

The Living History of Pakistan Vol-IV

**KARACHI CONTINUED BURNING.....**

**The Living History of Pakistan  
Volume - IV**

**INAM R SEHRI**

**Contemporary History is NOT that what has  
been happening around –  
It is the statement of facts about what  
the people considered significant**

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The Living History of Pakistan Vol-IV

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[in English] (2016)

{Collection of essays mostly published; dealing with Pakistan's chequered history of massive financial & intellectual corruption, abortive rule by two political parties in succession with higher judiciary's gimmicks during 1971 onwards; Constitutional Amendments which made political parties as family businesses & apex court's nexus making the politicians more corrupt.}

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***It's me; my Lord!***

**Inam R Sehri**

- Born in Lyallpur (Pakistan) in April 1948
- First Degree from Government College Lyallpur (1969)
- Studied at Government College Lahore & got first Master's Degree from Punjab University Lahore (1971);
- Attachment with AJK Education Service (1973-1976)
- Central Superior Services (CSS) Exam passed (batch 1975)
- Civil Service Academy Lahore (joined 1976)
- National Police Academy Islamabad (joined 1977)
- LLB from BUZ University Multan (1981)
- Master's Degree from Exeter University of UK (1990)
- Regular Police Service: District Admin, Police College, National Police Academy, the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) [1977-1998] then migrated to the UK permanently.

A part-script copied from the earlier volumes:

Just spent a normal routine life; with hundreds of mentionable memoirs allegedly of bravery & glamour as every uniformed officer keeps, some times to smile at and next moment to repent upon but taking it just normal except one or two spills.

During my tenure at IB HQ Islamabad I got chance to peep into the elite civil and military leadership of Pakistan [then] existing in governmental dossiers and database.

During my stay at FIA I was assigned to conduct special enquiries & investigations into some acutely sensitive matters like Motorway Scandal, sudden expansion and build-up of Sharif family's industrial empire, Sharif's accounts in foreign countries; Alleged Financial Corruptions in Pakistan's Embassies in Far-Eastern Countries; Shahnawaz Bhutto's murder in Cannes (France); Land Scandals of CDA's Estate Directorate; Ittefaq Foundry's 'cus-

tom duty on scrap' scam, Hudaibya Engineering & Hudaibya Paper Mills enquiries, Bhindara's Murree Brewery and tens more cases like that.

*[Through these words I want to keep it on record that during the course of the above mentioned, (and also which cannot be mentioned due to space limits) investigations or enquiries, the then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, or [late] Gen Naseerullah Babar the then Federal Interior Minister, had never ever issued direct instructions or implicit directions or wished me to distort facts or to go malafide for orchestrating a political edge or other intangible gains or hidden benefits.]*

**Hats off to both of them!**

***Some top bureaucrats like Kh Zaheer, Afzal Kahoot and Saeed Mehdi twisted my arms in the name of Sharif's anger firstly sent me home then tried to imprison me – only the INTERPOL's investigations into my affairs could rescue me.***

In Ingall Hall of the Pakistan Military Academy [PMA], it is carved:

***"It is not what happens to you that matters but how you behave while it is happening".***

I should feel proud that veracity and truthfulness of none of my enquiry or investigation could be challenged or proved false in NAB or Special Courts; yes, most of them were used to avail political compromises by Gen Musharraf's government.

That's enough, my dear countrymen.

**Epictetus;** a Greek philosopher in AD 55 – 135 once said:

**"If anyone tells you that a certain person speaks ill of you, do not make excuses about what is said of you but answer - he was ignorant of my other faults, else he would not have mentioned these alone."**

**— Epictetus**

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**8<sup>TH</sup> HUMBLE SUBMISSION**

Each chapter is a different scenario but in continuity of the '**Judges & Generals in Pakistan' Vol I - IV** and travelling through '**The Living History of Pakistan' Vol I - III** making this book the 8<sup>TH</sup> Volume of Pakistan's contemporary history.

So, these books, including this '**The Living History of Pakistan Vol-IV**' are compilation of facts from the contemporary history, may be irritating for many because the truth is often bitter; explaining diverse state of affairs. This volume, like Vol-III, is also treating with years from around 2013 till 2016 of KARACHI metropolis of Pakistan only.

No fiction or fabrication - this book, like the previous ones, may be taken as reference based on authentic news, editorials, opinions and criticisms on issues connected with mega city of Karachi – and with sources.

The truth is that most end users are just not that interested in the details that drive quality in research and reference work.

It is well known fact now that a substantial number of people offer opinions on fictitious topics in the fictitious way. The results of the most fictitious public affairs issues suggest that people give opinions on such matters in large part because of the pressure to answer public questions – which ultimately ends with bogus results prepared at the office tables on the '**need and urgency basis**'.

John H. Murphy of The University of Texas mentions in his research paper '**Advances in Consumer Research**' Volume 11, 1984; pp 52-55 wrote:

*"Hence, authors are to be commended on their efforts to bring attention to and to investigate this source of measurement error. However, an evaluation of some of the underlying premises of their methodologies suggests that their studies and resulting conclusions may be misleading [so authors should avoid the pitfalls]."*

Thus, this volume, like my other books on contemporary history of Pakistan contains no misleading intelligence story, no distracting investigative report, no concocted interview and no feed from the 'concerned ones' - yet every page seems innovative; no fiction in this book but simple narration of facts. As I quote in the beginning of each volume:

The Living History of Pakistan Vol-IV

*'It is the collection of tragedies and misgivings which are deliberately buried in suspicious darkness of political compromises and narration of lust, corruption, egoism, insensitivity and selfishness of ruling few whose families are settled abroad. They only go to Pakistan to [mis]govern when their turn ripens up.*

*'I've simply excavated those facts; collated and placed the same together for those who want to keep a track of Pakistan's past.'*

You read your newspaper daily and regularly; many of you go through it thoroughly but you do not keep record of even important events. This book contains nothing but the true events and analysis on certain topics, of course, which have cogent references to your history, your representatives, your leadership, your ideal guides and not the least, your nation - your country, the Pakistan.

Referring to the **'Daily times' dated 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004**, Lt Gen (rtd) Moeenuddin Haider once highlighted security and terrorism issues and said:

*'The United States should be cursed for abandoning jihadis after using them for its interests in the region. During the 'holy war' in Afghanistan in 1980, America had patronised 35,000 to 40,000 Arab militants but it did not develop the area after defeating Russia. It would have been much cheaper at that time than it will be today.*

*'Pakistan should have a "real" democracy and in that the army had no role; all political parties and other forces, including the army, should discuss a viable solution to the issue.'*

The truth was that the superior judiciary had lost its respect due to the flaws in the judicial system and continuous interference of the executive. The security and justice were the main public welfare issues of Pakistan, but the judiciary had been going weak – not coping with the demands of the day. Even today, after decades the judiciary stands at the same lowest point of disillusionment and frustration as it started in August 1947.

The meaning of justice was to manoeuvre the judiciary to get a judgment in one's favour; Pakistan's successive army rulers and the PML[N] notoriously used it that way. The fact was that the politicians and the rich had no respect for the law.

