

## The Role of Madrassahs (Islamic Seminaries) in the Politics of Pakistan

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### Abstract

There is no denying the fact that religious educational institutions have played a remarkable role in the development of human civilization. The role of Islamic religious institutions (Madrassahs) in the socio-political history of Muslim societies has been crucial. The political history of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent will remain incomplete unless a reference is made to the significant contribution made by Madrassahs. This paper describes the role played by Madrassahs in Pakistani politics through a discourse analysis research method. The findings indicate that a lack of unanimity exists on the constructive role played by these Madrassahs in the current political life of Pakistan. The views can be presented in the form of a continuum. On the one extreme lie those who view such Madrassahs with great suspicion, while at the other end sit those who see great merit in these religious institutions. The middleman opines that the Madrassahs, despite their limitations, have continued to produce scholars well versed in Islamic disciplines.

### Keywords

Madrassahs, Madaris, Ulema, Religious Parties, Islamisation, Wifaq ul Madaris (Federation of Madaris), Politics of Pakistan

### Introduction

Both religion and education have a deep-rooted association with humanity. From the wisdom of William Penn, Benjamin Franklin and Ibn-e-Cenna (Avecena), to the courage of Imam Hussain (the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad—Peace Be Upon Him) and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, religious belief has inspired some of the greatest heroes and their accomplishments in human history. It is therefore not surprising to find that religious institutions have played a significant role in the development of many human societies. Whether we take the example of monasteries in medieval Europe or Buddhist monks in India we find that in every human civilization religious institutions played a pivotal role in spreading education and knowledge.

It must be remembered that in the distant past religious institutions were the primary source of learning as education was not yet the responsibility of the state. Three main services rendered by these religious institutions to the community are noticeable. First, they were essentially charitable institutions which provided refuge and livelihood to orphans and other helpless children. Second, they provided a sense of belonging and identity to these socially excluded sections of the society. Third, these institutions were not only the source of education to such have-nots but also were seats of higher learning and knowledge in the medieval days of human history.

Islamic society is no exception and the emphasis upon learning forms the basis of the religion. The Encyclopedia Britannica also recognizes this role of Islamic institutions in the history of the development of libraries. Like the European monastic libraries, book collections in Islamic countries were attached to religious institutions, both mosques and Madrassahs. Scholars donated their personal collections to mosques, which usually kept only the religious books, sometimes setting up an adjunct library.

The organised religions have always endeavored to control the state machinery, and, at times, even capture it when possible. The same holds true of Madrassahs today. They desire to develop the society according to their particular thinking and transform it into a pious religious and spiritual community.

Today Madrassahs have a pivotal role in the body politics of Pakistan. Their role, its importance and magnitude can neither be denied nor ignored. It is the sum total of the evolutionary process, being strengthened by the geopolitical waves and the global trend. The Madrassahs stand at an important cross road, but before we deliberate upon their influence on the politics of Pakistan, we will examine their history, curricula and organizational structure.

## **Historical Origins of Madrassahs**

Quranic revelation begins with the word, ““Read”<sup>1</sup>. The Prophet was ordered by God to pray for the increase of his knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, in another verse the Quran says, “Can those who know be the equals of those who don't know?”<sup>3</sup> The Quran mentions two reasons as to why God chose Saul to be the king of the Israelites; firstly the strong physique and knowledge of Saul—bastatan fil ilme (knowledge) wal jism (body).<sup>4</sup> The Prophet said that the acquisition of learning was obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman.<sup>5</sup>

The ancient Madaris (plural of Madrassah, meaning Islamic school) included the Suffa Academy, situated inside the Mosque of the Prophet at Medina and the dar-ul-Arqam.<sup>6</sup> The Prophet was asked questions on the conduct both inside the Mosque at Medina and outside. In order to come to terms with this development, Greek philosophy and logic were thoroughly studied with a view to refute the attacks of the mutazilites (rationalists). This led to the creation of ilm-e-Kalam (dialectical theology or scholasticism).

The Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Fatimid's, the al-Moravids, the al-Mowahids, the Ottomans, and other Muslim rulers were the patrons of learning. The Fatimid's established the Jami ah Al-Azhar (university of Azher in Egypt) in the 10<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>7</sup> During the Abbasid era, the proliferation of the arts and sciences reached its zenith

There were huge private as well as public libraries at Baghdad and other cities of the Islamic state. These libraries contained the Quran, and books on the Hadith (sayings and deeds of the Holy Prophet), jurisprudence, theology, logic, philosophy, geometry, medicine, music, astronomy and alchemy. Some recent scholars have written books on the academic life of the Muslim golden period when, as we all know, Europe was passing through its Dark Ages. Many orientalists have also discussed this aspect of the Muslim intellectual progress.

Several Madaris and colleges were established at all the big cities of the Islamic Empire, of which two gained tremendous prominence. These were the Madrassah Nizamiyyah and Mustansariyyah at Baghdad. The first Madrassah was established in the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century by Nizam-ul-Mulk, the Vizier (Advisor or Prime Minister) of Malik Shah, the Suljuq Sultan. Caliph al-Mustansir Billah established the second. The Muslim world produced great scientists, mathematicians, astronomers and physicians such as Avecena, Ibn-Rushd, al-Khawarizmi, Jabir bin Hayyan, al-Farabi, and ibn al-Haithum, to mention only a few. The Abbasid era witnessed the appearance of countless philosophers, grammarians, theoreticians, theologians, jurists and the systematizers of the four medieval canonical schools; Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi, Imam Malik and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal.<sup>8</sup>

## The Indian Period of Islamic Schools

The advanced level of the literate nature of the Muslim society is obvious from the fact that during the reign of Muhammad Shah Tughlaq, there were one thousand Madaris in the city of Delhi alone.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, a European tourist Captain Alexander Hamilton who toured India during the reign of Aurangzeb has written about the city of Thatta (Sindh) that there were 400 different Madaris in the City. In the Indian subcontinent, Madrassahs flourished under the Muslim rule for more or less one thousand years.

With the advent of unprecedented industrial and technological revolution in Europe, new inventions, a proliferation of new sciences and knowledge was unleashed. In the changed circumstances, the Muslim community in India lost its creativity and the craze for knowledge. Consequently, the Muslim system of education became obsolete. With the arrival of the British, English replaced Farsi and a new system of education was introduced. The British cherished a peculiar prejudice and dislike for the Muslims in as much as they held them responsible for the uprising of 1857.

