

THE ECONOMIC PLIGHT OF SINDH UNDER PAKISTAN

By

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Introduction

The province or Sindh lies in the Southern part of Pakistan and extends from 23°-35' to 28° - 30' N and from 66° - 42' to 71° - 10' E with an area of approximately 143000 sq. kms., of which about 5.5 million hactre are irrigated from the Indus river. Population of Sindh as of today is about 20 millions of which 60% or 12 millions are Sindhis mostly Muslims by religion and only 2% of these Sindhis are Hindus Christians and Parsees. The Sindhi Muslims as well as a large majority of Hindus are mostly rural people and a only small percentage of them live in towns where they have migrated in search of jobs and other opportunities during the past years.

Feudalist remnants of Sindhi Society

The concentration of Sindhi Muslims in the rural areas was an out come of a feudalistic society developed on the irrigated agriculture of the arid Sindh, since around 3500 B.C. In a typical society of this kind a feudal chief provided water from the Indus for irrigation, maintained canals, cleared silt from canals deposited annually, made equitable distribution of water among the farmers, kept law and order, punished the law breakers by imposition penalties and controlled almost the day to day life of the village community. A canal would have a one or a number of feudals, who owned the total land, irrigated from the canal and each of them virtually was a despot, enjoying the powers of a civilian governor, military chief, imparter of justice, collector of land revenue as fifty percent share of agricultural produce, punished the criminals by penalties which he exacted as a police chief and also settled the day to day affairs. He was a petty king and was responsible only to the local king or bigger chief or higher despot. The power thus had concentrated in the hands of a large number of these Chieftains, later on called landlords by the British conquerors.

Attempt of the past Sindhi Societies to develop self sufficient economies:

Economy of Sindh was self-sufficient in a way that rural areas produced grains, fruits, vegetables, meat, fiber of all types including wool, mohair, cotton, and coarse jute, animal butter the main source of edible oil, vegetable oils raised for use of it in lanterns for producing light or as feed for cattle and timber and fuel wood of the various types. There also were animal husbandry and fisheries industries as vast as agriculture.

There was a little need to import, except metals and luxury items occasionally used by kings and their advisors, feudal and their families, but the common man probably had never used any imported goods with exception of steel for knives, scissors and plough shares. Needle was probably the most common imported item of goods in the house of the rich and poor. It was self-supporting and self-sufficient economy. Sindh's exports consisted mostly of cotton goods, textile, rice, pulses, meat and milk animals, indigo, hides and skins, all produced in the rural areas. Rural areas thus were important and proud of them-selves and the country,

Since the rural areas provided assured food, lot of leisure security against famine, easy life, music, poetry and sports for entertainment were a common feature. Sindhi Muslims concentrated in the rural areas where means of production existed. Besides the above advantages the center of the power was also the rural areas. The local chieftains though despots were important pillars of the government machinery. By all standards of the Western society they were decadent but as there was plenty of land as well as water and lack of labour, the chieftains had to retain local population to the rural areas by being cruel and kind and suppressing any acts not within norms of the society, that is thefts, adulteries, kidnappings and eloping of women, encroachment on property of others and etc., within ensured security. They simultaneously kept them-selves in luxury at cost of the farmers from whom they exacted large share of produce and some times even by cheating.

Self sufficient economy causes immobility of Sindhi Society

The peace thus prevailing kept the Sindhi Muslims within the rural areas. They did not like to migrate to cities. As against the Muslim the trading class of Sindhi Hindus traded with outside world and were the highest mobile society not only in Sindh but also in India until 1947.

Sindh's economic pattern, the causes of backwardness of rural areas.

For the Sindhi Muslims from rural areas, to get their children education in towns and cities, it meant the parents acquiring sufficient funds, to pay for the

cost of boarding school in town, in addition to lodging and tuition fees. For a person from a town expenses of lodging and boarding of children were to be borne in the house any way, so to educate a town boy, it meant paying for tuition fees, which accounted for only small percentage of the other costs. The agriculture economy did not pay enough to bear such and therefore rural areas remain backward in education.

By 1920 it had been already realized that rural areas of Sindh were backward not only on account of lack of educational facilities (except only the primary level schools in big size village), but the backwardness was also due to system of irrigation, which provided water only in the inundation season i.e., from June to September and not the year around. Even this supply of water due to fluctuations in the discharge of the river Indus was undependable, as in two out of five years, crops failed due to lack of water either at the planting or the harvesting season and in another two years it was just the average crop due to average supply of water and only in one year out of five it was a good crop, being above the average. This was considered a cause of poor economy leading to poverty of not only the small farmers and tenant farmers but even big land-owners. They could not send their children even to village school, leaving aside a city school. The villager argued that if his small boy could graze a few animals in waste government lands, free of cost, it returned him some thing better then schooling. This has caused backwardness in the rural Sindh to this day.

