 2019	November 7, 2019
5	The National Assembly resolves to extend the Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019	November 7, 2019
6	The National Assembly resolves to extend the Federal Govt. Employees Housing Authority Ordinance, 2019	November 7, 2019
5	The National Assembly resolves to extend the Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2019	November 7, 2019
6	The National Assembly resolves to extend the Federal Govt. Employees Housing Authority Ordinance, 2019	November 7, 2019

**Bills passed:**  
National Assembly passed three bills during the session held in last quarter

**The Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority Act, 2019** was passed on 10th December 2019. The Bill was to provide for Housing and real estate development and other activities related to land and construction of buildings owned or acquired by, vested in or in the possession of the Federal Government through the establishment of Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority.

**The Foreign Exchange Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2019** was passed on 30th September 2019. This bill seeks to amend Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947 (FERA, 1947) in order to enable the State Bank of Pakistan to regulate the foreign exchange regime in Pakistan more comprehensively as well as to strengthen the effectiveness of the Act.

**The Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Bill, 2019** was passed on 30th September 2019. These amendments are aimed at streamlining the existing AML law in line with international standards and suggest enhancing the punishment of offence of money laundering to make it more dissuasive and deterrent. The amendments suggest making the offence punishable under the AML Act, 2010 as "cognizable offence". These amendments would also allow Financial Monitoring Unit to seek Egrnont Group Membership (Group of Financial Intelligence Unit) which is the requirement under the Financial Action Task Force Recommendations.

## Government Bills Introduced:

The Government introduced 09 bills during this period.

	Title	Date
1	The Global Change Impact Studies Centre (Amendment) Act, 2019	16th December, 2019
2	Port Qasim Authority (Amendment) Act, 2019	4th December, 2019
3	The Surveying and Mapping (Amendment) Act, 2019	4th December, 2019
4	Gawadar Port Authority (Amendment) Act, 2019	4th December, 2019
5	Privatization Commission (Amendment) Act, 2019	4th December, 2019
6	The Constitution (.....Amendment) Act, 2019	7th November, 2019
7	The Islamabad Capital Territory Senior Citizens Act, 2019	7th November, 2019
8	The National Highways Safety (Amendment) Act, 2019	7th November, 2019
9	The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2019	7th November, 2019

## Private Member's Bills:

53 private Member Bills introduced during this period

	Title	Date
1	The Emergency Madadgar (Protection from Civil and Criminal Liabilities) Bill, 2019	10th December, 2019
2	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
3	The Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
4	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
5	The Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
6	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
7	The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
8	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
9	The Elections (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
10	The Higher Education Commission (Amendment) Act, 2019	10th December, 2019
11	The Islamabad Capital Territory Prohibition of Interest on Private Loans Bill, 2019	14th November, 2019
12	The Control of Narcotics Substances (Amendment) Bill, 2019	14th November, 2019
13	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
14	The Recognition and Enforcement (Arbitration Agreements and Foreign Arbitral Awards) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
15	The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
16	National Counter Terrorism Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
17	The Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
18	The Islamabad Rent Restriction (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
19	Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants (Amendment) Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
20	The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
21	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019	1st October, 2019
22	The Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
23	The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
24	The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
25	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
26	The Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
27	The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
28	The Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>29</b>	The Islamabad Consumers Protection (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>42</b>	The Anti-Dumping Duties (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>30</b>	The Pakistan Environmental Protection (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>43</b>	The Defamation (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>31</b>	The Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-Smokers Health (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>44</b>	The Regional Development Finance Corporation and Small Business Finance Corporation (Amalgamation and Conversion) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>32</b>	The Islamabad Capital Territory Private Educational Institutions (Registration and Regulation) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>45</b>	The Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (Re-organization and Conversion) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>33</b>	The National Insurance Corporation (Reorganization) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>46</b>	The Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>34</b>	The Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan (Reorganization and Conversion) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>47</b>	The Financial Institutions (Recovery of Finances) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>35</b>	The Islamabad Capital Territory Shops, Business and Industrial Establishments (Security) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>48</b>	The Trade Organizations (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>36</b>	The Electronic Transactions (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>49</b>	The Islamabad Consumers Protection (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>37</b>	The Press Council of Pakistan (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>50</b>	The General Statistics (Reorganization) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>38</b>	The Associated Press of Pakistan Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>51</b>	The Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>39</b>	The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>52</b>	The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>40</b>	The Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Court) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019	<b>53</b>	The Export Development Fund (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019
<b>41</b>	The Banking Companies (Recovery of Loans, Advances, Credits and Finances) (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st October, 2019			

## COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES



### Special Committee on Agricultural Products

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The meeting was chaired by the Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaisar where he took notice of availability and pricing trend of different fertilizer products particularly DAP and Urea. Mr. Asad Qaisar highlighted that the farmers complained that continuous surge in fertilizer prices has rendered farming unsustainable and non-competitive for the poor farmers. The Secretary Ministry of National Food Security and Research briefed the Committee about the fertilizer prices, availability and cost of production. He stated that the surge in prices is non-reasonable and the margin of profit for the fertilizer industry is quite high. Sharing figures pertaining to the cost of production, he highlighted that in the last one year alone fertilizer prices have been revised almost five times.