Referring to **'Overview of corruption in Pakistan'** Authored by Marie Chêne of Transparency International:

*'According to TI Pakistan's 2006 survey, 96 percent of the people who came in contact with the judiciary encountered corruption and 44 percent of them reported having to pay a bribe to a court official.*

*Again, according to Global Integrity, the procedure for selecting judges at the national level is not transparent and selection procedures are often made in exchange for political favours or on Chief Justice's whims.*

*Despite these problems, judges are exempt from oversight and investigations by Pakistan's national anticorruption agency [NAB].*

*The business community generally lacks confidence in the capacity of the judiciary to enforce rules and laws, and the settlement of disputes often involves paying bribes.'*

### **BITTER FACTS – BARE TRUTHS:**

Benazir Bhutto took over the reigns of government in 1993 again and brought Farooq Leghari as the President of Pakistan. Mr Leghari was a staunch member of the PPP and had been amongst the top admirers of the Bhutto family. Whenever Ms Bhutto wanted the president for official job, she used to call him in her chamber or PM House.

During mid 1996, the relationship between PM Benazir Bhutto and President Leghari started deteriorating. Immediately the two personalities went sour with each other. During the last days, the situation arose that Benazir Bhutto had to go to the Presidency to see President Leghari and, in meetings, started discussing official matters while sitting in the lounge.

During discussions, Benazir Bhutto addressed the president saying '**Bhai [Brother] Leghari ....**' President Leghari immediately interrupted and said: '*Look Madam! It is a meeting between the President and a Prime Minister; **avoid calling me Bhai** and continue talking political issues...*'

Benazir Bhutto did not care and continued calling him **Leghari bhai**. Suddenly President Leghari left his seat and called his wife with a loud shout. When she joined them in the lounge, President Leghari smilingly said to her, '**your sister in law [exact word used was 'nand'] is here; have**

***a chat with her. I'm going in my office for an urgent official commitment.'***

**ON BB'S INVESTIGATION:** The Pakistani populace had clues that why the President Zardari, having PPP's elected governments in Islamabad and Karachi, could not get his wife Benazir Bhutto's assassination case investigated while remained in saddles for full five years. The PPP's media stalwarts at President House once sincerely pointed out the involvement of Gen Musharraf and the then Interior Secretary Syed Kamal Shah who had dangerously tried to twist the facts about BB's killing. A report published in ***daily the 'Dawn'*** dated ***15<sup>th</sup> March 2011*** is referred.

In the backdrop of the infamous press conference by Brig (rtd) Javed Iqbal Cheema on that murder [he was spokesman of the interior ministry at that time], revealed that:

***"The contents of the press conference were provided by Maj Gen Nusrat Naeem, the then Director General of the Counter - Intelligence Wing of ISI [DG CI], at a meeting held in the ISI HQ."***

Big (rtd) Cheema whose statement was recorded by the Joint Investigation Team [JIT], also added that:

***"....the said meeting was also attended by the then Interior Secretary, Syed Kamal Shah. I did not express any assumptions, guess work or opinion at the press briefing. I just reproduced what I was given to share with the media."***

At the press conference held on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2007, Brig (rtd) Cheema had presented an audio-tape of a conversation between Baitullah Mehsud and one '*Maulvi sab'* and told media reporters that the Chief of the *Tehrik e Taliban* Pakistan [TTP] was behind the murder.

In the latest challan [final report under S 173 CrPC] submitted to an Anti-Terrorism Court in Rawalpindi, paragraph 42 related to the subject was:

***"In this press conference the then DG, NCMC, not only announced the cause of death of Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto but also declared that the terrorists belonged to Baitullah Mehsud, chief commander of TTP. The credibility of investigation of this case was affected by the premature press conference."***

Interior ministry believed that Brig (rtd) Cheema had acted only on the instructions of his immediate boss Kamal Shah who accompanied him at the ISI HQ. They said the decision to address the press conference had been taken at a meeting held the same morning at the Rawalpindi camp office with the then President Gen Musharraf in the chair.

Brig (rtd) Ejaz Shah, the former Chief of Intelligence Bureau and a trusted aide to Gen Musharraf, confirmed in his statement, a copy of which was also available with the media that the meeting had been held. ***"The intercepted CD and medical report was provided by the ISI. The briefing was given by DG-CI to the participants."***

The irony of fate remained that the PPP's government and its JIT had not interrogated Maj Gen Naeem, till ending 2011 at least, who was living in Rawalpindi and was then working with the Bahria Town Management.

### ***KARACHI'S SPILL OVER:***

In contemporary Pakistan, there have been less politics and more political gimmicks – mostly ending with shocks. Once in early May 2008, Mr Zardari, the co-chairperson of the PPP, himself threw a bomb shell by offering compromise with the PML[N] on the issue of reinstatement of defunct superior judges but then backed out declaring that ***'political promises are not verses of Qua'an or Hadith'***.

Immediately after, the PML[N] retaliated by withdrawing its ministers from the cabinet. Mr Zardari did two more explosions then; by sending Gen Musharraf home in August 2008 and then nominating himself as president in his place.

In February 2009, the PPP launched another attack by sending PML[N] government home in Punjab but PML[N] succeeded in hitting the PPP with more intensity by launching a long march on 16<sup>th</sup> March facilitating Justice Iftikhar M Chaudhry and his fellow judges to be restored and reinstated in their original position.

CJP Iftikhar M Chaudhry's superior judiciary in turn discharged numerous bomb shells in the form of decisions on burning issues like 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2007's emergency, NRO, promotions of federal bureaucracy, un-ceremoniously but rightly sending Justice Deedar Hussain Shah home and termination of PCO judges etc to cite few of them.

On political front Maulana Fazalur Rehman's quit, thrice MQM's somersaults for leaving and re-joining the federal and provincial cabinets with the PPP and PML[Q]'s joining the PPP were enough to provide hot material for the serious historians.

The most damaging nuclear bomb shell, mirroring the ugliest face of Pakistani politics, was a series of press conferences of PPP's Dr Zulfiqar Mirza during 28-30<sup>th</sup> August 2011 in which he apparently targeted MQM & Rehman Malik but indirect smack had also caused dents, adventurism and doubts in PPP's own circles especially the President's fort.

Speaking frankly, Dr Mirza's whole speech was basically a staunch criticism over the policies of his own party PPP in the garb of Mr Zardari's friendship claims and old family relationship. No body was expecting this stabbing from the PPP's '*Brutus*', too.

*[A similar occasion was once seen during Gen Ayub's rule of 1960s when Gen Azam Khan, being his most trusted aide, was made Governor East Pakistan. He ruled that part of Pakistan in such a nice way that the East Pakistanis again started praising their western counterparts more than brothers.*

*When the people's liking for Gen Azam Khan crossed a certain limit, Gen Ayub Khan was briefed that latter's own existence was being threatened. Gen Ayub, putting aside the public sentiments of the Eastern Wing, had sent Gen Azam on retirement without assigning any reason. A chapter of hatred was opened from the top brass ranks then.*

*At this moment, one can recall Gen Ziaul Haq's first speech in mid 1977 as CMLA after taking Mr Bhutto in 'protective custody' from which even a layman could understand that it was a revolt. The General ruled for eleven years in an unprecedented move of the history.]*

One can also recall Nawaz Sharif's press speech of early 1993 immediately before the event when he was sent home. Prior to that speech Nawaz Sharif was generally taken as the PM sponsored by the '*Establishment*' but after that speech he was considered a grown-up politician. Even PPP's Benazir Bhutto had to say that '**now she would be facing a full grown political opponent**'.