However the Ulema (Muslim scholars) were not going to surrender to the new set up. They considered the British as the usurpers of their political power and considered their expulsion from India as a religious duty. As early as 1803, Shah Abdul Aziz, the elder son of Shah Waliullah had given a fatwa (verdict) that India

had ceased to be dar-ul-Islam (the Abode of Islam) and it had become dar-ul-Harb (the abode of the Enemy).<sup>10</sup> The implications of this fatwa were twofold: First, the Muslim community should rise in armed rebellion against the British and second, if that was not possible, then they should migrate to the nearest Muslim country. Another stalwart namely Syed Ahmad Shaheed spearheaded a reform movement for the supremacy of Islam and Muslims. His strategy was to come to grips, first with the Sikhs and latter with the British.<sup>11</sup> The Jihad (holy war) movement of Syed Ahmed Shaheed has been described as the forerunner of the Pakistan movement. Although it did not succeed and culminated in the massacre of Balakot in 1831, the followers of the Syed gave considerable trouble to the British. The struggle of the Mujahidin continued up to 1947 when Pakistan came into being.<sup>12</sup>

The second implication of the Muslim political decline was the bifurcation in the Muslim system of education. During the heyday of the Muslim rule, there was no distinction between the religious and the secular sciences. With the arrival of the British, the Muslims became more self-conscious. A flood of Christian missionaries had accompanied the East India Company with the intention of converting the whole of India into Christianity.

In the changed circumstances the Ulema fancied that the Muslim political power was gone and if something was not done to stem the tide, there was every danger that they might lose their religious identity as well. With this grand view in mind, the dar-ul-Uloom Deoband (The school of Deoband) was established in 1867, ten years after the abortive war of independence. The guiding spirit of the Deoband Madrassahs was Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi who had actively participated in the war of independence at the battlefield of Shamli, a town situated in the Muzzaffar Nagar District of D.P.<sup>13</sup> The manifesto of Deoband was loyalty to the Hanafi school of thought and disloyalty to the British.<sup>14</sup> They were determined to open an intellectual front, albeit a medieval one. With the weaponry of knowledge, the sympathies of Deoband were with the International Muslim community as far as politics were concerned. On the occasion of the Khilafat Movement (movement for the revival and sustaining of Caliphate in Turkey) in 1919, the Deobandi Ulema formed their political party, which was called the Jamiatul Ulema-i-Hind (the party of the ulema of India). The Deobandi Ulema thought that they should have a forum of their own wherefrom they could speak and jump into the arena of Indian Muslim politics. The Khilafat Movement gave them one such opportunity.

The Deobandi Ulema took a leading role in the freedom movement. The Silk Letter Conspiracy was the brainchild of the Deobandi Ulema, more especially the Sheikhlul Hind Maulana Mahmud Hasan (1856-1920), the rector of Deoband, and his lieutenant Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi (1872-1944). The idea behind the Silk Conspiracy was that Britain was in trouble during the First Word War and the

Deobandi leadership, while capitalizing on the situation, made an effort to orchestrate an internal rebellion in India on the one hand, and persuade neighboring countries such as Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey to invade India on the other. This conspiracy met with little success; it only contributed to the passage of the Rowlett Act, which gave extraordinary powers to the British to incarcerate anyone without trial.

On the issue of the partition of India in 1947, a majority of the Deobandi Ulema joined hands with the Indian National Congress and opposed the creation of Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> However, through the persuasion of the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah the Founder of Pakistan, a rift was occasioned in the rank and file of the Deobandi Ulema. In November 1945, a convention of the Ulema was held at Calcutta in which the formation of the Jamiatul Ulema-e-Islam (the party of the scholars of Islam) was announced. Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani was elected the first president of the JUI.<sup>16</sup> It was because of the efforts of Maulana Usmani that during the elections of 1946 the Muslim League came out victorious in East Bengal.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, the success of the referendum in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was attributable to the JUI, which had by now converted many Mashaikh (spiritual elders) and saints to the cause of Pakistan, notably Amin-ul-Hasanat, the Pir of Manki Sharif. The Muslim League had done not very well in the election of 1946 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, during the referendum of 1947, the people of this province voted overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan. This was due to the amazing influence the Ulema had over the people. Because of their learning and piety, the Ulema had always been kept in high esteem in the Muslim society and the success of referendum was an example of this.

Shabir Ahmad Usmani had proposed the Objective Resolution in 1949, now incorporated into the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, the purpose of which was to give a sense of direction to Pakistan. Usmani had been elected to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on the seat of the Muslim League. This was in recognition of his services to the cause of Pakistan.

Apart from Usmani, other stalwarts of Deoband who supported the cause of Pakistan were Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1943), Maulana Ihtisham-ul-Haq Thanawi, Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani and a host of other Ulema. Ashraf Ali Thanavi, a scholar and saint of unprecedented standing, was of the opinion that the secular leaders of the All India Muslim League could be Islamized by supporting them. This means that the Ulema considered the formation of Pakistan inevitable and the best they could do was to support the idea of Pakistan so that the country could become an Islamic state.

Maulana Hamid Badayuni was also a great supporter of the idea of Pakistan. He belonged to the Barelvi school of thought. The Barelvi tradition is older than Deoband. Badayuni founded the Jamiah-e-Tablighiyya at Karachi. Apart from this, other important Barelvi Madaris are: Jamiah Naeemiyyah Garhi Shaho and Dar-ul-Ulaum Hizb-ul-Ahnaf at Lahore; Mazha-ul-Islam at Faisalabad and Madrassah Anwar-ul-Uloom at Multan.

Maulana Hamid Badayuni founded the Jamiat-ul-Ulam-e-Pakistan in 1948. This party played an active role in the politics of Pakistan. Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani (2004) the former President of Mutahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA), a political alliance of Islamic political parties, belonged to this party. His life was characterized by oppositional politics. The JUP later split into two factions i.e. the JUP (Noorani group) and the JUP (Niazi group headed by Maulana Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi). The JUP was a significant component of the anti-Government alliances such as Pakistan National alliance (PNA), Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD), and a host of other alliances.

Concern for converting Pakistan into an Islamic State has also been the pre-occupation of Jam'at-e-Islami headed by Maulana Maududi (1903-1979). Maududi had opposed the creation of Pakistan in his three volume series namely Musalman awr Maujuda Siyasi Kashmakash (The Muslims and the current Political Struggle). Initially, Maududi was in favour of the revival of Islam in India rather than partitioning the country. However, after partition he shifted to Pakistan and devoted his energies to the creation of an Islamic State. Maududi was also instrumental in the Objective Resolution and the 22 points of the Ulema.