Concentration of Sindhi Hindus in large towns

In a situation as above and lack communications, trade was a minor occupation left to Hindu merchants, who carried out their business under the active protection of the local chiefs. The trading centers, or the towns were small settlements, of 1000 to 2000 persons and were scattered all over the province. Trading as existed in Sindh then, needed no special education, other then what father taught to the son on the job and the alphabets of traders thus evolved different from each other so much, that there were 40 alphabets of these traders, as the British saw at the time of their conquest of

Sindh in 1843 A.D. The population of Sindh then was about 1.4 million people, with about 25% Hindus mostly traders and the rest being Muslims were mainly farmers, owning the land or tenants of fudal-chiefs. The towns were very small with exception of major trading centers like Karachi, with 20,000 people, Hyderabad, the then capital of Sindh, having about equal number of people, Rohri and Sukkur ports on the Indus river a total of 10,000 person, Shikarpur on a trade route between Sindh and Central Asia on the Sindh border about 10,000 people, and the rest of the towns had population varying between 1000 to 3000 people. The number of such towns nearly 100. Towns were mainly inhabited by Hindu shop keepers and traders and accounted for about 10% population, the balance 90% population lived in the rural areas and this included Hindu shop-keepers of the villages. The population of Sindh was happy and content as they had never seen famines, except a couple of times since 1600 A.D. Even before this Sindh faced famine only during the time of foreign conquests which upset the irrigation system or lead to burning of crops.

Modern education by the British, the cause of disparity

The British conquerors of Sindh bought new opportunities, the most important of which was Government jobs, from office attendants, guards and office clerks, to petty and senior officers. To educate people for these jobs as they started schools, colleges and technical institutions in the province, all of which were started in the big towns and gradually moved to small towns. It was not possible to start English medium schools in the rural areas, as the population in each village was so small that adequate number of students could not be collected to start school. The towns could justify and provide sufficient students for English school and large cities for colleges. Since the town were populated mostly by Hindus, they took the English education, got government jobs, which brought salaries many times as a farmer could earn under the agricultural economy. Thus started disparity between the towns and the villages, which increased year after year and has continued to this day.

Economic depression of the Post World War-I causes loss of ownership of land to Sindhi Muslims

The end of the World War-I brought an economic depression and it became difficult for the rural peoples to pay taxes and purchase day to day needs,

other than grain which they themselves produced. Thus 1917-1942, all agricultural land-owners incurred heavy debts by mortgaging their lands with urban traders. As the economic depression continued more and more people mortgaged their lands and as debts could not be re-paid the civil courts allowed the lands to be transferred to money lenders, who by 1947 owned 40% of agricultural land in Sindh.

Land Alienation Bill

The Sindh Provincial Legislative Assembly came into being in 1937 under the British reforms called “India Act of 1935”. Being fully aware of the economic position that had caused mortgages and transfers of land to the money lenders, the Legislative Assembly passed a bill called “Land Alienation Bill” recommending returns of these lands to owners, who had thus lost them between 1917 to 1947, free of compensation on the plea that money lenders had made many times more than loaned from the land and repayment was not justified. Money lenders were Hindus, but Hindu members too had supported the bill.

Sukkur Barrage brings prosperity to the rural Sindh

By 1932 Sukkur barrage proposed since 1869 and constructed between 1922 and 1932, was commissioned. It provided assured and perennial water to the Indus in the central areas of Sindh. The boom that barrage brought in the rural areas could be visualized in the rush of the rural students to the towns and cities for high school and college education since 1934. The rush can further be observed from establishment of Sindh Agricultural College in 1940, Sindh Madrasah College in 1943, Dow Medical College in 1945 and a number of high schools and colleges sprung up in Sindh, to accommodate a large number of students from rural Sindh. Sindh University was established in 1947. The government of Sindh created scholarships for high school and college education and also for higher education abroad. In 1945 Sindh assembly, the elected provincial body passed a resolution making it obligatory for the government to recruit 76% of their employees in all Government jobs from Muslims and this really meant the candidates from the rural areas.

However for Sindh this foreseeable opportunity was only short lived. The independence of Indian Sub-continent in two independent states India and

Pakistan caused a new situation, at least adverse to the economic interest of the rural Sindhis as discussed here after.

Land alienation bill nullified and migration of Sindhi Muslims checked by evacuee property laws

The independence caused Hindu Muslim riots in some province of India. There was mass migration of Muslims from some province of India to Pakistan and Hindus from Pakistan to India.