Coming back; it was the time that Mr Zardari had to revisit his political strategy for Sindh because Dr Mirza had attracted most of the Sindhi youth

towards his person. Big landlords were feeling danger from him so definitely sided with Mr Zardari but a common man had taken enlightenment from Dr Mirza's truthfulness. Not only rural Sindhis but the peace loving Karachiites, whether Urdu speaking or not but feeling oppressed due to *Bhatta*, Land, Drug and ammunition mafias & gangs, aspired to go hand in hand with Dr Mirza.

During the later terms of both PPP and the PML[N], every Pakistani has been floating in a quagmire of confusion. Politics had gone a curse in this country. Truthful and liar faces had intermingled. People wanted a drop scene of stinking political dramas of loot and plunder in dithering 're-conciliation'. MQM also came forward with true answers. Press conferences by its '*Rabita Committees*' and discarding messages did not work in that charged atmosphere then; it was mid 2011.

Boycott of TV talk shows and going into silence zones could not win the people any more. For the PPP, simply accepting resignations of Dr Mirza was not enough. Mr Zardari was asked to come out with a solemn pledge and thorough enquiries over the issues raised by Dr Mirza through some judicial commission – but with no avail.

Great responsibility lied on the shoulders of army and judiciary to sort out truth from the allegations leveled by Dr Mirza. The Supreme Court was already proceeding with the *sou motu* action on Karachi affairs. Dr Mirza was called in the court to place the evidences on record which he had waved during the press conferences under reference – but Dr simply ignored the call from the SC bench.

Other political groups, ANP and MQM, approached the apex court with the request to treat them as 'party' to the issue because they were the stake holders. The solution was not far away had the institutions felt it as duty with a live conscientiousness; either the MQM and Rehman Malik could be washed away or Dr Mirza disappeared from the political scene for ever.

The nation desired to know the facts about the hidden hands of killers in Karachi.

*(...the above paragraphs were published at [www.Pakspectator.com](http://www.Pakspectator.com) on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 under title 'Karachi's Spill Over')*

One **Ali Hashim** wrote in '**the News**' dated **19<sup>th</sup> September 2013**:

*'To an outsider, like myself, this MQM leader they talk about [referred to **Altaf Hussain**] does not appear to be anything special. His speeches are often rambling and off point. He bursts into song now and then, throws tantrums and uses the same rough language, like the other political leaders.*

*He [**Altaf Hussain**] talks about exploitation of the masses by feudal landlords and the well-to-do. All a rehash of the slogans we have heard before. The uproar in the media is part of a larger story for which we need to go back a few years.'*

### **KARACHI DEFINED BETTER:**

One would definitely like to see the REAL Karachi through foreign reports.

**Crime and Safety Report on Karachi**, released on **11<sup>th</sup> June 2014** compiled by the US State Department for 2013 kept its warning in tact:

*'.....all US citizens to defer non-essential travel to Pakistan. Al-Qa'ida, Taliban elements, and other extremist organizations operate [still] actively inside Pakistan.*

*Karachi and other areas of Sindh and Balochistan provinces continue to experience high levels of violence characterized by bombings, targeted killings, sectarian strife, kidnappings for ransom, extortion, and frequent demonstrations. American citizens, US interests, and other Westerners are at risk of becoming targets of violence.'*

The said 'Crime and Safety Report' held that criminal gangs, often with political party affiliations, continued to operate with impunity in most parts of the city, and some areas were effectively cut off from police.

Despite a large-scale security operation carried out by Pakistani Rangers and Police, violent crime continued to rise that year, too and by many accounts 2013 was the deadliest year recorded in Karachi. The following 2013 Karachi crime statistics were based on data released by the Sindh Police and Rangers.

**2,715 killed (civilians); 191 killed (police and Rangers); 125 killed (suspected criminals / terrorists); 108 kidnap-**

**pings; 519 cases of extortion; 3,082 cases of robbery; 4,068 vehicle thefts; 22,284 motorcycle thefts; AND 10,501 cell phone thefts**

The above figures did not include UNREPORTED / UN-REGISTERED cases for which the media holds that in Karachi only 30-40% cases are brought in books. The safest areas in Karachi remained the neighbourhoods referred to as Clifton, DHA and PECHS, but even these areas occasionally experienced serious crimes and thefts.

**Overall Road Safety Situation:** In Karachi, driving is chaotic and undisciplined. Intersections, both major and minor, often have non-working traffic lights. Poorly trained and unskilled drivers do not understand the concept of staying in lanes, turning etiquette, and use of mirrors. Driving outside the city at night is unsafe. Traffic is extremely heavy on weekdays, especially during normal commuting hours. Aside from the main arteries, roads are narrow, poorly-lit in many areas, and not well marked or maintained.

Vehicle accidents are common, and police generally do not respond to vehicle accidents, and there are no effective emergency medical response services. It is recommended to avoid all public transportation. For security reasons, foreign Consulate [*especially the American*] employees in Karachi are prohibited from using buses, taxis, rickshaws, or trains.

**Political, Religious and Ethnic Violence:** Pakistani Taliban [TTP] remained the most active terrorist organization even in Karachi and continued to demonstrate the capability to plan and execute major attacks.

Incidents of terrorism and politically motivated violence in Karachi and Sindh occurred with regular frequency. A variety of groups ranging from extremist religious elements to criminal gangs associated with local political organizations orchestrated bombings, assassinations, and other acts of violence with grim regularity, to include attacks on police and security forces.

NGOs and Polio vaccination programs were particularly singled out for attacks by the TTP. Since 2012 year, 33 workers associated with such programs were killed in the whole country. In 2013, there were seven reported attacks on polio vaccination drives in Karachi alone.

**Civil Unrest:** Political and sectarian civil unrest could erupt in Karachi at any time throughout residential and commercial areas of the city and quickly evolve into violent mobs. Strikes and transportation shut downs occurred frequently, often in reaction to sectarian violence, political interests, or in

protest of government policies. There were number of small anti-American demonstrations in 2013, but the overall numbers and size declined from 2012.

Police successfully demonstrated the capability to mobilize quickly and with force. Visitors were advised to avoid demonstrations, large crowds, and public gatherings that appeared to be political.

**Religious or Ethnic Violence:** Incidents of sectarian and ethnic violence in Karachi and in Sindh and Balochistan provinces continued unabated. A variety of groups representing extremist elements associated with Sunni and Shiite sects carried out bombings and assassinations in Karachi with grim regularity.

Minority religious sects and groups were also frequently targeted. In 2013, there were 128 reported incidents of sectarian violence in which 525 people were killed and 914 injured. These violent incidents often lead to retaliatory acts and demonstrations that went quickly spiral out of control.

*[On 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013; a magnitude 7.7 earthquakes struck the rural Awaran area in Balochistan, killing at least 825 people and destroying more than 21,000 homes. Lack of transportation infrastructure to the area, along with local apprehension of working with emergency authorities, contributed to Pakistan's difficulty in responding to the disaster.]*

**Economic Espionage:** Counterfeit movies and goods remained openly available in Karachi; however, the overall low level of disposable income did not generate high demand. Many garment factories often made supplies of counterfeits to local outlets, which sold them at a reduced price since they were not able to be exported.

Unauthorized access to personally identifiable information [PII] was quite frequent. Few holders of PII kept adequate safeguards and access controls to prevent dissemination of sensitive information.

**Restricted Travel Zones:** Roads in many parts of Sindh province are poorly maintained including Karachi, thus highway robbery and banditry were frequent occurrences, especially in areas where the government felt difficulty controlling.

Major areas of northern and eastern Karachi were not recommended for travel due to the frequency of criminal activity and neighbourhoods that

were controlled by various criminal or political gangs or sympathetic to extremist religious organizations that were suspicious of, or hostile to, Westerners.