## **Research Methodology**

Despite its manifest importance, the role of Madrassahs in the politics of Pakistan remains a very under-researched area. This is evidenced by the fact that published literature on the topic is extremely thin. Given the constraints of time and access, this author found discourse analysis as the best method of research for the given topic. This qualitative method of research is most suited in areas where exploration is desirable. As advised by Hardy (2001) textual data was acquired from different sources such as published books, periodicals, web contents and governmental agencies. The resulting discourse was analyzed in such a way so that a meaningful pattern could be deduced and a conclusion drawn. Necessary data on Madrassahs and their political role was obtained from published sources as well as from the Ministry of the Interior. While analyzing the textual data, the author was helped by personal experiences, as qualitative research allows the researcher to be a source of textual data.

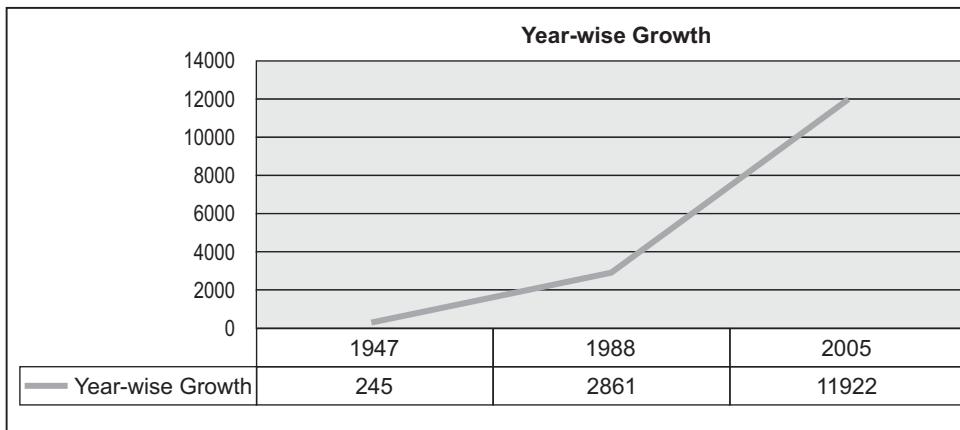
## Basic Data on Madrassahs in Pakistan

On the creation of Pakistan in 1947, many of the Ulema belonging to the above mentioned schools of thought and sects continued to follow their religious doctrines and politics. These religio-political groups evolved and shaped religious Madarassahs. Since then almost all religio-political leaders, the product of those Madaris, have been active players on the stage of national politics. It is necessary to have a look at the phenomenal growth of these Madrassahs.

There were 245 Madrassahs in 1947 when Pakistan was created.<sup>18</sup> In 1988 there were 2861 and between 1988 and 2005 the number increased by 11922,<sup>19</sup> with a total of 933,000 boys and 439,000 girls of Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia reading in them. According to Maulana Muhammad Saleemullah Khan, the president of Wafaqul Madaris Al Arabia 62,000 boys and girls took their examinations in 2001<sup>20</sup> while according to data of Ministry of Interior the total number of enrolled students are 1,021,404 (Pakistani) and 2603 (foreigners). Each year 163,993 students are trained. In the last ten years 1,427,190 have been trained.<sup>21</sup>

Pakistan today has approximately 1922 Madaris, big and small. Most of the Madaris have teaching staff who are not formally trained to impart authentic and sensitive teaching of Islam. Their knowledge is primarily based on an obsolete and primitive syllabus that was passed on from the uneducated to the uneducated over decades.<sup>22</sup> However, a World Bank sponsored working paper published in February 2005 came up with a new angle, stating, “Enrolment in the Pakistani Madrassahs, that critics believe are misused by militants, has been exaggerated by media”. The study claimed that less than one percent of the school-going children in Pakistan go to Madrassahs, and the proportion has remained constant in some districts since 2001. The study titled Religious School Enrolment in Pakistan: A Look at the Data,<sup>23</sup> conducted by Jishnu Das of the World Bank, Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Tristan Zajone of Harvard University and Tahir Andrabi of Pomona College, sought to dispel the general perception that enrolment was on the rise saying: “We find no evidence of a dramatic increase in Madrassah enrolment in recent years”. The funding for the report was provided by the World Bank through the Knowledge for Change Trust Fund.

Fig 1



*Source: Ministry of Interior (internal report), Islamabad, Government of Pakistan*

The South Asian Director of International Crisis Group (ICG) Director Samina Ahmad, has challenged the findings of the World Bank study, which questioned the validity of Madrassah enrolment statistics provided by the ICG and other expert analysis. Ms. Ahmad was quoted in the Dawn newspaper on March 11, 2005 as stating: "the authors (of the World Bank report) have insisted that there are at most 475,000 children in Pakistan Madrassahs, yet Federal Religious Affairs Minister, Ejazul Haq says the country's Madrassahs impart religious education to 1,000,000 children." She asserted that the World Bank findings were directly at odds with the minister of education's 2003 directory, which said the number of Madrassahs had increased from 6,996 in 2001 to 10,430. She added that the Madrassahs unions themselves had put the figure at 13,000 Madaris with the total number of students enrolled at 1.5 to 1.7 million.<sup>24</sup>

Almost all the Madaris in one form or the other receive financial support from the religious political parties, while in certain cases directly from NGOs in the rich Arab countries. The syllabus of the Madaris is completely devoid of all other modern scientific and social subjects.<sup>25</sup>

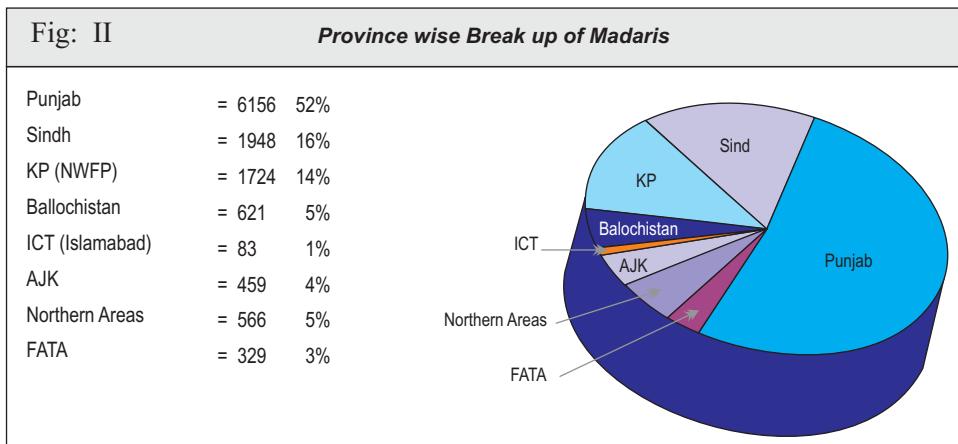
Table I: Data on Madaris / Religions Students

Number of Madaris	11922
Registration of Madaris	6803
Un Registered Madaris	6119
Local Students	1024051
Foreign Students	2606