**20<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Sub-Committee of the National Assembly Special Committee on Agricultural Products chaired by Syed Fakhar Imam. After detailed deliberations, unanimously urged the Government to set the Minimum Support Price for Wheat for the year 2019-20 at Rs.1400/40 kg. The members of the committee emphatically stressed that the Minimum Support Price should be in line with price hike in agricultural inputs particularly

fertilizers, fuel, and pesticides. They contended that the government's recommended MSP at Rs. 1350 should be revised.

### The Parliamentary Committee on CPEC

**21<sup>st</sup> November 2019**

The Parliamentary Committee on CPEC, met (in-camera), at Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, MNA. Secretary Ministry of Planning Development and Reforms briefed the Committee about the mechanism for identification of projects at Federal and Provincial level (including local stakeholder analysis) under Socio-Economic Development Projects under 1\$ Billion grant. The Members critically examined the criteria regarding 27 proposed Socio-Economic Projects for best utilization of these funds and to improve the Socio-Economic conditions of people of the concerned areas in which the projects are identified. Moreover, it was emphasized that the concerned public representatives should also be consulted during the project identification process by the respective provincial governments for making a broad-based consensus on these projects by the all stake holders to strengthen the efforts of the present government for poverty alleviation.

### Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat

**13<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The Committee directed Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to assert its regulatory role on telecommunication sector for improvement in service delivery and coverage in far flung areas. The Committee also directed PTA to take stringent measures to address the menace of hate speech and religious intolerance on social media. The Committee met under the chairmanship of Syed Amin-ul-Haque, MNA in Parliament House.



### **Standing Committee on Climate Change**

#### **12<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

A tenth meeting of the Standing Committee on Climate Change was held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at Parliament House under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Munaza Hassan, for comprehensive briefing by CDA and Climate Change Division. The Committee expressed its serious concerns over rising change in the climate of the country and expressed resolve to tackle climate change related issues with commitment and honesty.

### **Standing Committee on Commerce and Textile**

#### **29<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Commerce and Textile was held in Parliament House under the Chairmanship of Hon. Syed Naveed Qamar. The Secretary Commerce and Textile briefed the Committee on structural changes required to ensure effective role of the Pakistan Embassies abroad to promote the Trade, Economic and Investment Partnership between Pakistan and the other countries having Pakistan embassies/Missions abroad. He also briefed the committee on steps taken to ensure that Pakistan continue to benefit from GSP plus Status.

### **Standing Committee on Communications**

#### **8<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Communications was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Ibadullah Khan, MNA. The Committee recommended revision of salary structure of the force, incorporation of human resource, logistics and infrastructure requirements of the NH&M Police in PC – I of all future projects. The Member Planning NHA briefed the Committee about the on-going schemes, New schemes, BOT Projects, China Pakistan Economic Corridor and Revenue collection of NHA. A sub-Committee was constituted under the convener-ship of Mr. Murtaza Javed Abbasi to probe/examine on-going projects, non-operational completed projects and projects for which allocation has been made but work not started.

### **Standing Committee on Defence**

#### **16<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

The meeting was held in Parliament House, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Amjid Ali Khan, MNA.

Mr. Pervez Khattak, Minister for Defence also attended the meeting. The Committee observed that there is lack of liaison/coordination between departments regarding Cyber Crimes related issues. The Committee directed the M/o Interior to collect information from Federal and Provincial Departments on the said issues and submit a comprehensive progress report in the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee directed that all the concerned departments should take prompt action on zero tolerance against the culprits who posted blasphemous material and any kind of anti-state contents on the social media. The Committee considered “The Joint Maritime Information Organization Bill, 2019” and after detailed discussion and deliberations the Committee unanimously passed the said Bill.

#### **19<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

The meeting of the Standing Committee on Defence was held in Parliament House, under the chairmanship of Mr. Amjid Ali Khan, MNA and passed “The Surveying and Mapping (Amendment) Bill, 2019” (Government Bill), without any amendment. The Committee deferred the agenda regarding all the related issues on Cyber Crimes, due to absence of Federal Secretary Interior.

### **Standing Committee on Energy**

#### **18<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee was held in Parliament House under chairmanship of Dr Imran Khattak. Minister Energy Mr Umar Ayub stressed the importance of adopting alternative and renewable energy sources. Moreover, he informed that the transmission lines from Quetta to Gwadar will be completed by 2021. He further told that the indigenous gas has decreased, and that LNG will help fill the gap.

#### **26<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Energy was held in Parliament House, under the chairmanship of Dr. Imran Khattak. Members of the Committee expressed annoyance on the continuous load shedding of Gas in different parts of the country. The Ministry said that due to the current cold spell, the consumption of the Gas has been increased and the companies had to adjust the Gas supply to the domestic consumers as well as to the Power sector, despite of the fact that 11.6% of more Gas has been injected in the system. The Committee directed the Secretary and concerned officials to address the concerns of the people on priority. The Committee asked about the concerns of Elected Representatives regarding their development schemes and directed the Ministry to complete the process of shifting the Head Office of SNGPL to Islamabad without any further delay.