**Drug-related Crimes:** Drug-related mafias kept controlling parts of Karachi. Drug-related crimes were not well documented by police. While illicit drug use occurred, the knowledge of its frequency, type, and proliferation remained based mostly on anecdotal evidence.

**Kidnapping Threats:** Kidnapping has been a lucrative industry in Karachi and Sindh since many years. Criminal and extremist groups often targeted local businessmen and prominent families in order to extort ransoms for profit or to finance operations. Ransoms were often negotiated and paid by families without police notification or involvement.

US citizens and foreign and local employees of NGOs were targeted for kidnapping. Groups that perpetrated kidnappings were not frequently identified, caught or brought to justice. Vetting of personnel and proper personal security procedures remained key for avoiding this kind of crime.

**Police Response:** The police services always remained below the professional standards in whole of Pakistan and more in Karachi due to lack of training, resources and low salaries. The conduct of investigations, arrests, and prosecutions continued to go affected by local political influence.

The police had difficulty in responding to emergencies in many of the more violent areas of Karachi and were actively denied access to some neighbourhoods. Hostile and volatile areas remained the kingdoms of specific gangs.

**Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment:** All foreign citizens and travellers in Karachi and generally all Westerners were advised that if they would be arrested or detained by police, they would make no admissions, statements, or would sign documents.

**Medical Emergencies:** in Karachi, like Pakistan's common hospitals, care and cleanliness has always been below the any other nation's standards. Medical facilities required pre-payment. There has been no standard ambulance / emergency medical service in Karachi and no air ambulance except two charities – Edhi & Cheeba. All ambulance services could be considered merely as transportation without emergency medical personnel.

**Health Hazards:** Water has never been potable in Karachi, and sanitation in many restaurants remained inadequate like outdoors in streets. Stomach illnesses remained common and were life-threatening for all. Vaccinations for Hepatitis A and B, Typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, Polio, and Rabies were always recommended but never been available even on prompt payments. Citizens were frequently advised to avoid street foods.

**Avoiding Crimes / Scams:** In Karachi, crimes and scams remained common, including cell phone theft, credit card fraud, and counterfeit money schemes – and like ever. All business travellers were advised to exercise maximum caution with investment and property transactions.

Many areas were recommended as off-limits to Western visitors in Karachi. Visitors were advised to not venture into any unknown areas and to limit their movements, especially after dark. Many areas in Karachi remained 'un-accessible' due to high crime, lack of police control, and the presence of extremist elements.

Business travellers in Karachi had to maintain a high level of situational awareness and caution at all times; used to notify someone of their location. They had to avoid time and place predictability, and were not to set established patterns through variable routes and times of departure. Most people knew primary and alternate routes to all destinations and ensuring locations with emergency exits.

General populace had to keep a low profile, avoid carrying large sums of cash or wear any jewellery. They used to leave wallets or purses secured at home while carrying only necessary cash and ID in a front pocket. Sensible and educated people always avoided politically or religiously active areas of the city; also high risk areas, crowds, and civil disturbances.

**Hotels & Restaurants:** most major hotels kept employed local security firms, which provided them adequate security. Fire fighting resources were severely lacking like ever, and the foreign travellers generally stayed on lower floors in hotel. No fire evacuation plans were available in the hotels even they were ranked five starred.

Now see a factual script in media pages; a truthful observation:

In Pakistan, decades of observation forced the historians to conclude that there is no temporary solution. A country had been brought to the brink of disaster by its own custodians in succession, only Gen Ayub and ZA Bhutto excluded. ***Pakistanis never wanted change***, because a positive change

would deny them the liberty of not following building plans, traffic rules, honesty in trade, business and ethical rules.

***Each Pakistani is responsible for this dilapidated situation of this country;*** they want rules to be applied to everyone else, except themselves. They break rules on the pretext that someone else has also done that. Look at traffic lights what is happening, look at their triumphs when they do encroachment for their houses and business.

Long term solution is each one abiding by the rules without any exception. They do not train their next generation to follow rules; rather they break the rules in their presence on the pretext ***"this is Pakistan - sab chalta hai"*** [– everything is fair here].

Pakistanis must start self accountability and evaluate themselves as to how many times a day they have broken what laws, how many times they have offered bribe in order to take short cut, even for their legal jobs. ***One should start good governance from his own person, then family, then.....***

One must congratulate the efforts of LEAs in Karachi and especially the Rangers for bringing the peace to this city after a while though there was still lot more to do yet; big fishes remained at large.

Ending this day's sermon with the famous words from **Theodore Roosevelt**, the American Statesman:

*"Here is your country. Cherish these natural wonders, cherish the natural resources, cherish the history and romance as a sacred heritage, for your children and your children's children. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skin your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance."*

**Inam R Sehri**  
Manchester  
12<sup>th</sup> February 2017

## **Scenario 150**

### **OPERATION [2013] CONTINUED....**

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2011;** the National Assembly of Pakistan discussed the Karachi situation, where another spike in killings had taken place — the death toll of the last five days was 58. All this while, the politicians talked meaninglessly of taking action against the killers. The parliament performed a tested old drama of arrested posturing, with the MQM putting on record its rage at what the other two stakeholders — the PPP and ANP — were doing, and the PML[N] selectively chastising the PPP and MQM, accusing the **'corrupt'** government of dividing the country and creating more breakaway *'Bangladeshes'*.

Nothing came out but more disagreement and one could see the difficulties arising when a parliamentary committee was formed to go down to Karachi and compile an inquiry report about what actually was happening there. The scene on the ground meanwhile was the same: eight people were gunned down on that day 2<sup>nd</sup> August as police and Rangers failed to stem the wave of mayhem in several localities.

No one ethnic community could claim immunity because all suffered violence and displacement. One accused the MQM of driving the *Pashtuns* out of Orangi, the *Muhajirs* pointed to their share of those killed, which remained the highest. The MQM chief had spoken in terms of **"a final siege"** by asking the people of Karachi to take in one month's supplies and be prepared for more suffering.

The ANP was equally pious, appealing for a de-weaponisation drive after admitting that weapons were *"the ornament of the Pashtun race"*. The PPP kept boasting about how it was getting ready to swoop down on the killers after supplementing its rather ineffective Karachi police with Rangers and Frontier Constabulary [FC] from neighbouring Balochistan after giving it the right to search and arrest.

All three stakeholders of Karachi were seen deadlocked as usual despite the federal interior minister's empty bragging that the killers would all be hauled up and punished. What shocked, or at the very least confused, people were statements like the one made by the IGP Sindh claiming that 91 target killers were arrested by his police.

However, no one knew that who were the killers and who had instigated them to go out and kill innocent people, who paid for their weapons and perhaps, most importantly, how many of them were prosecuted and convicted for their crimes — not a single one. The reason being that the killers

were connected with the political parties ruling Karachi but no public disclosures were made and no one named from among them.

The new gimmick was seen that the Sindh government announced paying Rs:5 million to anyone identifying the killers and Rs:10 million for any video evidence against them. But evidence was there on all TV channels and the Sindh government did not need to make such offers.

All three parties were caught up in spiral they could no longer control. If their communities were attacked, they were expected to stand by the suffering citizens. Instead of getting together — at least the Pashtun and Muhajir leaders could be civil to one another — they preferred to let the hooligans take over the scene. Both sides proved that they had the capacity to hurt; the obvious conclusion was there.