Table II: Province / Area-wise data of Madaris

Punjab	6156 (3204 registered & 2952 unregistered)
Sindh	1948 (965 registered & 983 unregistered)
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	1724 (777 registered & 947 unregistered)
Balochistan	0621 (305 registered & 316 unregistered)
Islamabad Capital Territory	0083 (13 registered & 70 unregistered)
Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK)	0459 (213 registered & 246 unregistered)
Northern Areas	0566 (293 registered & 273 unregistered)
Federally Administered Tribal Area FATA	0365 (33 registered & 332 unregistered)

Source: *Ministry of Interior (Internal Report)*<sup>26</sup>

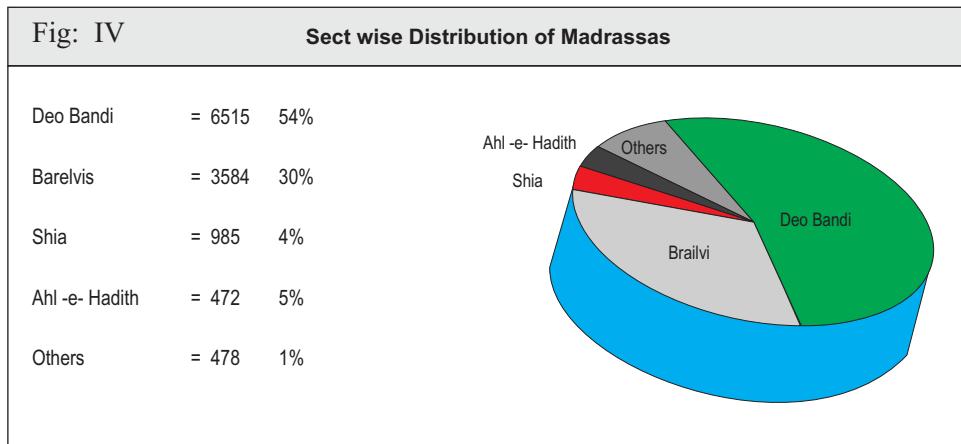


Source: *Ministry of Interior (Internal Report)*

Table III: Sect wise Break up of Deeni Madaris

Name of Sect	No. of Madaris	% age
Deo Bandi	6515	54%
Barelvis	3584	30%
Shia	0472	4%
Ahl-e-Hadith	0478	4%
Others	0985	8%

Source: *Ministry of Interior (Internal Report)*



Source: Ministry of Interior (Internal Report)

## Organizations of Madrassahs

Some of Madrassahs are affiliated to Central organizations, which prescribe a uniform curriculum and system of examinations for all, such as:

- (1) *Wafaq al-Madaris al-Al-arabiyyah*. The Deobandis created this in 1959 with its central office in Multan.
- (2) *Tanzeem al-Madaris al-Al-arabiyyah*. The Barelvis created this in 1959 with its central office in Dera Ghazi Khan.
- (3) *Wafaq al-Madaris ul Salfiya*. This was created by the Ahl-e-Hadith in 1955. They are highly fundamentalist, rejecting the cult of saints and rituals. They are also called *Wahabis* in common parlance in Pakistan.
- (4) *Wafaq al-Madaris ul Shia*. This was created by the Shia sect, the believers in (twelve imams) *Ithna Asha'ris*, in Pakistan in 1959. The head office is in Lahore.
- (5) *Rabta-ul-Madaris*. This was set up by the Jamat-e-Islami. They teach more modern subjects and often enable the students to take the ordinary state examinations along with religious ones.<sup>27</sup>

Not all the Madrassahs are affiliated to these central organizations (See Table IV).

Table IV

<b>Province</b>	<b>Barelvis</b>	<b>Deobandis</b>	<b>Ahl - e - Hadith</b>	<b>Shia's</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Total</b>
Punjab	148	96	65	10	677	996
Sindh	40	67	1	3	269	380
KPK	16	69	3		130	218
Balochistan	14	20			135	169
Total	218	252	69	13	1211	1763

Source: Jalal, Ayesha (2008), *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*, Lahore Sang-e-Meel Publications.

This means that out of 1763 Madrassahs, only 552 (31%) were affiliated to central organizations while 1211 (68.7%) were not. However, the Jamat-e-Islami's institutions have not been counted in these reports. It is probable then that they are subsumed under those not affiliated to control organizations. The number of unrecognized and unregistered institutions have probably multiplied since the nineteen eighties when according to numerous newspaper reports, new Madrassahs were setup with internal and external funding. Thus, a study of the courses of study printed by the central organizations of the Madrassahs does not provide complete information of the language-teaching situation in them. Between 1982 and 1987 371,905 students had read the Quran without understanding it, known as Nazerah, i.e.; mere recitation with no translation. Only 45,691 had received the Shahadat-i-Almiyah award from the Madrassahs (of which figures are available) in Pakistan. The levels of Madrassah education correspond to the levels of mainstream state education as given in Table V.<sup>28</sup>

## Curriculum

Table V

<b>Level</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Award</b>	<b>Equivalence</b>
Ibtidaaiyah	Nazera / Hafz / Tajweed -o- Qirat	1 - 5	6 - 5 years	Shahadatal, Tahfeeq ul Quran ul Kareem	Primary (5th Class)
Mutawassat	Hifz / Tajweed etc	6 - 8	3 Years	Shahadatul Mutawassata	Middle (3,7&8th Classes)
Sania Amma	Tehtani	Oola & Sanvia	2 Years	Shadatul Sanivya tul Amma	Matriculation (10th Class)
Sania Khassa	Tehtani	Salasa & Rabiah	2 Years	Shahadatul Sania tul Khassa	F.A. (12th Class)
Aliya	Mauquf Alay, Khamisa & Sadisa	Khamsia & Sadisa	2 Years	Shahadat ul Aliya	B.A. (14th Class)
Almiya	Daura I Hadith, Sabia & Samina	Sabia & Samina	2 Years	Shahadatul Almiya fil Uloom -e- Arabia wal Islamia	M.A. in Arabic & Islamic Studies

Source: Jalal, Ayesha (2008), *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia*, Lahore Sang-e-Meel Publications

## Major Religious Parties in Pakistan

There are two hundred and twenty seven religious parties working in Pakistan. Of these, eighty-two are based along sectarian lines and twenty-four regularly take part in politics. Some parties claim to be working on a non-sectarian basis, though a higher percentage of its members may lean towards one sect or another. For example, Jamaat-i-Islami claims that it was neither formed nor works on a sectarian basis, but it shows a clear Hanafi/Deobandi bent. Similarly, the Pakistan Awami Tehrik is dominated by Barelvis. One hundred and four parties are organized for jihad while eighteen are purely *tableeghi* (preachers).<sup>29</sup>