The first action of Government of Pakistan, to accommodate a large number of immigrants, was to settle the immigrants (Mohajirs) in place of out-going or evacuee Hindus, on the latter's property. The Land Alienation bill for restoring land to Sindhi Muslims was not allowed to become operative as Land Alienation Act by Government of Pakistan and thereby, 40% land transferred due to mortgages in possession of out going Hindus in the rural areas of Sindh, was allotted to the immigrants from India.

The immovable property vacated by out-going Hindus in large cities consisting commercial establishment, industries, shops and residential houses which had come up during the British rule of 104 years was allotted to go to the immigrants.

In spite of properties by Government of Sindh and the Sindhis, none of the evacuee property, except residential housing actually under occupation of Sindhis, but costing less than dollars 2000, was allotted or sold to Sindhis. This included 40% agricultural land transferred to money lenders as afore said. Thus Sindh's participation in Pakistan movement was rewarded in a kickback economically.

Separation of Karachi from Sindh causes a death blow to progress of Sindhi Muslims

In 1948 Karachi the capital of Province of Sindh was separated from it and converted in to capital of Pakistan. Most of the Sindh Government buildings and housing were handed over to newly formed Government of Pakistan.

All schools in Karachi were also taken over by Government of Pakistan. These colleges had a quota fixed for Sindhi Muslim (rural percentage people),

in terms of percentage of seats, although number of seats for Sindhis was retained by Government of Pakistan by numbers, but the percentage kept decreasing as the total number of seats in the college kept increasing. This affected the college and university education of Sindhis, as there were no Engineering and Medical Colleges in Sindh out-side Karachi. Though colleges were established gradually during ensuing years in Sindh but they have remained ill-staff and ill-equipped even to this day.

Province of Sindh abolished

In 1955 under the dictatorial pressures of the Governor General of Pakistan, the four provinces of present Pakistan namely; Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan and North Western Frontier were merged in to a single province called West Pakistan with Governor's head quarters and secretariat at Lahore, until then the capital of Punjab. The name of Sindh was abolished from official correspondence and it was not legal to call it by that name. Since the Punjab had total population of 56% of the West Pakistan, it was quite obvious that the Punjab would dominate the West Pakistan Government and this was the aim of the merger, now an open secret with documentary evidence. The Pakistan Armed forces also consisted of people mostly from the Punjab. The dominance of the Punjab within the West Pakistan Province was the aim and objectives was achieved by different methods, here after discussed.

Budgeting system of One Unit Government

The 1962 constitution gave powers to the secretaries of the departments to re-appropriate the budget. The Punjab took full advantage of this. In most of departments local Sindhis were transferred from Sindh and Punjabi officers put in, as the regional heads. These officials created difficulties in spending in Sindh and by April 1, each year surrendered substantial amount of funds. The secretaries re-appropriated them and used them in the Punjab. In this way budget meant for Sindh was diverted to the Punjab year after year.

Sindh Punjab Water Dispute

Sindh lies at fall of the river Indus, the other share holder up to 1947 was the Punjab. To protect its water right, Sindh had taken up the question of distribution of water between Sindh and Punjab with Government of India since 1900 and in 1945 an agreement was reached and signed by the Chief Engineers of the two provinces under which Sindh had share of 75% to water

of the river Indus and the Punjab 94% share on the five tributary rivers passing through the Punjab. If the Punjab was to construct any water storage dam on the Indus, Sindh had share of 75% to its water. The Independence had caused division of Punjab in two parts, here after named as; East Punjab and West Punjab, as part of India and Pakistan respectively. East Punjab diverted some waters from the five tributaries of the Indus, and West Punjab also started diverting waters, inspite of 1945 agreement.

The area under cultivation in the Punjab in 1948 A.D., at the time of its conquest by the British was 750,000 acres. The area under cultivation in Sindh, one hundred years prior to this in 1749 A.D. was 2.2 million acres. Today the area under irrigated canal command in the Punjab is 28.0 million acres in Sindh 13.3 million.

In Sindh intensity of cultivation is 80% where as in the Punjab intensity of cultivation varies between 150 to 200% in different areas. This means a land-owner, having 100 acres in Sindh, can cultivate a total of 80 acres in the two seasons of the year i.e., summer and winter, where as in Punjab, he is able to put 100 acres under crops in winter and 50 to 100 acres in summer. In Sindh therefore 100 acres mean 80 cultivated acres a year and in the Punjab, 100 acres mean 150 to 200 cultivated acres.

Thus the effective cultivated area in Sindh is only 10.5 million acres out of 13.3 million acres and in the Punjab it is much more than 42 million acres, out of 28.0 million acres. This disparity has been caused by abundance of water in the Punjab and shortage in Sindh.