The PPP, with its history of unfriendliness and hostility against the MQM, looked at the ANP as its partner in a city otherwise dominated by the MQM. That was the phenomenon the stakeholders had to look at carefully and remove through mutual agreement.

Editorial in '**Express Tribune**' dated **4<sup>th</sup> August 2011** had rightly said:

*"Beirut's three warring communities indulged in slaughter for 15 years but that situation was complicated by interventions from Israel and Syria.*

*Karachi has been on the boil and off it for the last 15 years; and all the three communities are suffering while politicians lack the guts to save their already impoverished followers from being brutalised."*

#### **WAJA KARIM DAAD KILLED:**

**On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2011;** local media of Karachi roared as about 44 people were killed during two days in gang-wars and political disputes, some after being tortured. Fighting erupted a day earlier Wednesday in and around the old district of Lyari, long a focus of battles between rival gangs and a stronghold of President Zardari's PPP. Former PPP lawmaker Waja Karim Daad was among the dead.

**[Waja Karim Daad:** *Former Member National Assembly [MNA] was Baloch and a senior member of the PPP. He started his political career by contesting the union council elections and was elected councillor in Lyari. Daad, who belonged to the Ismaili community, hailed from Gawadar and later shifted to Kalri, Lyari from where he moved to Kharadar.*

*During Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government, Daad was elected as the PPP president of the old city area comprising Lyari, Keamari, Kharadar, Shams Pir and Baba Bhit. During Benazir Bhutto's government, he was elected as the president of District South.*

*He had contested the general elections in 1993 and 1997 and won the MNA seat with a thumping majority both times. His father, Kareem Dad Baloch, was affiliated with the fishing business in Gawadar while his younger brother was continuing the family business.]*

Karim Daad, a former PPP MNA and a popular social worker of Lyari, was targeted by armed men on motorcycles outside a local restaurant in front of the Kharadar Jamaat Khana in the limits of the Jackson police station just before iftar. Karim Daad and one of his friends were killed on the spot.

The police officer investigating the murder, Sub-Inspector Iftikhar told the media that both Karim Daad and his friend Sadaruddin regularly used to sit together in front of the main gate of the Kharadar Jamaat Khana, adding that Karim Daad was shot once in the forehead, Sadaruddin was shot in his upper torso.

DIG Police Shaukat Ali Shah confirmed that the killing of the former legislator was the result of a "*gang war between two rival groups in Lyari*". There was old rivalry between Arshad Pappu [then being run by Ghaffar Zikri] and Rehman Dakait [at present, run by Baba Ladla] gangs. This was the outcome of a chain reaction; such incidents were happening in reaction to each other.

Most of the killings had resulted from clashes between criminal gangs operating in Lyari and surrounding areas. It was not the kind of fighting that had happened in previous month of July; this was more of a gang war – one of the turf wars between gangs dealing in drugs and extortion rackets taken as routine phenomenon in Lyari.

It was fair for those gangs which regularly clashed and killed members and supporters of rival groups. Many times, innocent people were also targeted in this rivalry; however, many of those killed ended up linked to one gang or the other. Most gangs had political support but still it was not a political war as such.

A few of those killed could have been targeted over their ethnic or political affiliation as Karachi keeps a long history of violence, and ethnic, religious and sectarian disputes and political rows can often explode into battles engulfing entire neighbourhoods – and any time.

About 300 people were killed last month, July 2011 – one of the deadliest months in almost two decades – in fighting linked to ethnic and religious tensions that plague Karachi since years. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP], 800 people had been killed in the first seven months of that year in ethnic and politically linked violence alone.

Meanwhile, the funeral prayers of former PPP MNA Waja Karim Daad, who also fell prey to escalating violence in the city a day earlier, had been offered amidst cries and tears. President Zardari strongly condemned the killing of former MNA but practically did nothing; no law amended in the National Assembly and no procedure made better in the secretariat echelons.

Waja Karim Daad was elected from the Lyari area. The President prayed the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity. Earlier the MQM had also issued a statement in which MQM leader Altaf Hussain condemned the killing of Baloch MNA along with seven others shot dead in the city on that day.

That fresh spate of violence had broken out in the wake of the recovery of five bodies of Lyari residents found in gunny bags from various localities in the city. More than a dozen people were injured in the wake of the latest outbreak of bloodshed.

Attacks were also mounted against the Salar Compound after the bodies of five Baloch men were found; "*God knows what else is to follow*" was the common whispering. DIG Shah confirmed the killing of at least six more people, and said nearly a dozen others were injured.

Fierce fighting between the two groups ensued in parts of Lyari, Old City, Saddar, Pak Colony and Old Golimar were affected after intense firing gripped the areas. Hand grenades were freely used by both the groups in the fierce fighting.

Meanwhile, the authorities were unable to take any action and failed to enter the affected areas. The bodies stuffed in gunny bags of the five Baloch-speaking residents of Lyari, which triggered the violence, were found from different areas of the city and all five victims were killed after being kidnapped. They were shot multiple times, mostly on their heads.

Three of the dead – who were later identified as Kamran Behram, 26, Shahnawaz Buksh, 25, and Saqib Ghani, 24 – were found within the limits of Ferozabad Police Station. All three victims were residents of Sangu Lane, Lyari.

Two more bodies, identified as Irfan Baloch and Nadir Baloch, were also found from Garden and Preedy, respectively. Following their funeral, residents of Lyari took to the streets and staged a demonstration against the killings. The protesters, headed by former president of defunct Peoples *Amn* Committee [PAC] Shahid Rehman, then marched towards the chief minister house and demanded stern action against the perpetrators; however, the protestors dispersed peacefully soon.

While returning from the Chief Minister House, a score of unidentified persons attacked their rival gang in Old City areas including Salar Compound, Bhimpura and the Aqal Bonga area where they hurled nearly a dozen hand-grenades and also fired at least two rockets following intense firing. Result: a twelve-year-old girl Esha, daughter of Ramji, and two other unidentified persons were killed and nearly half a dozen were injured. At least three vehicles were also damaged after catching fire in the rocket attacks.

Meanwhile, three people – including a hosiery shopkeeper Yousuf Sattar – were killed and at least four others were wounded during the firing in the Kharadar area.

Salar Compound and its surrounding areas were a stronghold of PPP senior activist Akram Baloch and Lyari's gangsters or the defunct PAC former members believed that Akram was supporting their rival Ghaffar Zikri group and attacking them.

**BABA LADLA FLED & KILLED:**

Frustration over finding a job had brought 32 years young Baba Ladla into the fold of Rehman Dakait's gang. Drug peddling helped keep his kitchen

fires burning but soon his three younger brothers were caught and sent to jail when his illicit business saw little progress. Baba himself divulged:

*"Since I had joined the drug mafia, confrontation with the police became a regular affair and I was picked up several times. My father, Ghulam Hussain, who works as a labourer with a major corporation, hasn't spoken to me for the past 10 years."*

Not a lot is known about the Lyari gangster, known for playing football with heads of his opponents; Baba Ladla's real name was Noor Mohammad but the people knew him more by his nick-name – and Rehman Dakait's chief operational commander. Once he talked to the media in disgusting mood:

*"They [Karachi Police] opened indiscriminate fire and killed people who were not involved. They misbehaved with the women and broke into our homes and destroyed them. Perhaps they [police] thought that by aggravating the residents, they would turn against Lyari's gangsters."*

Karachi Police showed the resentment; the government announced Rs:3 million for Baba Ladla's arrest. Baba Ladla also reacted in the same tone while referring to CID's SSP Chaudhry Aslam:

*"What would the SSP do if I announced Rs:5 million for the person who brought him to me dead or alive? Chaudhry Aslam has no idea what can happen to him in five seconds here. If God wills it, then the SSP will no longer be a problem for us."*

The Lyari people had a fair idea that Baba Ladla would stay with them if any untoward situation come up from the state side. It was because Baba Ladla announced to do the [above paragraphed] job himself instead of letting his boys take the heat; he was not one to run or hide.