There is greater ratio of parties and organizations belonging to the Hanafi/Barelvi sect of which forty-four are large. With the inclusion of smaller parties the number exceeds one hundred, of these six are religio-political, twenty-two sectarian, thirteen jihadi and two tableeghi. Hanafi/Deobandi parties are more influential. There are a total of forty-six parties of the Deobandi sect of which four are religio-political, thirty-three sectarian, five jihadi and three tableeghi: parties and organizations belonging to the Ahle Hadees school of thought are also influential and are twenty in number; four religio-political, ten sectarian, three jihadi and one tableeghi. Parties working under Jamaat-i-Islami and its offshoots number fourteen and are further divided into three political, four jihadi and seven education/tableeghi organizations.<sup>30</sup>

## Madrassahs and Ulema Since 1947 - A Historical Review

Based on historical perspective and statistics the role of Madrassahs in the Pakistan movement is interesting to analyze. The slogan of Pakistan was *Pakistan ka matlab kiya Laillah ha* (the meaning of Pakistan is that there is no god but Allah, the words of Islam) with a divinity attached to it. One would expect the religious seminaries to support this very religious notion. Paradoxically the stronger religious parties like Jamiat-e-Ulema Hind, Ahrar, Jamat-i-Islami vehemently opposed the idea of Pakistan. The religious sentiments unleashed by the Muslim League to achieve its objective inadvertently strengthened the hands of those who opposed the very idea of Pakistan. Pakistan was identified with Islam and any criticism on any pillar of state was considered a sin and synonymous with criticism of Islam. Thus the Muslim League virtually became a hostage to the religious groups particularly after the death of the Quaid. This pressure culminated in the Objectives Resolution. The Objectives Resolution was the first constitutional acknowledgement that state and its pillars would be subservient to Islam, the interpretation of which was a matter of profound subjectivity. Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmania, groomed in Darul Uloom of Deoband, supported by his like-minded people Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, Jamat-e-Islami all having their origins in Madrassahs in one way or the other prevailed upon Liaqat Ali Khan Government to pass the Objectives Resolution. This was the

first taste of success by these religious groups and from there, there was no looking back. In February 1949 Shabir Ahmed Usmani, the President of Jamiat-e-Ulema-i-Islam, had demanded the appointment of a committee consisting of eminent Ulema and thinkers to advise the constituent assembly on the requirements of an Islamic Constitution. This demand was met when the assembly's Basic Principles Committee appointed a Board of *Talimat-Islamiyya* (Islamic teachings). The Board recommended that the Head of the State should be a Muslim, with ultimate power; that government should be run by an elite pious Muslim chosen from their party by the Muslim electorate; that the committee of Ulema should decide what legislation was repugnant to the injunctions of the Quran and the Sunnah and was therefore invalid. Most of the Boards recommendations were turned down by the Basic Principles Committee of the Constituent Assembly, but they left a considerable imprint on Pakistan's first (1956) and second (1962) constitutions. The Ulema held a conference in January 1951 and adopted 22 principles as the basis of an Islamic constitution. These principles reiterated the recommendations of the Board of Talimat-e-Islamyia; they also included a clause to the effect that the State should strengthen the bonds of unity and brotherhood among the Muslims of the world; they also emphasized the responsibility of the State to guarantee the basic necessities of life for all citizens and of the need of a strong censorship to suppress un-Islamic views.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the fact that these religious parties approach to religious issues was so divergent the political parties did have one thing in common, the *Islamization of Pakistan*. This kept them together against other political forces. While this was happening Pakistan was skidding down to the abyss of poverty. The graphs of economics indicators and literacy were dropping at an alarming rate, and the State was unable to respond. Most of the rural areas did not have schools even of the minimum standard. This was an ideal ground for Madrassahs to flourish and get deeply rooted in every nook and corner of Pakistan.

These Madrassahs were not only achieving the educational needs but were also providing shelter to thousands of poor children who could not be catered by the secular institutions of the state. The curriculum of Madrassahs has already been discussed in the previous chapter, and the graduate of these Madrassahs had a unique mindset to implement *shariah* and glorify Islam in Pakistan. When we critically analyze the political scenario of Pakistan it becomes evident that these Madrassahs did not have any position at any level of establishment and its hierarchy. The Madrassahs were well taken and well received by the people. At the same time there was no political movement or organized effort in the body politics of Pakistan to make Pakistan a liberal or secular state, except for few regional political parties raising their voice against religious groups. By and large, the expansion of

Madrassahs went ahead without any significant opposition. While the centralist parties remained indulged in mud slinging against one another and thus curbed their progress, the Madrassahs expanded.

The 1953 anti-Ahmadi movement organized and executed by the students and graduates of the Madrassahs had popular support behind. The movement did not succeed, but it signalled the strength and influence that these Madrassahs could have. This was an important story in the history of Pakistani politics. The state was challenged by Madrassahs and only Martial Law could rescue the civil government. Later on it was believed that the Madrassahs were used by the Punjab Government to undermine the Federal Government, evidence of this belief relies on the fact that Sir Zafarullah a known Ahmadi, was the sitting foreign minister. Those who used Madrassahs for short-term gains and expediency strengthened the Madrassahs as a consequence. Although the anti-Ahmadi agitation was suppressed, it deepened the rift between the westernized secular leadership and the Ulema; it left the common man

Standing on the crossroad, wrapped in the metal of the past and with the dead weight of centuries on his back, frustrated and bewildered and hesitant to turn one corner or the other.... it is this lack of bold and clear thinking, the inability to understand and take decision which has brought about in Pakistan a confusion which will persist and repeatedly create situation of the kind we have been enquiring into until our leaders have the clear concept of the goal and of the means to reach it.<sup>32</sup>

The period between 1953 and 1956 were the years of political instability; there was a struggle for power between the Governor General and the Prime Minister and there was tussle between the provinces. Each political group tried to strengthen its position and strike an alliance with Ulema for this purpose; this increased the influence of the Ulema in constitution making.

The 1956 constitution was the compromise between the western secular state held by the westernized elite and the Ulema, naming the State, the “Islamic Republic of Pakistan”. Besides certain other Islamic provisions inserted in the preamble and the Directive Principles of state policy the most noteworthy feature of the first constitution was the insertion of the Islamic provisions as a separate chapter. This chapter dealt with the Islamic research organization and law commission.<sup>33</sup>

## **1. Some Developments In General Ayub Khan's Era (1958-1969)**

In the murky waters of politics at the federal level, where persistent conspiracies and new alliances resulted in the rapid turnover of the Government, the people watched the circus with disdain and feelings of isolation. The Madrassahs and its graduates, and their corresponding political

views were looked down upon by the establishment and by liberal forces at the top. Citizens became fed up with the political upheavals and vilification of politicians and did not resist the martial law of 1958. Ayub Khan, a graduate of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, was essentially a liberal, but through the power of his office he began to develop authoritarian tendencies. He changed the name of the state by an Ordinance to the "Republic of Pakistan" dropping the adjective "Islamic". This indicated that the military rulers intended to remove the Islamic "burden" and were heading for a western-type secular state. It has been said that the previous political rulers were not wedded to the cause of Islam, that they paid only lip service to Islam and were effectively shaping Pakistan into a secular state. In fact, only the military rulers wanted to get rid of the Islamic principles in politics.