The above figure also shows that by use of extra river water, area under cultivation had gone up 4.77 times in Sindh, where as in the West Punjab it is increased by 60 times since 1849. This also means that apparently the Punjab has exploited 60 times more water than Sindh, since the British conquest of the Punjab, but the picture is still different. These figures do not include figures of East Punjab which will increase these figures by 40% or more, i.e., the whole Punjab (East and West) has increased area under cultivation about 85 times that of Sindh and all this at the cost of diversion of water from the Indus, to which Sindh had a share of 75% and has been denied.

Punjab's execution of irrigation projects during One Unit

In 1960 the World Bank acted as an un-official mediator between India-Pakistan on water dispute and some solutions were found, to improve irrigation water supply, combat water logging and salinity and also improve agriculture. The "Consortium" of developed countries agreed to contribute the cost. A number of projects were envisaged and "One Unit Government" completed the Punjab projects quickly enough before 1970 but Sindh projects were not executed barring a small insignificant one.

Sindh's Condition to the merger in "One Unit" not honored

When various provinces of West Pakistan were merged to form a single province called West Pakistan Province or "One Unit" in 1955, Sindh had put eleven conditions, to accept the merger and of these, three important conditions were:

- All government lands in Sindh comprising 2.7 million acres, in the command of two new barrages at Kotri and Guddu under construction in 1955, will be distributed among the Sindhis.
- Irrigation water to be distributed between the Punjab and Sindh will be maintained according to "The 1945, Sindh-Punjab Water Agreement".
- All government jobs in Sindh will go to Sindhis (All people settled in Sindh in this case) and only Sindhi officers will be posted in Sindh.

After formation of West Pakistan Province or "One Unit", none of the above three conditions were honored by the "One Unit Government", leaving aside the other conditions. The above conditions were meant to protect the economical rights of Sindhis and the very basis of economic well-being of this nationality were destroyed systematically. Since 1951 attempts have been made to settle out-siders in Sindh to to-day Sindhi population in Sindh is only 60% and Sindhis are threatened to be turned into minority.

Besides these three setbacks, there was a systematic attempt to keep Sindh and Sindhi back-ward by all possible means in the various spheres, like; education, agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, rural and town water

supply, power, communication, rural development, introduction of new crops suiting climate of Sindh, soil and water conservation and etc.

1959 Land reform as means of crippling the power of Sindhi, to purchase agriculture land, distribution of Sindh's land to non-Sindhi and arrangements for the rehabilitating them

In 1959 the first “Pakistan Land Reform” under Martial Law was enforced, limiting the higher ceilings of land holding to 500 acres and surrender of lands above that ceiling. This limit of ceiling had served only one major purpose of the military regime in Sindh. It crippled the powers of big land owners, to purchase any more land, as almost all of them had to surrender some land. They were also afraid that future had more of such reforms in store for them and therefore it became the dead end for them to purchase any more land at that time or subsequently.

Soon after the declaration of “Land Reform”, the West Pakistan Government in 1960, declared policy for sale of government land in Kotri Barrage areas of Sindh. Similar policy was to follow for Guddu barrage two years later. Quotas of land were fixed for various categories of allottees from different areas of the whole country.

In service and retired personnel of army, navy, air force, civil servants (having meritis awards) most of whom were from the Punjab, Mangla dam displaced persons from Punjab, N.W.F.P. tribal areas, flood affected people of East Pakistan, rainfed and other districts of Punjab, mechanized cultivation (Those who wanted to start mechanized agriculture and could show that they had tractor but without documentary proof, to the project director irrespective of domicile from any part of Pakistan) etc.

No quota was fixed for landless farmers of Sindh. A very large number not shown on the 100 year old survey and settlement departments maps, un-registered grave-yards and mosques too were excluded from the agriculture land being allotted. They were bulldozed and villagers thrown out. Most of 1.6 million acres of Government land in Kotri barrage and 1.1 million acres in Guddu barrage was this way allotted to non-Sindhi mostly from the Punjab, on installment basis at extremely

low prices fixed by government of Pakistan. The price fixed was Rs. 350 per acre, in Kotri barrage and Rs. 550 in Guddu barrage.

Complete arrangements were made to receive the allottees of these lands, transport them to site was organized, taqavi (development) loans granted for purchase of bullocks, seeds and fertilizer. For allottees of armed forces, official transport was provided and camps built a temporary housing. The best perennial on the “Land Channel” of Kotri barrage was allotted to the armed forces.

Besides above concessions, the allottees had to pay 10% of the rates fixed as first installment and balance had to be paid in 10 annual installments with a grace period of three years. The grace period was provided for the first time in the history of land allotment in the Sub-continent.