### **Standing Committee on Federal Education, Professional Training, National History and Literary Heritage**

#### **21<sup>st</sup> November 2019**

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mian Muhammad Najeeb ud Din Awaisi in National

Commission for Human Development, Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat. The Committee deferred four bills for next meeting. The report of the committee was presented by its Convener Mr Ali Nawaz Awan. A sub committee was formed on the request of Ms. Mehnaz Akbar Aziz to conduct oversight of Federal Directorate of Education.

### **Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs**

#### **7<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee was held in Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mr. Asad Umar. The Committee discussed “The Pakistan Coinage (Amendment) Bill, 2019”, “The Banking Companies (Recovery of Loans, Advance, Credits and Finances) (Amendment) Bill, 2019”, “The Agricultural Development Bank of Pakistan (Re-organization and Conversion) (Amendment) Bill, 2019” and “The Financial Institutions (Recovery of Finances) (Amendment) Bill, 2019”. The Committee rejected “The Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan (Reorganization and Conversion) (Amendment) Bill, 2019” and “The Regional Development Finance Corporation and Small Business Finance Corporation (Amalgamation and Conversion) (Amendment) Bill, 2019”. The Committee Members expressed their concern about the performance of FBR regarding collection of tax amount under this system. The Committee was also informed about the pendency position and way forward on the issues. Mr. Muhammad Hammad Azhar, Minister for Economic Affairs briefed the Committee about the updated position on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) matter. He apprised the Committee that Pakistan has significantly completed action plan on 22 items out of 27 given by FATF under International Co-operation Review Group (ICRG).

### **Standing Committee on House & Library**

#### **26<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker. The Committee considered the report submitted by the concerned departments on the status of its previous recommendations. The Committee directed Capital Development Authority (CDA), to take necessary steps to resolve the matter regarding payment of salary of the workers hired for janitorial services and recommended that Ministry of Finance may release the funds to CDA timely.

### **Standing Committee on Human Rights**

#### **7<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

The 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Human Rights was held in Parliament House, under the chairmanship of Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. The Committee was given briefing by the Special Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs on severe Human Rights violations have been observed in Indian Occupied

Kashmir, as well as, steps taken to highlight those before international forums / Governments. The Committee approved “The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2019”.



### **Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication**

#### **24<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

The National Assembly Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication showed its displeasure on the absence of Secretary, Ministry of Interior in its meeting held in National Telecommunication Corporation (NTC) Headquarters, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Ali Khan Jadoon. The Director General, National Information Technology Board (NITB) while briefing informed the Committee that E-Office is implemented in 31 Ministries including 48 Departments out of 42 Ministries/Divisions and the implementation of the said application is pending in remaining 11 Ministries due to non-availability of required infrastructure. The procurement of required infrastructure is in process and will be completed in next financial year subject to the release of funds by Finance Division.

### **Standing Committee on Interior**

#### **24<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Interior was held under the chairmanship of Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz in Parliament House. The Minister for Interior updated the Committee that for addressing the issues of the Federal Capital the Government is planning to revisit the structure of CDA, for this purpose people of high stature will be hired to head the CDA Board. The issue of Khokhas will also be addressed. The representatives from Farash Town placed their grievances before the Committee. The Minister assured to resolve the issues of Farash town on priority basis. The bill titled “the Islamabad Rent Restriction (Amendment) Bill, 2019 was placed before the Committee. The Committee concluded that the bill is useful, if implemented in true letter & spirit, and recommended that the Bill may be passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan.

#### **13<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Interior was held under the chairmanship of Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz at National Data Base Registration Authority

(NADRA) Headquarters, Islamabad. The bill titled “the Mutual Legal Assistance (Criminal Matter) Bill, 2019” was passed by the Committee. Remaining Bills on the agenda were deferred till next meeting due to the absence of the movers. Committee also raised question about criteria for issuance of Sehat Insaf Cards.

#### **14<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee was held under the chairmanship of Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz in National Data Base Registration Authority (NADRA) Headquarters, Islamabad. The bill titled “the Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Bill (Section 3), 2019” was passed by the Committee. The Bill titled “the National Counter Terrorism Authority (Amendment) Bill 2019 was discussed and deferred till next meeting. Remaining Bills on the agenda were deferred till next meeting due to the absence of the movers.

#### **24<sup>th</sup> December, 2019**

15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee was held under the chairmanship of Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz at NADRA HQ, Islamabad. The bill titled “The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2019 was passed by the Committee. The Committee directed Ministry to submit implementation statuses of pending recommendations of the Committee. The issue of granting dual nationality to Pakistanis living in Malaysia was discussed. the Ministry informed that the Government is planning to start negotiation with the Government of Malaysia on the issue of granting dual nationality to Pakistanis.

### **Standing Committee on Law and Justice**

#### **30<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Law and Justice was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Riaz Fatyana, MNA in Parliament House. The Committee considered the Bill “The Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 4) (Government Bill)” and deferred “The Muslim Family Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 7) (Government Bill)” at request of the Ministry. The Committee reconsidered the Bill “The Superior Courts (Court Dress and Mode of Address) Order (Repeal) Bill, 2019 (Government Bill)” after detail deliberations the Committee unanimously recommends that the same may be passed by the Assembly.