The police registered over 50 murder, attempted murder, extortion and kidnapping cases against Baba Ladla; on the other side, the then prevailing unrest in Lyari had exposed the growing differences between PAC Chief Uzair Baloch and Baba Ladla. The relationship was going rocky day by day.

The starting clash between Baba Ladla and the PAC had surfaced soon after **Rehman Dakait was killed in encounter on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2009**. Senior political activists and the gangsters held long discussions and eventually agreed to make Baba the commander of the militant wing

while Uzair Baloch was made the political face of the *Amn* Committee, for communication with the PPP leadership, the local administration and various other communes in the area. However, the fact was:

*"Baba approved Uzair's name as the chief of the PAC but not as the **sardar**. Baba has never been fond of popularity or political fame; Baba agreed to this arrangement on the condition that his 'matters' and his men will not be bothered."*

Baba Ladla always overshadowed Uzair Baloch in his meetings and, sometimes, he misbehaved with him, warning Uzair to keep his bloody politics away from his affairs. Baba always restricted himself to his *own business*; his business included drug deals, gambling and kidnappings. He always exhibited his anger forcefully on Uzair and Zafar Baloch whenever his men were detained or killed by the law-enforcement agencies.

There were several issues that caused major differences between Uzair Baloch and Baba, such as the killings of Baba's men and clashes with the *Kutchhis*; sometimes these differences were seen at their peak when the clashes with the *Kutchhis* erupted in ending June 2013.

Before the killings of Baba's two closed aides — Alok Gawadri and Zubair Wehshi — Baba was never in favour of clashes with the Kutchhi Rabita Committee [KRC] but the truth was:

*"It was Gawadri's killing that compelled Baba to reconsider his inclination towards the KRC. Gawadri was killed on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and Wehshi on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2012."*

*Baba always wanted peaceful ties with the KRC as he knew that Kutchhis lived in areas he dominates but after these two killings Baba was pushed to start fighting the KRC."*

The grave differences between Uzair and Baba began over the issue of Uzair's escape from Lyari. Baba asked rather had advised Uzair not to leave his men as the entire neighbourhood considered him to be the *Sardar* [leader] but Uzair left without taking Baba into confidence.

***The bomb blast outside a football stadium in Lyari on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2013*** also worsened the already strained relationship between Baba and Uzair. The local leaders held:

*"Baba Ladla was the original target of that blast, not MPA Javed Nagori; it was the first time the two had reached the point where they wanted to kill each other. It was unfortunate for Uzair Baloch that his 'rival' [Baba Ladla] survived."*

**On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2013;** a three-day battle in Lyari between the groups of Bada Ladla and Uzair Baloch exposed the weaknesses of the former, especially after he conceded to a ceasefire which came as a surprise for many; after his own men turned on him, he believed that he was no longer in a position to continue the fight.

Baba also suffered setbacks when a large number of his operational commanders were killed. Uzair Baloch in comparison did not lose as many men. Some of Baba's commanders even joined his rival's group, which came as a shock for him.

Four commanders – Moosa Baloch, Yousuf Gojji, Mairaj Baloch and Younus Baloch – of Baba's group were killed, either during the gang war or in encounters with law enforcers. Many others, including Ustad Taju, Mullah Nisar, Umer Kutchhi, Wasiullah Lakho, Shafi Pathan and Ismail Lashari, chose to leave Baba and joined Uzair's gang.

When internal cracks between the PAC started to appear, these men played a neutral role as they were against the internal gang war. But one by one, they saw Baba weak thus joined Uzair Baloch. Baba, however, continued fighting with only few of his remaining commanders, including Sikander Sikku.

Baba's brother Zahid Ladla, Karachi City Alliance's chief Shahid Rehman and his brother Shakeel Commando were among some of the gangster's most trusted men but could not help him fight. Zahid Ladla was wounded few months ago, he was unable to participate [in the gang war] and help his brother. Shakeel Commando was injured during the internal gang war while Rehman was considered a politician and had no skills in fighting.

Law enforcers also believed that their actions along with the internal gang war have weakened the gangsters, especially Baba. Lyari DSP Shakeel Ahmed told the media:

*"We did not face resistance from Baba's side. Over the last few days, we faced massive resistance from Faisal Pathan of Uzair's group."*

*Baba didn't even attend the jirga for the ceasefire as he believed that he could be killed on the way or while it was taking place. During this temporary ceasefire, Ladla has once again started re-organising his group to make sure it is strong again."*

**On 12<sup>th</sup> March 2014;** the JhatPat Market of Lyari became a battleground as the two groups – Baba Ladla and Uzair Baloch gangs – attacked each other with hand grenades, rockets and guns – leaving 12 women and four children dead while dozens of others suffered injuries.

The two gangs started with exchanging gunfire, later they fired RPGs and lobbed hand grenades at each other. There were 15 schoolchildren among the injured. The violence had erupted after one of the gangs had kidnapped a member of the other gang the night before. The firing began around 4:00 am while major blasts were heard at noon.

Major Sibtain Rizvi, a spokesman for Rangers told that two gangsters had been killed and one had been arrested; three rangers and two police were wounded. Back in Lyari, Uzair Baloch's former home turf – spread over Rexer Lane, Singo Lane, Bizenjo Chowk, Chakiwara and Shah Baig Lane – was under the control of the Rangers since mid 2013.

The impact of the Rangers' presence was noticeable.

Moreover; eight gangsters were killed in three joint operations conducted by the police and Rangers in the Rangiwara area of Lyari. All gangsters were belonged the Baba Ladla and Uzair Baloch gangs.

- ***For about a year, Baba Ladla remained lost due to Rangers' intensive operation in Lyari and around.***

In mid 2014, the Interpol had issued red warrants for Ladla along with Uzair Baloch – the chief of Ladla's rival Lyari gang-war group. The warrants stated Ladla's date of birth as 10<sup>th</sup> October 1974 with no mentions about his profession. He had fled to UAE and then to Iran following the launch of a major crackdown against criminals and terrorists in Lyari neighbourhood.

Baba Ladla was killed with his two Iranian friends when the Iranian border guards tried to stop them and fired at them after they refused to surrender, leaving all the three dead - but the news was denied by the people of Lyari – especially at Saifi Lane, where a six-month-long gun battle had then ended after a ceasefire between the warring gangs. One respectable held that ***"...most people will be relieved if the news of his death is correct."***

The reason everybody thought one of the three men was Baba was because he was residing in Gwadar 15 days earlier. Most gang lords of Lyari were on the run considering the gang rivalry in the area as well as the on-going operation led by the Rangers. Shopkeepers and traders used to pay extortion to a number of splinter groups got recorded that:

*"Since most of these gang lords are not in town, any goon and small time criminal may seek extortion. Extortion amount, which was to be given to two people earlier, is now distributed among six groups.*

*Also, it was easier to speak to an elder or head of a gang and ask for some relief, or consideration. But now even that is out of the question as these 'new gangsters' are not controlled by anyone.*

*In such a situation, the ongoing Rangers' operation is the only saving grace for us. Because of it, such groups are also in hiding."*

It was clear in May 2013's general elections that the PPP had no choice but to tag along with these gangs they had created and patronised. But over Baba Ladla's death, there was no reaction in any part of Lyari. The local police Chief held that the law and order situation had improved in Lyari because rival gangs were no more there to resume their activities **after 107 gangsters had been killed in 'encounters' over the first six months of Rangers' operation.**

The official record shows that in June 2014, 64 people were killed by gangsters but in the same month of year 2015 only five people lost their lives. The City SSP claimed that incidents of firing and even the throwing hand-grenades had ended.