A small part of land in areas near Karachi and Sukkur was sold by open auction. Motive involved here was to sell lands to the urban people of Karachi and Sukkur and invariably Punjabi businessmen and industrialists to form a base for cash crop near these urban settlements. Some Sindhi participated in open auction but the urban bidders purchased at rates about 3 to 4 times rates fixed by the Government.

The big land-holders local chiefs of Sindh could not purchase the land in auction because of ceiling on holdings under land reform and small land holders and landless farmers had no means to purchase a land in open auction. Land reform had not excluded a 100 year old rule of *mahaga rights*, which under land reforms as modified, meant that a piece of government land could be allotted at the government rate to a person having less than 16 acres of land, to make it a total of 16 acres, if the government land was adjoining his land or within the same Deh (block of about 3000 acres). If Mohaga right had been extended only to the same Taluka or District (county), Sindhis would have acquired more than 50% of government land, as there were large number of small land holders.

Another major concession to allottees of land was spending of some Rs. 150 millions from 1961 to 1970 for leveling of government land in Kotri and Gudu barrages with the help of about 500 bulldozers. This amount was to be recovered in 20 years in equal annual installments, but was never recovered. Such concession were unheard of in 104 years rule of Sindh by the British.

This is a brief history of allotment of 2.7 million acres of land under command of Guddu and Kotri barrages constructed from revenues paid by the farmers of Sindh, since inception of Sukkur barrage in 1932. All this was achieved by imposing “Land Reforms” under Martial Law of 1958, the only purpose of which was usurping Sindh’s land and water and also recruitment of non-Sindhis in government as well as organizing immigration from other areas to upset balance of population in Sindh.

To this may be added that the best lands in both barrages (Kotri and Gudu) went to armed forces and retired government employees. Almost 100% perennial land of Kotri barrage in the Gaja and the Lined Channel commands of Kotri barrage went to the armed forces and same was the case of Ubavro and Ghotki Talukas lands, the best of lands in Guddu barrage, which were non-perennial but having fresh ground water underneath. This ground water has been developed at Government cost under name “Ghotki Fresh Ground Water Project” and area has been made perennial.

Pakistan Army and land grabbing

Traditionally Pakistan army consisted of Punjabis. They hardly recruited anybody from Sindh. There was a Mutiny against the British rule in 1857. The whole of present northern India was under revolt led by the British Army comprising of locals. The Punjab Army helped British to suppress the revolt and the British decided to recruit armed forces from the loyalist group i.e., Punjabis, Gorkhas, (Nepalese), Marhattas (from Maharashtra) and other minor groups. At the time of Independence Punjabis formed more than 80% army and all coming mostly from only three districts of Punjab. The British had won their loyalty by allotment of lands on retirement, recruitment to civilian government jobs on retirement and etc.

The Pakistan Army expects same concessions and three Martial Laws since 1958 have more than proved that main motivation is concessions for armed forces and in case of Pakistan for Punjabi armed forces.

Since Sindh had 2.7 million acres of government land awaiting disposal, the army found easy solution to grab it under cover of Martial Law.

Dismemberment of One Unit an burden of un-executed projects

By 1969, the “One Unit” set up was declared a failure as people of small provinces raised serious objections to its working and original four provinces were restored by the order of Chief Martial Law Administrator and President. During the 15 year period of “One Unit”, the irrigation, water logging and salinity projects of Punjab were executed from “The West Pakistan Government” funds or common funds of all four provinces but after dissolution of “One Unit” the Sindh projects became financial responsibility of Sindh Government and lack of funds have hither to delayed many of these projects. The irrigation, water logging and salinity projects of Sindh should have been responsibility of Federal Government as they were delayed by a Government dominated by the Punjab.

Agriculture

No other government department is so centralized as Agriculture Department. The agriculture research is controlled by Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC), a Federal Government autonomous organization. Its boss spends 80% of the funds meant for whole agriculture sector of Pakistan, in the Punjab.

Cotton is controlled by Central Cotton Committee, which has starved Sindh of funds for cotton research with the result that production of cotton in Sindh, which was highest in the country, is reduced due to lack of adequate varieties and research. The Punjab, which was behind Sindh in cotton yield is now leading.

There is now concentration on introducing new fruits and industrial crops and also there are plans to provide infrastructures for export of fruit and vegetables. The concentration of various agencies of Federal Government is diverted to, making the Punjab as the leading producer and exporter of fruits

and vegetables. Sindh has most suitable climate for raising a large number of tropical, semi-tropical and sub-tropical fruit crops but Sindh is being deprived for funds for research and trained man power. PARC is spending most of its funds for the development in the Punjab.