Ayub Khan reformed the Muslim family laws to restrict polygamy and promulgated Muslim Family Law Ordinance, 1961. The Madrassahs and Ulema considered this ordinance Unislamic and opposed it with tooth and nail. According to them the Quran permitted a man to have up to four wives and this permission could not be constricted by any human law. However as there was no monolithic ecclesiastical body they could not effect their protestations effectively and this family law became the law of the land. But having said that, it is pertinent to note that this controversy did provide them with an opportunity to be felt and acknowledged as partner in the state apparatus and governance.

Ayub Khan, however, realized that for the sake of the legitimacy of his government, he had to sustain an Islamic appearance; this was only a compromise of necessity. Through the Commission of National Education, appointed by him, he introduced the study of theology as compulsory subject in classes one to seven, it reiterated that:

Religious education should do nothing which would impair social and political unity in the country. On the other hand, it should strengthen this unity by trying through mutual understanding to bring humanity together. Religion is not to be presented as a dogma, superstition or ritual...as a religion of nature, Islam has nothing to fear from scientific discoveries and inventions. Advancement of scientific thought is but a revelation of the laws of nature leading ultimately to a control of these forces and their utilization for human aims...The great task that lies ahead of all Islamic scholars is to bring together knowledge of the fundamentalist Islamic values and of modern sciences.

These palliatives, reflecting the spirit of Islam, appeal to the glory of past Muslim civilizations, which produced great scientists, mathematicians, doctors, pharmacists and philosophers; this conveyed an impression that the

government intended to build Pakistan as an Islamic state. The introduction of the study of theology in the schools also blunted the agitation of the Ulema for enforcement of Islamic teachings. The real test, however, came in constitution making. In 1960, the government appointed a Constitution Commission which invited public opinions through questionnaires; it gave an opportunity to the Ulema to present their point of view and the Ulema, particularly, Jamaat-Islami took full advantage of it.

The Constitution Commission suggested an international commission on the issue to evolve consensus and thus the matter was put to cold storage. The Commission also suggested that before changes were introduced in the general laws a synthesis had to be made between different schools of Muslim juristic thought as well as other legal views in the modern world of Islam.

The 1964 Presidential election between Fatima Jinnah and Ayub Khan witnessed a fundamental shift in the attitude of the religious parties, getting out of the shell of supposed religious orthodoxy. They supported the democratic forces of the country. Not only did they support a woman to become the head of state, they were also part of the alliance that comprised of communist, nationalist and secular organizations. Perhaps, it was the start of a new era of religious parties, most of whom were the offspring and graduates of Madrassahs. The changed attitude of the leadership also influenced Madrassahs and its thought process and its students played a pivotal role in all the democratic moments, be that Ayub Khan or later. Having entered politics and assuming the Presidency of the Muslim League, Ayub Khan faced religious pressures from those like Jamat-i-Islami and Nizami-e-Islam Party, which had religious programmes in their manifestos; he had to yield to a number of issues. The Constitution (First Amendment) Act passed by the then National Assembly on December 24 1963, this changed the name of the State back to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; and also introduced the following provisions;

a. A new Principle of Policy was added:

'1. Islam. No law shall be repugnant to the teaching and requirements of Islam as set in the Holy Quran and Sunnah and all existing laws shall be in conformity with the Holy Quran and Sunnah.'

Explanation: In the application of this principle to the personal law of any sect, the expression Quran and Sunnah shall mean the Quran and Sunnah as interpreted by that sect.'

b. The following addition was to the functions of the Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology in Article 204(i) (a) '...and to examine all laws in force immediately before the commencement of the Constitution (First

- Amendment) Act, 1963 with a view to bringing them in conformity with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah'
- c. In the preamble of the original Constitution, it was provided that 'the Muslims of Pakistan should be enabled individually and collectively to order their lives in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam.'

The religious sectarian element was introduced in the second Constitution under the First Amendment; this constitutional recognition of different sects, as far as Muslims are concerned, was a regressive step and was bound to have an adverse effect on the efforts for Islamisation of laws. They showed increasing influence of the Ulema representing different sects. Nevertheless, the recommendations of the Council of Islamic Ideology were of an advisory nature and it was up to the government to move legislation in the National Assembly in respect of the recommendations accepted by the President at a time considered appropriate by him.

## **2. Some Developments in Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's Era (1973 - 1979)**

The social implications of unplanned industrialization and urbanization included increases in the labour force and urban population, which provided a breeding ground for discontent and agitation. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto coined the phrase "Islamic socialism" to attract the downtrodden. Even among the Ulema there emerged the Hazarwi group of Jamiat-ul- Ulema Islam who presented socialistically oriented programmes and were called the red Ulema. The demand of the Ulema for *Shariah* (Islamic law) was relegated to the background of the political scene as agitation against Ayub Khan over price rises in sugar began to dominate. In the 1970 election, the Pakistan Peoples Party won the majority of seats in West Pakistan and the Awami League swept the polls in East Pakistan. The political parties which stood for Islamisation were confronted with a crushing defeat. The election results showed people wanted improvement in the quality of their life and did not trust the empty slogan of Islam raised by the Islam-oriented parties. Rulers had used the slogan of Islam for twenty years and the pendulum of public approval now swung to the other extreme. However, Maulana Mufti Mahmud inflicted a massive electoral defeat on the invincible Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the 1970 general election. The JUI and NAP formed a coalition Government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in which Mufti Mahmud became the Chief Minister in May 1972. When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto dismissed the Government of Balochistan on February 15 1973, the Mufti resigned from the Chief Ministership of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a mark of protest.

Bhutto came to power on a wave of economic slogans but he was conscious of the fact that Islam was an indispensable part of life of the common man who had rejected only the Ulema's version of Islam which did not offer them economic improvement in their lives; he also realized that the Ulema had been defeated in the elections but had not been eliminated from the society; their influence on the public through the Madrassahs and mosques remained a fact to be reckoned with. Like the first and second constitutions, the name "Islamic Republic of Pakistan", Islamic provisions in the preamble, the principles of policy; and the Council of Islamic Ideology became part of constitution. A new Article 2 was added to the constitution declaring Islam to be the state religion of Pakistan.