**On 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** all media channels made it breaking news that Lyari's gang leader, Noor Muhammad alias Baba Ladla, had been killed in Balochistan; later news confirmed that he was actually killed on Iranian border.

Next day, **on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** referring to a video of the bullet riddled corpse of Baba Ladla, **The Express Tribune** repeated its story of **13<sup>th</sup> May 2014** quoting reliable sources from across the border that Baba Ladla was intercepted and killed by the Iranian security forces. He had fled to Iranian province of Sistan when Sindh Rangers launched its operation in Karachi.

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Iranian forces had spotted the presence of Ladla at a house near the Konarak Coastal Township and raided it. The desperado tried to flee towards the Pakistani borders where the Iranian border guards intercepted him.

In an ensuing exchange of fire, Baba Ladla was killed and his body was taken to a local hospital where the Iranian security officials prepared a video for record purposes.

The government had fixed head money of Rs:2.5 million for Baba Ladla.

Most Pakistani TV channels and media outlets had reported Baba Ladla's killing along with two of his Iranian friends near Pak-Iran border area of Jeevani in May 2014 but the news were not believed. Perhaps because the security officials in Quetta had not received any official information from Iranian authorities confirming Baba's death.

Referring to the daily '**Pakistan Today**' dated **21<sup>st</sup> December 2015**:

*"Lyari's gangster Baba Ladla's younger brother Zakir Ladla informed the authorities that he tried regrouping the gang after Baba Ladla and Zahid Ladla left Lyari but the gang activities had been disrupted after crackdown by the police and Rangers."*

Zakir Ladla also confirmed that several suspects of the gang war were in hiding in Balochistan, Punjab and Interior Sindh; various prominent commanders of the gang war were hiding in areas surrounding the Chaman border.

***Zakir Ladla said his brother Zahid Ladla had fled the country out of the fear of the targeted operation.*** Occasionally, boys of ages 12 to 14 used to extort money in Lyari and around and that they used **WhatsApp** for communications purposes.

**UZAIR BALOCH ON THE RUN:**

**On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2016**; Sindh Rangers formally announced the arrest of Uzair Baloch and produced him in Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] to get 90-day physical remand. It was claimed that Baloch was arrested from a locality on outskirts of Karachi while entering the city. The force also released his four

photographs in which he was seen being handcuffed by Rangers soldiers in *balaclava* and then seated in a vehicle with them.

The court was told that Uzair Baloch was blamed for over 275 murders including policemen. The suspect was also blamed for running a network involved in criminal activities including killings, extortion, kidnapping for ransom and drugs business.

Meanwhile his eldest daughter, 14-years old, Yursala claimed that:

*"My father was arrested by the law enforcement agencies on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2014. He [Uzair Baloch] was taken away by the officials of Interpol thirteen months ago when we were sitting in the lounge of Dubai airport."*

However, Yusala further clarified answering a media question that he [Uzair Baloch] was **presumably** in the custody of law enforcement agencies since December 2014. Dubai authorities had initially told her that Uzair Baloch would remain in their custody for a while. She also shared a picture of Uzair Baloch with media which showed him at a location of Dubai, saying that it was taken in December 2014.

Meanwhile she also expressed her happiness towards his father's production in the court, adding that **"now we at least know that he is alive."**

Producing Uzair Baloch in the ATC was a move aimed at putting pressure on the beleaguered PPP in an ongoing tussle with the establishment over Rangers special powers since the first week of December 2015.

After an initial knee-jerk reaction by several PPP leaders, Sindh CM Qaim Ali Shah told the Sukkur media that the Rangers Chief had taken him into confidence before the arrest of Uzair Baloch and that he [the CM] was not against powers of the paramilitary force. He was perhaps indicating that Rangers' power issue rested with 'the boss' – Mr Zardari.

While the high-profile arrest caused quite a stir in the national political scene because of Uzair's previous association with the PPP, the official version of the actual events remained shrouded in mystery.

The electronic media time and again reported that a key intelligence agency held a trump card against PPP in the form of Uzair Baloch. And the initial reaction from PPP leaders showed a sign of panic. Senior Sindh Minister Nisar Khuhro told reporters in Karachi that:

*".....the arrest [of Uzair] was not fresh news. He was already in their custody. They should be asked where he was and from where he was arrested. There is nothing new in his arrest."*

However, in what appeared to be a damage-control attempt, Sindh CM Qaim Ali Shah told reporters in Sukkur that:

*".....the DG Rangers had informed him before the arrest was made. I never said that he [Uzair Baloch] was not associated with the PPP, but the fact is he disassociated himself from the party and the party also disassociated itself from him over his criminal activities.*

*It would not be fair to target the PPP for his criminal activities. We believe that he is a criminal and should be investigated.*

*We are not against the powers of Rangers and none of their powers were clipped."*

Daily '**Dawn**' dated **31<sup>st</sup> January 2016** is referred.

In reaction to Uzair Baloch's arrest, disgruntled PPP leader Dr Mirza said:

*"I still recognise him [Uzair] as my younger brother. I am glad he's alive and his arrest has finally been declared. His arrest would pave the way for bringing back those looters who have fled the country.*

*I appreciate ..... for doing a wonderful job in the national interest of the country."*

The 60-day period regarding the special policing powers of the Sindh Rangers was due to expire on 5<sup>th</sup> February and the paramilitary force needed an extension to continue its operations in Karachi.

**On 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016;** the news channel '**SAMAA**' sent breaking news on air that '**Uzair Baloch would stand trial in a military court.**'"

Uzair Baloch was then facing over 50 cases on different counts in local courts which would be referred to a military court once a Joint Investigation Team [JIT] completed its task of interrogating the suspect. Out of 55 cases 42 were pending in Anti Terrorism Court Karachi while he was wanted in 13 more cases in session courts. He was also declared a proclaimed offender before he fled the country to Oman.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016;** Nabeel Gabol, while talking to the media, disclosed the details regarding the murders which Uzair Baloch did for the PPP. Sharjeel Memon said that the leaders of the PPP were denying any connection with the Uzair Baloch but they all used him. Nabeel Gabol urged the PPP Sindh to stand by Uzair Baloch being the provincial government in power because:

*'...there is likelihood that he would be killed in the way while going to attend the court. **He knows how many murders Sharjeel Memon had managed through Uzair.**'*

Nabeel Gabol said that once he accompanied Uzair Baloch to Dr Zulfiqar Mirza, the then Home Minister Sindh, for surrender but Dr Mirza refused to arrest him, gave him free hand and said: **'Uzair is my brother, let him do whatever he likes.'** Why Dr Mirza didn't go to Uzair's family to stand by them in that hour of need.

Gabol also told that Uzair Baloch had already got his statement recorded before the JIT. He had divulged that he [Uzair Baloch] used to receive direct orders from Bilawal House; and that he used to send Rs:100 million every month to Zardari House.