Sindh has less qualified researchers i.e., Ph.Ds from abroad in various fields of research. In the past 30 years, only one or two persons from Sindh Agriculture Department have been sent abroad for education upto Ph.D. PARC had sent 400 person for training abroad. Out of these only 2 or 3 were from Sindh and 380 from the Punjab. This clearly shows how Sindh is being hit badly in agriculture economy. The result is that research in Agriculture in Sindh has been dwindling. New policies for Agriculture were planned by National Commission on Agriculture for years 1988 to 2000 i.e., 12 years. This report essentially was meant to kill agriculture in Sindh and boost it in the Punjab.

Rice export policy adverse to interest of Sindh

Pakistan produces rice of which Basmati of the Punjab is of high quality and Sindh produces comparatively inferior quality rice due to its climatic conditions. Sindh also produces local rice varieties of good quality, but “Rice Export Corporation” a federal Government body is opposing export of the quality varieties of Sindh. However, even the inferior varieties of rice of Sindh fetch good prices in international market because of markets for coarse varieties in Africa, South East Asia and some developing countries. Basmati a superior variety of Punjab finds its market in USA and Europe. Under the Pakistan National Commissions report it was planned to increase rice cultivation in the Punjab by paying the farmer higher prices as an incentive and stop export of Sindh rice. The objective simply is that the farmers of Punjab should benefit and farmers of Sindh should be hit hard. Basmati fetches double the price of Sindh’s coarse rice, but its yield per acre is half that of Sindh rice. The country thus gains nothing and on the contrary more area has to be put under quality rice to produce the same tonnage and almost twice water is needed.

Proposals to crush sugar-cane industry in Sindh

Sindh has most suitable climate for sugar cane and it has expanded in the recent years. Farmers are getting reasonable returns. The federal bureaucrats

do not like it. It is proposed in National Agricultural Commission to import sugar at subsidised rates to compete with local sugar, so that the rates of sugar do not rise. Farmers even now are paid lower rates than internal rates for cane. Sugarcane dis-appeared from Punjab and N.W.F.P because of low production on account of adverse climatic conditions. In order to hit farmer of Sindh, this proposal is put forth.

Soil and water conservation

Since mid-sixties the “One Unit” government launched soil and water conservation programs, which was really meant to diverting rain water from streams leading to the Indus and use it in fields so developed in the Punjab. More than 700 bulldozers were employed. No such program was under taken for Sindh, although 60% of land in Sindh is un-irrigated and is rainfed.

Price of agriculture commodity fixed to the dis-advantages of rural population.

The British fixed prices of agricultural commodities to give farmer “Fair Deal”, as per recommendations of “The Royal Commission on Agriculture 1928”. These prices policies continued until 1950. Since then the price fixation has been arbitrary, always to the dis-advantage of the farmer and to the advantage of urban population. Staple food in Pakistan is wheat. If the prices of wheat are fixed at a low ceiling. Other agriculture commodities adjust their prices automatically proportionate to the wheat prices. Today farmer gets about 45% of what he got for his wheat , in 1950. The table below shows year-wise prices of 40 Kgs wheat adjusted to the 1950 level of prices in Pak currency and U. S. dollar, after accounting for depreciation of U. S. dollars and Pak rupee. The prices fixed in 1974-75 were of same level as 1950 and this was the secret of “Bhutto’s magic over masses”. Low prices of wheat have curtailed purchasing power of rural Sindh, to maintain decent lively-hood, almost 100% farmers are in debit. The rural economy has been shattered.

Real prices of 40 Kgs of Wheat from 1950 to 1988, in terms of purchasing power of Rupee and US Dollars converted to 1950 values

Year	Price of Wheat in terms of Pak.	Price of Wheat in terms of US
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	Rupee of 1950	Dollars of 1950
1950-51	6.44	1.95
1951-52	5.30	1.60
1952-53	4.71	1.44
1953-54	4.39	1.33
1954-55	4.12	1.25
1955-56	3.89	1.18
1956-57	3.59	1.09
1957-58	3.26	0.89
1958-59	3.26	1.05
1959-60	3.26	0.89
1960-61	3.04	0.92
1961-62	2.82	0.85
1962-63	2.64	0.80
1963-64	3.88	1.18
1964-65	3.64	1.03
1965-66	3.43	1.04
1966-67	3.23	0.98
1967-68	4.67	1.42
1968-69	4.47	1.35
1969-70	4.11	1.25
1970-71	3.73	1.13
1971-72	3.41	1.03
1972-73	4.22	1.28
1973-74	5.15	1.56
1974-75	6.86	2.08
1975-76	6.11	1.85
1976-77	5.71	1.73
1977-78	5.44	1.65
1978-79	5.12	1.55
1979-80	5.71	1.73
1980-81	5.21	1.58
1981-82	4.72	1.43
1982-83	4.22	1.28
1983-84	3.77	1.14

1984-85	3.98	1.24
1985-86	3.58	1.08
1986-87	3.27	0.99
1987-88	3.24	0.93

Note: Since 1952 farmers got the highest prices for wheat in 1974-75 and prices have been falling since then being 44.7% of these in 1987/88.