The Committee re-considered the Bill “The Family Court (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Amendment in Article 10) after detail deliberations the Committee recommends that the Bill may not be passed by the Assembly however Ministry ensured that the object of the Bill will be incorporated through the relevant Rules. The Committee considered the Bill, “The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article 31). The committee deferred the same till next meeting due to no availability of the Mover.

#### **31<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Law and Justice was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Riaz

Fatyana, MNA in Parliament House Islamabad. Committee offered Fatiha for the departed soles of the Passengers in train incident near Rahim Yar Khan. The Committee unanimously recommended that an inquiry shall be conducted by the concerned Ministry and the report of the same should be submitted to the committee with details of why and how the Gas cylinders were brought onto the train when the same is banned in Pakistan.

#### **27<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Meeting of the Committee was held in Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mr. Riaz Fatayana. “The Muslim Family law (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 4) (Government Bill)-, “The Muslim Family Law (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 7) (Government Bill)” and The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Government Bill); were deferred at the request of the Ministry.

The Committee recommended that the “The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article 48) (Government Bill) and The Constitution (Amendment) Bill’ 2019 (Article No. 51 and 59) may be passed by Assembly. However Ms. Aliya Kamran MNA submitted her note of Dissent. The Committee re-considered the Bill “The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article 51, 76 and 106)”. the Committee recommended that the same be referred to the House with recommendation that a Parliamentary, /Special Committee shall be constituted for consideration of the same.

#### **28<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Parliament House. It was chaired by Mr. Riaz Fatayana. The Committee deferred the following bills: “The Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reform (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 22) The Recognition and Enforcement (Arbitration Agreement and Foreign Arbitral Award, (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 9), “The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article 25 and The Defamation (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Section 16)”.

The Committee considered the Bill, The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article No. 51 and 106). The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019, to the extent of (Article No. 51 and 106) moved by Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, MNA and The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2019 (Article No. 51 and 106) moved by Dr. Darshan, MNA, after detail deliberations, the Committee recommended that issue for enhancement of seats for minorities be referred to the House with recommendation that a Parliamentary/Special Committee shall be constituted for consideration of the same. However, the Committee recommended that the issue relating to the dual votes and other provisions in the Bill may not be passed by the Assembly.

### **Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan**

### **10<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan was held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in Parliament House, under the chairmanship of Rana Shamim Ahmed Khan, MNA. The Secretary, M/o Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan (KA&GB) informed the Committee that a summery has been initiated by the M/o KA&GB for the Hon. Prime Minister, wherein, Prime Minister has been requested to direct the M/o National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination to extend the facility of Sehat Sahulat Card to all the vulnerable families residing along Line of Control (LoC).

### **Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs**

#### **17<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs was held in Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mir Amer Ali Khan Magsi, MNA. The Committee took notice of the rapidly depleting stocks of fish in Pakistan and recommended that the Government should take steps to take care of the indigenous fisherman present in Sindh and Balochistan. Various projects in Gwadar are nearing completion, such as construction of Industrial units in the Pilot Zone is 90% completed. Second Expo in Gwadar was a huge success and WEBOC has been made operational at Gawadar Port. The Committee recommended considering the concerns of people of Gwadar which haven't been addressed during the initial agreement.

### **Standing Committee on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination**

#### **4<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Committee was held in Parliament House and was chaired by Mr. Khalid Hussain Magsi. The Committee considered Pakistan Psychological Council Amendment Bill 2019, reconsidered Transplantation of organs and Tissues (Amendment) Bill 2019 along with many others.

### **Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development**

#### **25<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee was held in the Old PIPS Hall, B&D Block, Parliament Lodges, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Sheikh Fayyaz ud Din, MNA. The Director General, Bureau of Emigration and Overseas Employment (BE&OE) gave a detailed briefing on functions, performance, and potential of BE&OE. The briefing also included the issues regarding insurance fund for emigrants, under process projects and challenges being faced by the Bureau. The Ministry was directed to share the draft of under process National Emigrant Policy for its review by the Committee. The issues regarding arrests and detention of Pakistanis abroad on various charges were also discussed and the Ministry was asked to take necessary steps to educate the outgoing Pakistani emigrants regarding the laws and

customs of the host countries in order to avoid such persecutions.

### **Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs**

#### **11<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

Meeting for the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Affairs was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Mujahid Ali, MNA in Parliament House, Islamabad. The Committee confirmed the minutes of its previous meeting which was held on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2019. Compliance on the comprehensive report/implementation status of the previous recommendations of the Committee was given by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

### **Standing Committee on Planning Development and Reform**

#### **16<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Planning Development and Reform was held in Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mr. Junaid Akbar, MNA. The Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms briefed about salient features of the draft of 12<sup>th</sup> five years plan and suggested that the Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Reform and Standing Committee on Finance & Revenue may examine and suggest valuable opinions on draft plan before finalizing. The Committee discussed the compliance report regarding the recommendations of the previous meeting; the committee was not satisfied with the reply of Ministry regarding Mansehra Air Port.

### **Standing Committee on Postal Services**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Postal Services was held under the chairmanship of Haji Imtiaz Ahmed Choudhary, MNA. It was informed that Pakistan Post is implementing the recommendations of the Committee in letter and spirit. The Committee recommended that as per direction of Prime Ministe all government/semi government/autonomous bodies and government organization send their mail via their Postal Services. The Committee considered "The Pakistan Postal Services Management Board (Amendment) Bill, 2019" and deferred it till next meeting on the request of Ministry of Law and Justice.