A new feature of the third constitution under the pressure of the Ulema is contained in the oaths to be administered to the President and the Prime Minister. In the previous two constitutions, the oaths proved for the performance of duties in accordance with the constitution; but the third constitution also provides that

I am a Muslim and believe in the Unity and Oneness of Almighty Allah, the Book of Allah, the Holy Quran being the last of them, the Prophethood of Muhammad (Peace be upon him) as the last of the prophets and that there can be no prophet after him, the Day of Judgment, and all the requirements and teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

On the whole, the third constitution contains heavier doses of formal Islam which shows the increasing influences of Ulema and the gradual retreats of the westernized elite.

With the failure of Bhutto's economic programme and non-fulfillment of the common man's dream of improvement in his quality of life, the political parties in the opposition found a fertile ground for their comeback in the political field. They started a massive campaign of criticism against Bhutto's style of government.

Bhutto was also concerned about the pressure of Ulema for introduction of Islamic system and as concession to them, announced on January 6, 1977 that Friday, instead of Sunday, would be the weekly holiday from Rajab 14, 1397/July 1, 1977.

In January 1977 Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto announced that the general election to the National and Provincial Assemblies would be held on *Rabi ul Awwal* 16 and 19 1397/March 7 and 10, 1977 respectively. In a surprise move, all the opposition parties forged an alliance, called a National Alliance which included, among other three Ulema led parties (Jamat-i-Islami, Jam iyyat ul Ulema-i-Islam and

Jamiyyat ul Ulema Pakistan), two secular oriented rightist parties (Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Democratic Party), one left of centre party (Tehrik-e-Istiqlal) and one leftist party. This combination of different political thoughts and ideological orientations in the country decided to resist the authoritarian system, to which Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto was leading the country, and demanded to restore the democratic order and civic rights of the people. Each party had its own slogans on popular level but, by and large, restoration of the civic rights of the people and enforcement of Nizam Mustafa (The System of Islam) became the battle cry from the platform of Pakistan National Alliance.

The result of election gave the Pakistan People Party a landslide victory of 136 out of 173 seats under contest, plus another 19 uncontested seats.

### **3. The Islamization of General Zia-Ul-Haq's Era (1979 - 1988)**

Pakistan National Alliance announced boycott of the Provincial polls to be held on March 1977 and demanded re-polling of the National Assembly. The Alliance launched a movement to press its demands. The presence of Ulema in the Pakistan National Alliance placed almost all the Madrassahs and Mosques in the country in hand of the Pakistan National Alliance which utilized the pulpit fully in support of the agitation against the Pakistan People Party. Resolutions in support of the outlawing of alcoholic liquor, gambling and nightclubs, and the shifting of the weekly holiday from Sunday to Friday were passed. Bhutto started negotiations with the Pakistan National Alliance to find a mutually acceptable solution to the impasse. These negotiations petered-out without a result. On July 5, 1977 there was a military coup d'état. General M Zia ul Haq, the Chief of the Army Staff took over the government and declared martial law in the country.

The very first speech of General Zia on 5 July 1977 set the tone of the Martial Law Government. In this speech, he praised "the spirit of Islam, demonstrated during the recent movement" and said:

It proves that Pakistan, which was created in the name of Islam, will continue to survive only if it sticks to Islam. That is why I consider the introduction of Islamic system as an essential prerequisite for the country.

The events of the next eleven years prove that General Zia used Islam and Madrassahs to legitimate his Martial Law Government.

The history of General Zia's rule is marked by broken pledges solemnly made to the nation. In his address to the nation on 5 July 1977 he said:

I want to make it absolutely clear that neither I have any political ambitions nor does the Army want to be detracted from its profession of soldiering.... My sole aim is to organize free and fair elections, which will be held in October this year...I give a solemn assurance that I will not deviate from this schedule.... I would not like to dissipate my powers and energies as Chief Martial Law Administrator on anything else.

Elections were scheduled to be held on 18 October 1977 but General Zia announced indefinite postponement of elections on the pretext following:

During the last few months the Martial Law authorities investigated certain departments and a lot of dirt came to the surface. Most of the misdeeds fall within the purview of the law. I have decided that these facts should be brought before the elections are held. When will the elections be held? That will depend upon the speed of the process of accountability.

The promulgation of the system of Prayers, compulsory deduction of *zakat* (poor due), *hudud* (Islamic punishments) ordinances, *Qisas* (Retribution) and *Diyat* (blood money) ordinances, introduction of the Islamic law of evidence, the formation of the Federal Sharia Courts, the launching of the International Islamic University and the establishment of *Qazi* (Islamic judge) courts are but a few examples of his Islamization. Naturally enough, he was an ally of the religious parties. However, whereas the Jamat-e-Islami (JI) was an active collaborator of Zia-ul-Haq, the JUI withheld its support from him. This was because of the ideological difference between the JI and the JUI.

During the reign of Zia-ul-Haq, the Madaris (Islamic seminaries) mushroomed in the country, besides most of the extremist groups such as the Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan. Tehrik-i-Jafariya Pakistan, Lashkar-i-Jhanghavi, Lashkar-i-Tayyiba, Sipah-i-Muhammad, Ahl-i-Hadith Youth Force, Harakat-ul-Mujahidin and host of other groups sprang up during this period. In December 1979, Soviet Russia invaded Afghanistan. About three million Afghan refugees entered Pakistan. A protracted Afghan war intended partly to lessen Pakistan's burden of Afghan refugees and partly strengthen Pakistan as a front line State began. With American money and ammunition a relentless Jihad was initiated in Afghanistan to expel the Russians. According to the British Broadcasting Corporation, Pakistan received seventy-eight billion dollars from the United States of America in this connection. The students of Madaris in Pakistan, some in their impressionable age, participated in the Jihad. Some guerrillas from the Middle East also headed towards Afghanistan converting that country into an international battlefield. Among the Arab Mujahidin was Osama bin Laden who later became the prime suspect in the 9/11 attacks. Osama bin Laden was then portrayed as the great champion of Islam.

The Russian soldiers left Afghanistan in 1989 in the wake of an accord that was reached between the various warring parties. A state of lawlessness, anarchy and civil war followed which turned the country red. This state of affairs continued till 1996 when a band of student militia called *Taliban* took control of Afghanistan with the help of Pakistan. For the first time in a period of twenty years, the Taliban succeeded in creating order out of chaos and civil war. They implemented Islamic laws in the most ruthless and grim fashion, for an acephalous and unruly country such as Afghanistan could not be set right without an iron hand. The Taliban were the students of Madaris who had been trained in Pakistan. The leader of the Taliban, namely, Mullah Umar was a graduate of the *Dar-ul-Ulum Haqqania*, other Afghan leaders were also the graduates of this Madrassah. Most of the religious leaders including Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman, who had taken over as the general secretary of JUI on the occasion of the death of his father Mufti Mahmud on October 14, 1980 and Maulana Sami-ul-Haq, leader of his own faction of JUI (S) and a son of the founder of this Madrassah, are its graduates.