Fresh water fisheries of Sindh

Sindh was producing 75% of inland fisheries in 1960. Since then, due to diversion of waters of the river in the Punjab, and shortage of water in Sindh, natural lakes and depressions, the inland fisheries of Sindh have started dwindling.

Since 1973 i.e., filling of Tarbella Dam, water in the riverine areas of Sindh decreased and fisheries were effected. In 80's for some years there was no water flowing in the river between Sukkur and Kotri barrages resulting into large scale destruction of fish colonies, which inhibit 200 mile long stretch of the river Indus. Since 1973 water down stream of Kotri barrage flows for an average of 56 days a year, with the result that fisheries between Kotri and the sea is a distance of about 125miles perish each year. The riverine Indus channel fisheries occupied about 0.6 million acres.

The Mancar Lake some 90-90 square miles in area, a great source of fisheries, now-a-days dries almost each year and some 200 species of fish which existed in this lake since the past 10,000 years or more have disappeared. Lake now rarely gets filled and to its full capacity and dries each year.

It is estimated that dwindling of fisheries has put more than 1.0 million people out of employment.

Coastal or brackish water fisheries of Sindh

Sindh coast used to get fresh water each year and coastal waters were diluted, which became breeding grounds for sea shrimps, lobsters, fresh water shrimps, hilsa or palla and other brackish water fishes. Due to diversion of water from the Indus in the Punjab river discharges some water only for 56 days a year and the coastal waters are not diluted and therefore

breeding for these fisheries are destroyed and the catch per boat or per unit has reduced to 10% what it was 20 years ago. Catch now decreases year after year.

Forests

The riverine area in Sindh forms 1.8 million or 18 lack acres, out of this 1/3 06 0.6 million acres were under forests, 0.6 million acres were under agriculture crops raised on preserved moisture and the balance 0.6 million acres were various channels of the river Indus. Due to diversion of water in the Punjab, the 0.6 million acres under forest have either disappeared or deteriorated to the limit of being abandoned. 0.6 million acres under cultivation, on preserved moisture do not get annual floods and therefore cannot be put under crops. Unfortunately water in about 50% of the riverine area is brackish even within the flood protective embankments and this water can not be utilized by means of tube wells for cultivating this land. The balance 0.6 million acres of river channels was under fisheries but river channels now are dry during most of the year and therefore fish cannot be raised.

At the delta of the Indus, there were one million acres under mangroves. These were sustained on brackish water formed by mixing of river water with sea water and brought back by tidal action. Most of the mangroves contained trees 60 feet tall and were source of timber, fuel, fruit and also fodder for cattle. Mangroves are now dying out very fast. The total forest area now lost in 1.6 million acres, which is about 12% of area under crops in Sindh.

The leaves shed by mangroves were natural food for shrimps, lobsters and cretaceans. Death of mangroves has reduced the catch of fisheries per unit.

The forests in general were employing about one person per acre in terms of fuel, timber, cattle feed and fisheries catch. This has put 1.6 million people of rural Sindh out of employment, during the past 10 years. Same is effect of loss of fisheries each acre of which employed one Sindhi.

The 0.6 million acres of agricultural land in the riverine area going out of cultivation has displaced 0.6 million persons from those areas.

Autonomous and Semi-autonomous Government Organization and employment of Sindhis.

Since 1959, the early days of the first Martial Law in Pakistan the Federal Government have been setting up of autonomous organizations for increasing the efficiency and execution of various projects expeditiously. The number of autonomous bodies has kept increasing since then and under General Zia's dictatorship, not only their number swelled but these bodies were also expanded. These organization employ a large number of personnel. Although they are supposed to recruit 21% of their employees from Sindh, of whom again 60% have to be from rural Sindh, the actual number of Sindhis employed is some time negligible and at other times it is hardly 1-2%. A large scale un-employment in Sindh is caused by this indiscriminate recruitment employing the people from the Punjab in excess of their quota and neglecting the rural Sindh.

There are a large number of autonomous bodies with headquarters in the Punjab i.e., in Lahore or Islamabad and some times, the regional offices are located in Karachi or else-where in Sindh. These bodies have their regional chiefs usually from the Punjab, they invariably recruit subordinates mostly from the Punjab. No provincial quota is being maintained inspite of constitutional provision. The same applies to industries taken over by the government, fertilizer and chemical companies like National Cement and other Federal autonomous organizations.