### **Standing Committee on Privatization**

#### **27<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

A fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on Privatization was held in Parliament House, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Syed Mustafa Mahmud, MNA, for comprehensive briefing by Privatization Division and Energy Division. The Secretary, M/o Privatization/Commission briefed the Committee over the Privatization of two Power Plants. He apprised the Committee that the First Women Bank Limited and the SME Bank would be privatized because the Government has a fiscal deficit and there is no fiscal space and a

strategic partner would be required for injecting capital but the Ministry assured that the special character especially of First Women Bank Limited would be maintained and majority employees would be protected. The Chairman Taskforce on Power also presented the report of the Taskforce on Power in which he highlighted various points.

#### **29<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

A sixth meeting of the Standing Committee on Privatization was held in Parliament House, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Syed Mustafa Mahmud, MNA. The Secretary, M/o Privatization/Commission briefed the Committee over the Privatization of OGDCL that in pursuant to Cabinet Committee on Privatization directions, the Privatization Commission Board approved divestment of up to 7% of OGDCL shares to the foreign and domestic institutional investors and general public at Pakistan Stock Exchange. Privatization Commission invited of Interest for appointment of Financial Advisory Consortium and issued request for proposal to three Interested Parties.

#### **Standing Committee on Railways**

##### **10<sup>th</sup> October, 2019**

8th meeting of the Standing Committee on Railways was held today under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad Mueen Wattoo, MNA, in M/o Railways Islamabad. The Committee approved the minutes of its lasting meeting dated 8th July 2019 with little bit of observation on the direction of agenda item (viii) regarding appointment of lower staff in Railways through computerized balloting.

#### **Standing Committee on Science and Technology**

##### **21<sup>st</sup> November 2019**

Meeting of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology was held in Parliament House under the chairmanship of Mr. Sajid Mehdi, MNA. The Agenda items pertaining to the legislation business was discussed as moved by Syed Fakhar Imam. The Chairman endorsed the proposal of the mover. However, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad Malik, MNA had the view that these types of amendments should be discussed on another forum jointly and should be discussed with the Honourable Speaker to constitute such forum.

##### **22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019**

Meeting was held in PCSIR Ministry of Science and Technology, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Sajid Mehdi, MNA. The Director General, PCSIR apprised the Committee on the working and performance of Pakistan Council of Renewable Energy Technologies (PCRET). He informed that at present the share of renewable energy in the energy sector is up to 6%, which is even higher than the share of nuclear energy and up to 30% is expected up to 2030. He further briefed the Committee that there is zero tax on solar panels. Due to manufacturing of substandard solar panels especially from Afghanistan minimized the quality, as a result PCSIR has proposed the

establishment of a internationally accredited laboratory in Islamabad in collaboration with PSQCR to regulate the production of these substandard solar panels.

##### **23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**

Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in PCSIR Ministry of Science and Technology, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Sajid Mehdi, MNA. The members have shown their reservation on the reply of the ministry against the last direction of the committee. However, the Secretary M/o Science and Technology assured that the same will be furnished during the next meeting.

##### **24<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

9th Meeting was held in PCSIR Ministry of Science and Technology, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Sajid Mehdi, MNA. The Committee advised the Director General, Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) to prepare a feasible report for establishing the hotel, tea/coffee shops and other commercial activities and placed before the Ministry for granting the loan by international donor or the loan from national banks and report to the committee within two months.

#### **Standing Committee on States and Frontier Regions (SAFRON)**

##### **24<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

The Committee meeting was held in Parliament House, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Mr. Sajid Khan, MNA. The Committee discussed the issue of doubling of seats in Medical/Dental colleges across the country as announced/ approved by the Cabinet in its meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017, in detail. In this regard, the Secretary Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC), Islamabad informed the Committee that the notification of 136 seats in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had already been issued and the increase of seats in other provinces was still awaited as the admitting universities have not yet submitted their inspection forms to the PMC.

#### **Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development**

##### **25<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

7th meeting of the Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development was held in Old PIPS Hall, B&D Block, Parliament Lodges, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Mr. Sheikh Fayyaz ud Din, MNA. The Committee proceeded with the agenda of the meeting.

#### **Standing Committee on Water Resources**

##### **15<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

6th meeting of the Standing Committee on Water Resources in Parliament House, Islamabad under the chairmanship of Nawab Muhammad Yousuf Talpur, MNA. Secretary Ministry of Water Resources briefed and answered the question of the members about the

implementation status of the previous recommendations of the committee. The Committee was satisfied on the briefing. However, a Sub-Committee was constituted on the proposal of the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources. The “Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (Amendments) Bill, 2019” being an agenda item was deferred due to non-availability of the Mover of the Bill. The issue of land acquisition for Dasu Hydro Power Project was also discussed.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Water Resources was held in Parliament House. The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of its meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2019. While discussing the agenda item regarding issuance of NOC by IRSA to propose 25 MW power project in Khushab district on Chashma-Jhelum link canal to M/S C-J Hydro (Pvt.) Limited, the Secretary Irrigation Sind briefed the Committee that NOC was issued without the consultation of Sindh Government. He further informed that such type of NOC in favour of Sind was regretted by NEPRA in 2016. He requested to cancel the NOC as issued by IRSA in violation of Water Accord 1991.