On 11 September 2001, hijacked jet-airlines were flown into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, resulting in the killing of 2977 Americans and became the biggest turning point in world politics. The American President, George W. Bush was hell bent on invading Afghanistan, where the prime suspect of these attacks, Osama bin Laden was hiding, supposedly under the protection of the Taliban. There was tremendous pressure on Pakistan to give up their support to the Taliban and become an ally of the US in her war against terrorism. Mullah Umar was approached several times to hand over Osama to the US but he refused to cooperate. The President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf appeared on TV and tried to persuade the people that the time was ripe to distance themselves from the Taliban only for the security of Pakistan. He cited examples from the Holy Prophet's Mecca life in which he avoided war and instead devoted his efforts to peaceful persuasion and preaching, for the time demanded so. The analogy was very clear. Since Pakistan could not stand up to the American pressure, common sense demanded that she must show compromise and sense of adjustment. Besides, Pakistan was the only nuclear power in the Muslim world and confrontation with the USA would endanger the nuclear possessions of Pakistan. Furthermore, the traditional foe of Pakistan, India will exploit the situation, join hands with the US and destroy the nuclear facilities of Pakistan. The elimination of the Taliban Government was only a matter of time. On 7 October 2001 the US invaded Afghanistan. After a few days the Taliban capitulated. However, their leader Mullah Umar and Osama Bin Laden are still at large.

As a reaction to the American invasion of Afghanistan, the Afghan Defence Council, comprising of 28 religious and political parties was formed in the country in support of the Taliban government, condemning the American atrocities in their demonstrations. The religious parties capitalized on mass anti-American sentiment. Subsequently, an alliance *Mutahida Majlis-i Amal* (MMA), comprising of six religious parties namely Jamaat-i-Islami, JUI(F), JUI(S), JUP(N), Tehrik-e-Jafferia and Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadees was formed.

*Mutahida Majlis-i-Amal* was converted into an election alliance and contested the election under one symbol, a book. *Mutahida Majlis e Amal* playing on the anti-American sentiment, a sense of deprivation, helplessness and Jihad, and a promise of Islam as the panacea of all ills won an unprecedented number of seats in the National Assembly, and also succeeded to form exclusive government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a coalition in Balochistan. Maulana Fazal ur Rehman, leader of the MMA not only became the leader of the opposition but along with the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also made it to the National Security Council.

PPP and the PML (N) who could counter the influence of Madrassahs and its products allegedly did not have a level playing field. Both the leaders of these parties had been expelled from the country and the field was left open to the religious parties to exploit it to the full, which they did.

In the beginning of 2002, the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf campaigned to reform the religious schools, unveiling a new strategy which would see Madaris teach Mathematics, Science, English, Economics, and even Computer Science alongside their traditional Islamic programme. Musharraf said in his address that,

My only aim is to help these institutions overcome their weaknesses and providing them with better facilities and more avenues to the poor children at these institutions. These Schools are excellent welfare set-ups where the poor get free board and lodge. And very few Madaris run by hardliner parties promote negative thinking and propagate hatred and violence instead of inculcating tolerance, patience and fraternity.

While embarking on several initiatives to combat zealotry and broaden the educational offerings, the Musharraf administration announced a number of measures to make Madaris participate in the modernization programme. These reforms included a five-year \$1 billion education sector allocation for reforms in syllabuses of religious seminaries; a \$100 million bilateral agreements to rehabilitate hundreds of public schools by the United States Agency for

International Development (USAID), besides increasing access to quality education and the enforcement of Madrassah Registration Ordinance, 2002 which required Madaris to audit their funding, and register their foreign students with the Government. At the same time, a Federal Madaris Education Board was established to enable the students at the religious schools to benefit from the national educational system by learning Mathematics, English and vocational Science in addition to the normal Madrassah education.

However, three years down the road, the government has been cautioned to use state authority to implement its reforms agenda in order to avoid backlash. Since the country's leading religious parties like Jamiat-i-Islami, Jamiat Ulema Pakistan, and Jamiat-ul-ulema-i-Islam sponsors most of these schools the government is following a pragmatic line.

The present state of Pakistani politics and the role played by the Madrassahs could be discerned by the following comment of Shafqat Mahmud.

The mullahs have shown the ability to mobilize. They may not have the largest bank, but thanks to the Madrassahs, street power is always available to them. This is a huge asset, given the history of Pakistani politics. We have often been ruled by unelected authoritarian governments backed by the might of the state. The only place to challenge them [the government] is on the streets. The MMA seems to be the only entity capable or doing this these days.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In the preceding pages the historical origin and growth of Madrassahs were briefly examined. It was seen that Madrassahs are an essential and deeply intertwined part of the social fabric in our society. They have been providing livelihood, education and essence of identity to those millions who happened to be the *sons of lesser gods*. Democracy is all about active participation of different sections of the societies. The Madrassahs play the role of providing a platform to a significantly large section of the society as such there is a need for greater realization of the importance that we should attach to these institutions. However, there is also an urgent need for ensuring that these institutions should keep pace with advancements in the fields of physical and social sciences. When the well known British Prime Minister Gladstone introduced electoral reforms giving the right to vote to low income classes he remarked, "its time to educate our masters". By this he meant educational reforms, and hence the system of the free universal education followed. It is thus not difficult to see the important relation between a functional democracy and adequately educated electorate. Since the size of electorate attached to Madrassahs is significant, it is important that their educational needs are properly

addressed. While the present policy of the government which aims to reform the Madrassahs is understandable, there is a greater need for cautious treading on this route.

1. Reform approach may be incentive based rather than strictly authoritarian. Such as giving equivalence to qualifications provided in Madrassahs with respect to mainstream educational certificates and degrees (FA, BA, MA) subject to inclusion of English, IT, Economics, and Basic Sciences.
2. The Government may evolve a parallel modern system of Madrassahs education, inducing the traditional Madrassahs to change.
3. Ensure provision of education at Matric level to all segments of the society.
4. Continuity of democratic process may be ensured to provide constitutional means of active citizen participation in governance.
5. Madrassahs may not be allowed to become a handy tool for implementing various agendas of the foreign countries.
6. Seats for higher education may be reserved in colleges and universities for students of Madaris provided they fulfill some minimum requirements of colleges and universities.
7. A proper mechanism is required to capitalize on the government's USD 225 million Madrassah reform scheme.

### **End Notes**

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