Federalization of higher education and learning

Higher education is totally centralized through University Grant Commission of the Federal Government. They provide funds for various needs of universities, import equipment and distribute it, organize training facilities, start new departments, create "Center of Excellence" and funding is manipulated to reduce share of Sindh. There are less foreign trained Ph.D's in Sindh as compared to the Punjab, where even the junior most employees like demonstrators and lecturers in the Punjab are Ph.Ds. This has effected Educational standards of Sindh. There are specific purpose colleges and institutes like "Fine Arts College" and etc., which exists only in the Punjab.

Secondary and intermediate education

Before 1985, the Punjab had been able to send 250 headmasters of their high schools abroad, for training and education in the universities some of them to M.S. and others to Ph.D. levels. Not a single high school teacher from Sindh had this privilege. This has improved the Punjab's standards tremendously, and this would effect developments in the Punjab in future. The foreign training is within preview of the Federal Government dominated by people from the Punjab and is denied to other provinces.

Railway Post and Telegraph Departments

Since railways head-quarters are at Lahore and most of senior officers are recruited from the Punjab and even most of subordinates are sent to Sindh from the Punjab under orders of head quarters bosses. The Sindh quota is limited to the railway level crossing operators and some clerical jobs at the rural station. The same is true about Posts and Telegraph and Telephone Departments.

Meteorological Department

This department employs 23,000 person, of whom quota of Sindh is about 5000. Again of these 5000 person, 3000 have to be from the rural Sindh but department hardly employees 20 persons from rural areas and these took in the lowest ranks.

Other Federal Government Departments

Almost same is the case of all Federal Government Departments and many of them, against 13.2% employment for rural Sindh, hardly employ 1 or 2%, and some times even less.

Martial Law hits the economy of Sindh

The first Martial Law came in Pakistan in 1958 and military regimes continued to dominate Pakistan for next 13 years. Next Martial Law came in 1977 for 11 years. The consequences of Martial Law, military regime and Government of West Pakistan were shattering of the economy of rural Sindhis to the irreparable degree.

There were demonstrations against Martial Law in Sindh in 1983 and 1986. On each occasion army killed thousands peaceful peasants

Electric Power

The per capita consumption of electric power is low in the whole country, but again in terms of the provincial consumption the per capita consumption of power is the highest in the Punjab and lowest in Sindh, where large number of villages have remained unelectrified. When it comes to equitable distribution of power, it is argued that the power in Punjab is meant for private tube wells.

1973 Constitution, taxes and budgeting for Sindh

In 1973 Pakistan adopted a new constitution under which the Federal Government is collecting most of taxes and after meeting the Federal requirements, the rest of funds are distributed among the provinces in proportion to their population.

The Federal Government is collecting more than 60% of their revenue from Sindh, but only 22% is returned to the Provincial Government of Sindh in proportion to Sindh's population in Pakistan.

This has resulted into Sindh's spending less and less on development projects and consequently getting backwards as each sun rises.

The Frontier and Baluchistan provinces get additional funds for "Special Development Projects" and their annual Budget is as much as that of Sindh, even though Sindh's population is multifold and requirements for development funds are too high. Sindh has no funds for financing development projects, whereas the Punjab has no projects to consume the funds allocated. The main reason for this is that the Punjab, built its irrigation works, roads in 60's at the cost of other provinces in the name of shortage of water logging and salinity control projects. They brought electric power to the rural areas in the name of tube wells and development of province. When the turn of Sindh came for its development, funds were distributed on population basis. In this Sindh has been kept backward since 1955.

Reduced Provincial Autonomy

The British had ruled India under Parliamentary Acts amended from time to time. Under these Acts or constitutions there was Federal Government and a number of Provincial Governments. There also were Federal and Provincial

subjects. They invariably was some amount of provincial autonomy i.e., there were subjects which were exclusively provincial. There also were concurrent subjects handled by both the provincial and Federal Governments but concurrent subjects were considered interference of Federal Government in the provincial affairs and interference was avoided by seeking provincial governments concurrence before hand or co-operation. Under 1973 constitution all provincial subjects are also concurrent subjects and the Federal Government specially under dictatorship of General Zia interfered too much in the provincial matters by executing the projects them-selves. Since Federal government is dominated by officers from the Punjab, the funds were diverted to the Punjab at cost of other provinces.

Looking back to the history of provincial autonomy, changes have been taking place since 1935, amount of provincial autonomy is being reduced with highest to lowest autonomy in the following order, under the various constitutions (Considering the fact that the British also ruled the country constitutionally); 1935, 1956, 1954, 1962 and 1973. The list of concurrent subjects was always there, but the 1973 constitution reduced provincial government to virtually a department of Federal Government.