#### **29<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee was held under the chairmanship of Nawab Muhammad Yousuf Talpur. The Committee did not confirm the minutes of its previous meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 with direction to the Ministry of Water Resources to take up the issue of Power Station, proposed to be constructed at Chashma Jhelum Link Kanal, in the CCI meeting expected to be held in near future. The Committee discussed the Diamer/Basha and Mohmand Dam funds and the Ministry of Water Resources explained their position. However, the Committee directed that latest position of the funds deposited for these Dams and the expenditure incurred on advertisement through electronic and print media be provided in detail to the Committee in the next meeting.

### **Non- Ministerial Standing Committees**

#### **House and Library**

#### **26<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee on House & Library was held in the Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Mr. Muhammad Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker. The Committee considered the report submitted by the concerned departments on the status of its previous recommendations. The Committee directed Capital Development Authority (CDA), to take necessary steps to resolve the matter regarding payment of salary of the workers hired for janitorial services and also recommended that Ministry of Finance to release the funds to CDA timely. The Committee considered the issues relating to the maintenance of Parliament Lodges and appointed a sub-committee under the convener ship of Mr. Farrukh Habib, MNA to look into the matters relating to the issues of the maintenance of the

Parliament Lodges. The Committee considered the issues relating to the allotment/possessions of the plots to the members of the National Assembly Secretariat Employees Cooperative Housing Society (NASECHS).

### **Government Assurances**

#### **5<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

The Committee instructed NADRA to open two centers immediately in District Bajaur and decided that Health Ministry should submit report on reducing the seats of Layari Medical College. The meeting was being chaired by MR. Malik Muhajmmad Amir Dogar.

### **Rules of Procedure and Privileges of the National Assembly**



#### **13<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges of the National Assembly was held in Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, MNA. The Committee discussed the question of Privilege raised by Pir Syed Fazal Ali Shah Jillani, MNA Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan, MNA and deferred Privilege motions raised by Mr. Atta Ullah, MNA, Mr. Sher Akbar Khan, MNA. The Committee once again recommended that Home Department and IGP Government of Sindh may be requested to provide necessary security to Ms. Shagufta Jumani, MNA.

#### **27<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, MNA. The Committee discussed the question of Privilege raised by members Pir Syed Fazal Ali Shah Jillani, Mr. Atta Ullah, Mr. Sher Akbar Khan and deferred the Question of Privilege raised by Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan and Mr. Abdul Majeed Niazi.

#### **30<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges of the National Assembly was held in the Parliament House, Islamabad, under the chairmanship of Rana Muhammad Qasim Noon, MNA. The Committee deferred the Question of Privilege raised by Mr. Muhammad Aslam Khan, MNA. It was unanimously decided by the Committee that subject matter would be disposed of in case of further absence of the mover in next meeting of the Committee.

## PICTURE GALLERY



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing participants of 4th Meeting of the Speakers Eurasian Countries' Parliaments at Nur Sultan (Astana) in Kazakhstan while Deputy Speaker India Rajya Sabha disrupting his Speech on 24.09.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser and Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri sharing moment of happiness with a person with Disabilities held at Parliament House on 03.12.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser planting a sapling on the occasion of Joint Convocation of University of Swabi & Women University Swabi in Swabi on 09.12.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with Srilanka Natinal Cricket Team in Islamabad on 15.12.2019



President of the Council of State Swiss Confederation Mr. Jean Rene Fournie With Speaker NA Asad Qaiser during a call on at Parliament House on 06.11.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group Photo with ASEAN Parliametary Delegation led by the President of Majlis-Perundingan Islam Malaysia (MAPIM) Dato'Muhammad Azmi Abdul Hamid in Parliament House on 05.11.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser listening the National anthem along with Chief Minister KPK Mehmood Khan and faculty members during the Joint Convocation of University of Swabi & Women University Swabi in Swabi on 09.12.2019



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri in a group photo with faculty members and Students of Fatima Jinnah Women University at Rawalpindi on 05.11.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with specially-abled Children on the occasion of Special Function on International Day of Persons with Disabilities held in Parliament House on 03.12.2019



Regional Chair for Universal Peace Federation Mr. Umberto A. Angelucci, and Dr. Asfar Rathor, President Growth for Peace called on Deputy Speaker NA Mr. Qasim Khan Suri at Parliament House on 10.12.2019. Former Deputy Speaker NA Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi is also present on the occasion



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a meeting with Delegation of Pakistani Expatriate from UK in Islamabad on 15.11.2019



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing participants of "Saalam Kissan Seminar" in Islamabad on 18.12.2019



Acting Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri cutting cake in connection with Christmas celebrations at Parliament House on 24.12.2019



Ambassador of Palestine Mr. Ahmed Jawad Rabei presenting manuscript of Quran-e-Pak to Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri at Parliament House on 19.12.2019

## BOOK REVIEW

### Governing the Ungovernable

by Dr. Ishrat Husain

*Reviewed by Shehzad Saeed*

“Governing the Ungovernable” by Dr Ishrat Husain is a comprehensive and compelling analysis of the landscape and history of governance in Pakistan. Covering a wide array of topics, — history, economy, polity, society, federal and provincial governments, the civil service, the judiciary, the military and the private sector — the book challenges many widely held assumptions. Given the vast range of topics covered, the most insightful chapters are on economic issues or political economy.

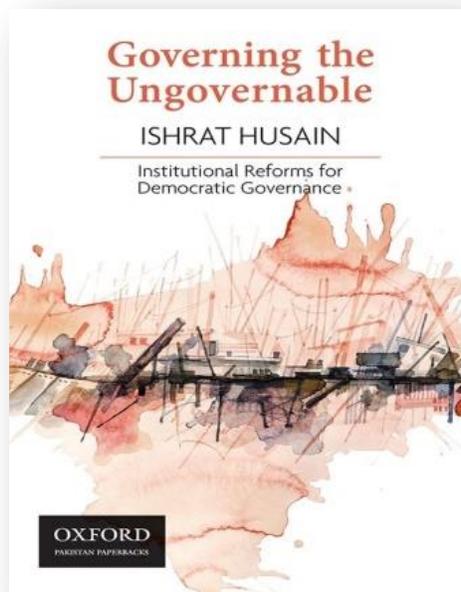
Key thesis of the book is that the economic history of Pakistan can be divided into two distinct phases: 1947 to 1990 and 1990 to 2017. During the first four decades after independence, Pakistan’s economic and social indicators ranked among the top ten developing countries, ahead of its neighbours. After 1990, Pakistan’s economic performance has been so poor that both social and economic indicators have fallen behind those of its regional counterparts such as India and Bangladesh. Since the 1980s, the IMF has been approached by Pakistan (twelve times), India (just once), Bangladesh (three times) and Sri Lanka (twice).

The author believes that an independent and politically neutral bureaucracy was the main reason for Pakistan’s impressive economic performance and efficient service delivery till late 1980s. Later on, bureaucratic reforms — most importantly withdrawal of security of service provision set the country’s governance on the road to ruin. However, one important point unexplained by this systematic decline of bureaucracy argument is that an impartial and efficient civil service could not check unequal economic growth in West and East Pakistan in the first two decades, which ultimately resulted in secession of Bangladesh from Pakistan.

The book busts many myths and challenges. Despite military’s domination of Pakistan as expressed in the “garrison state” hypothesis, defence spending, as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), has been declining since the 1990s. Lowest budget allocation for military took place during Musharraf’s time. Currently, the combined budgetary allocation of education and health is higher than that of defence and internal security. However, as pointed out by the author, defence spending figure since 2000 does not include numbers for military pensions which are considered part of civilian pension account, thus bringing down the overall defence spending figure. Moreover, most of the expensive defence spending on nuclear programme took place before 1990.

The topic of military’s expanding corporate influence is also discussed, and it is shown that military owned-corporations accounted for just 4.5 percent of the corporate sector’s total market value in 2016. Two monopolistic army-related organisations — Frontier Works Organisation and National Logistics Cell — are singled out for lack of transparency while bidding for civilian contracts. Military’s presence in urban real estate sector in the form of housing societies and allotment of agricultural lands to senior army generals is not discussed in detail although Defence Housing Societies projects have been criticised as elitist, and example of poor public policy.

Pakistan’s economic adrift has often been attributed to the increasing religious extremism and terrorism since 9/11. Dr Husain points out economic decline started in the 1990s, well before Pakistan got into the war against terror, as economic growth declined to an average rate of 4.5 percent and incidence of poverty rose during



comparatively tranquil but politically unstable 1990s. He observes that economic growth rose to 6 to 7 percent, investment/GDP ratio peaked at 23 percent and foreign investment jumped US \$5 billion during Musharraf years (2002-2008) when Pakistan was fully involved in the war against terror.

One of the repeated arguments is that Washington has always supported military dictators with generous aid in the 1960s, 1980s and 2000s, which has translated into high economic growth during the tenure of military dictatorships. Dr Husain reveals that even civilian governments have been recipients of huge external inflow from friendly Gulf countries or international financial organisations.

The book makes a very forceful argument for continuation of democratic process in Pakistan without any interruption as all military interventions have resulted in transient gains due to reforms which are immediately rolled back once the democratic parties are back in power. Military government-initiated reforms, no matter how well-intentioned and technically robust, suffer from lack of legitimacy. Frequent episodes of martial law have resulted in political instability which negatively impacts economic growth in the long run.

After the Eighteenth Amendment, provinces have become more powerful due to transfer of many subjects from the federation to provinces, which,

unfortunately, suffer from lack of capacity and expertise. Moreover, true decentralization will only take place when provinces devolve power, with financial and administrative powers, to the local government.

Civilian-military relationship has also been discussed in the context of an activist judiciary, strong executive and powerful parliament. Civilian leadership can make parliament an effective forum which can exercise its supervisory powers on the executive and exert civilian supremacy. Political parties should hold meaningful and periodic internal elections as the current model has weakened the political system, patronised poor quality of loyalty-based political candidates and promoted corrupt practices.

In his concluding remarks the author emphasized that Pakistan's urgent problems and challenges including tackling extremism, urbanisation, population growth, water scarcity, federal decentralisation, and climate change are all governance-related.

Dr Husain's book is not only informative but also provides a way forward to secure the future of the country. It is highly recommended book especially for confronting crisis of governance in Pakistan.

*(The reviewer is Assistant Director Research in National Assembly)*

## **Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy & the West**

By Benazir Bhutto

*Reviewd by Rumaisa Rubab*

The book "Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy & the West" written by the first and only female Prime Minister of Pakista. The book is the author's take on various aspects of democracy especially in Islamic countries and the role the West could have played historically. This also talks about the reasons of extremism from political point of view. The author also discusses the misconception of West about Islam that it breeds extremism.

"Reconciliation" is divided into six chapters. The first chapter describes the arrival of Benazir Bhutto to Pakistan in 2007 after living eight years in exile.

The style of the narrative is quite emotional and sometimes nostalgic.

After the first chapter, the tone gets more scholarly in which Bhutto defends Islam from those who view it as a violent religion. She thinks that majority of Muslims in the world belong to a forbearing and a loving religion. However, she is of the view that it is the dictatorship mind-set that breeds extremism and the extremists have hijacked the religion. Ms. Bhutto attempts to provide a clear understanding of the concept of *Jihaad* that has been used manipulatively by the extremists. She is of the

opinion that *Jihaad* is a collective obligation of whole Muslim community but not for an individual.

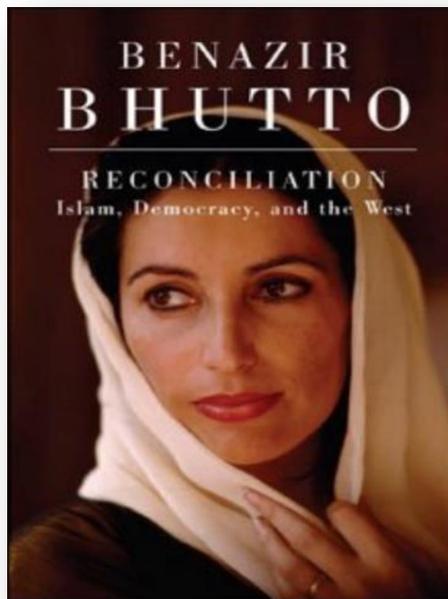
Ms. Bhutto goes further and discusses the issue of suicide bombing and other violent activities performed by the extremists, which makes the West believe that Islam is a violent religion. She clears this misconception by quoting verses from Quran, which forbids the killing of any human unless he has done mischievous activities.

The author also provides her understanding on whether Islam supports democracy or not. The writer conveys that democracy is in Islam and dictatorship is contrary to it. She is of the view that Islam and democracy are not exclusive; however, it is time to reinterpret various things in Islamic teachings and to bring democratic changes in our country. She thinks it was dictatorship, referring to Zia-ul-Haq, which deteriorated the political process in Pakistan and to support Afghan Mujahideen. Religion was used as a tool to manipulate people to achieve their own goals.

In this book, Ms. Bhutto also mentioned the role of West in not doing enough job to alienate the misconceptions about them in the people of the East, especially in Islamic countries. She upbraids the US for its role in helping to overthrow the democratically elected government of Iran in 1953. This not only undermined the democracy in that country but also "made generations of Muslims suspicious and cynical about Western motivations". She also explained how West had been engaged in the countries of Middle East and that resultantly led to corruption and dictators as rulers. This again puts a big question mark on the intentions of the West towards Muslims as if the claims of West are just mere claims. Similarly, she stated that if the US had not used Afghanistan to implode the Soviet Union and then abandoned it, history in this region could have been different. Same was the case presented for Iraq war, a "colonial war in a postcolonial era", from which America cannot extricate itself.

One special chapter "The case of Pakistan" is dedicated to Pakistan and its politics. History of

Pakistan and how democracy took tolls on various occasions by military takeovers has been presented. Strangely, she didn't point out any faults in her or her father's tenures. She refused to acknowledge that she was prime minister from 1994-1996 when Taliban, with the support of Pakistan, were gaining control over Afghanistan. She admits that she had no control over Afghan policy. Thus, she put all the burden of Afghan policy on her successor, Nawaz Sharif. She also claims that if her government remained in power for full duration, it would have been difficult for Osama bin Laden to set up base in Afghanistan in 1997.



At the end, Ms. Bhutto provides her plan for defeat of extremism that requires concerted efforts from both Muslims and the West. Some of the ideas seem very ambitious, especially the suggestion that oil-producing Gulf States should work on economic and intellectual development in rest of the Muslim world via a Muslim Investment Fund.

This book is an interesting read as it provides brief history of Islamic countries, especially Pakistan and events that changes their current dynamics. Secondly, it attempts to fill the void between East and West by removing the misconception of West about Islam and extremists. Similarly, it also highlights the internal issues of Muslim community that need much attention on emergency basis. This book takes a very strong stand against dictatorship and urges people to seek solutions through dialogues and political process i.e. democracy. At the same time, it demands the West to rethink their dual policy towards Muslim countries and asks them to support only democracy as dictatorship breeds extremism, which is not in the interest of anyone.

*(The reviewer is Assistant Director in National Assembly)*



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