PPP's Senator Saeed Ghani told that once he had also joined dinner with Uzair Baloch; Faryal Gohar used to visit her and so many other PPP leaders, too. Some political parties had extended Uzair invitation to join them with surety of winning ticket in next elections.

Referring to the **'GEO News TV'** dated **27<sup>th</sup> April 2016**; Sindh Rangers handed over Lyari's Uzair Baloch to the police at the end of 90-day physical remand in the paramilitary's custody; police presented him in the Sindh High Court.

Uzair Baloch confessed to 197 murders in the Joint Interrogation Report compiled by Rangers; 65 cases were registered in different police stations of the city including the killing of 12 traders at the Shershah scrap market - he had ordered the collective murder of Haji Aslam and his five sons.

Uzair confessed to have ordered the kidnapping of rival gangster Arshad Pappu and three of his accomplices and then carrying out their gruesome murder. He claimed to have used two of his own cars and a police van owned by the **Kalri Police Station** for the murder.

In other alarming confessions, Uzair Baloch said he had appointed Saeed Jan Baloch as Chairman Fisherman Cooperative Society - Saeed used to pay him Rs:10 million every month, he admitted. The former Lyari Town Administrator Mohammad Raees used to give Uzair Baloch 20pc money in every deal he cracked.

Baloch confessed to transferring huge amounts of cash to foreign countries.

Referring to **'Defence pk'** dated **29<sup>th</sup> April 2016**; Uzair Baloch also divulged that he had been working for the intelligence of neighbouring country Iran that utilized him to bring about deterioration in Balochistan. Uzair

had travelled to Dubai with Iranian passport, adding, "PPP leadership contacted me while I was in Dubai."

Revealing about his capture in Dubai, Uzair Baloch said:

***"Iran struggled a lot to take his custody after Dubai police arrested him. The Iranian intelligence had asked him to provide location and building plans of Pak-Army's COD and Corp HQ Karachi – which he arranged for them. [Most probably to forward them to Indian Intelligence / RAW]"***

Making outrageous revelations about the liaisons with separatists of Balochistan, Uzair said he offered refuge to the separatist leaders in Lyari; Dr Allah Nazar Baloch was also kept in Lyari for some days. ***"Five Baloch chieftains of Balochistan helped out about weapons and hiding,"*** Uzair added.

Detailing the PPP connection, Uzair told that the PPP leadership leveraged him to assassinate ***Bilal Sheikh and Khalid Shehanshah*** – the two key witnesses in Benazir Bhutto's assassination case. JIT report contained with reference to Uzair's admission that:

*"Khalid knew that he would be murdered. Accordingly, he ceased leaving Bilawal House. But, he was coaxed into going out when my gang killed him."*

It was the PPP that had arranged for Rehman Dakait's homecoming from Iran and handed him over to police, Uzair Baloch asserted before the investigators, according to the report.

According to Baloch, the SHOs and SSPs were posted in Lyari at his behest. He also informed the interrogators that: ***"Arshad Pappu was given to me by police officers."***

## **Scenario 151**

### **KILLING SPREE ENTERS 2014 ....**

**TTP EXPANDED TERROR ATTACKS:**

See the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP]'s report as appeared in the '**Express Tribune**' of **18<sup>th</sup> January 2014:**

*"The year 2013 was the deadliest one for Karachi so far. As many as 3,251 people were killed or they died from the several incidents of violence in the city. The city has seen a sharp increase in killings in the past few years with 1,981 people killed in 2010, 2,382 killed in 2011 and 3,105 killed in 2012."*

Of the killings and deaths in 2013, nearly 1,000 people who had no affiliation with any political party also lost their lives in targeted attacks. The number of political workers targeted and killed was 268, and 108 people were killed due to their sectarian beliefs.

189 people in Karachi were killed either during police encounters or due to torture during police custody. The police force did, however, lose 169 personnel, apart from 22 Rangers men and other law enforcers. They also managed to gun down 28 members of banned outfits.

Lyari gang war claimed the high share; of the entire year, August was the bloodiest month with 334 killings or deaths. HRCP Chairperson Zohra Yusuf told while referring to the targeted operation that started in September [2013], the operation showed some improvements.

Karachi was then facing the biggest challenge of its era - terrorist groups like Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan [TTP], were becoming stronger and making their presence felt in Karachi. The incident of men slaughtered at a shrine was alarming; the Rangers were doing enough – but the Taliban killed whoever they wanted to.

Out of collective fear, children stopped going to school; they even shuddered when going to the bathroom alone. They could recall the events of showering bullets and blood splashes of their dearest ones happened before their tiny eyes. The whole families were often left torn apart by such incidents; under the genuine impression that they were being targeted due to their sectarian beliefs or political affiliations.

In reality, however, none of Karachi's major political and religious parties, save for Imran Khan's PTI, were keen on fully cleansing the city of its militant outfits. Their initial support of Karachi's top political parties for the operation was mainly out of a desire to curry favour with the army, hoping

that the military would target their party's enemies and let their militants go Scot free.

The net effect: Wealthy Karachiites fled to Dubai, Islamabad, or the west. The cost of business in a port city with more than 6,000 factories closed due to continuing extortion. The common man lived in a state of fear, afraid of being shot by robbers for a mere cell phone. Gains from limited operations against militants in the city were fleeting. And the city's major parties were unwilling to make sacrifices to reduce the city's violence.

Referring to the '**Express News**' dated **8<sup>th</sup> February 2014**;

*"During the last 5-months of the Karachi targeted operation, 79 police officers have been killed so far since the start of the operation; a report was presented to the IG of Sindh Police. The targeted operation was ordered by the prime minister in Karachi....on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2013."*

In September 2013; 15 police officers were killed during the operation, 12 in October, 11 in November and 11 in December; while in January 2014, 25 police officers lost their lives and five in February till the date of above news.

Also, 15671 suspects were arrested while a total of 804 encounters and 10254 raids launched; also recovered 282 kgs explosives, 167 hand grenades and explosive devices, and seven rocket and rocket launchers. 3430 pistols, 84 Kalashnikovs, three light machine guns and four suicide jackets were also seized during the operation up till now.

The diverse and densely populated mega-city had not seen peace for years. It has been the home to mafias, terrorists, target killers and criminals affiliated with political parties and other groups aggressively pursuing vested interests. Karachi's problems had taken years to accumulate owing to negligence and complicity.

Since the targeted operation in Karachi started, MQM has been complaining about the abduction and extrajudicial killing of its members at the hands of Law Enforcement Agencies [LEAs]. However, the presence of criminal elements within the MQM remained a fact; especially since a JIT report submitted in the Supreme Court [SC] in 2011 had pointed out. Action was required against all such individuals, regardless of their associations.

**TALIBAN HIT POLICE COLLEGE:**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014;** an explosion occurred targeting a police bus near ***Razzaqabad police training college*** in Karachi's Shah Latif Town in which 13 policemen were killed and 47 others, including civilians, were wounded. The attack came early in the morning. At the face of it, an explosive-laden car hit the police bus transporting officials for security duty.

The Pakistani Taliban claimed the responsibility of that explosion; TTP's spokesman Shahidullah Shahid told the media that it was a revenge attack for killing militants. *'The TTP workers were victims to targeted killings in Mardan, Swabi and Peshawar'*; the spokesman explained.

SSP Farooq Awan, head of a special investigative unit, said the bus was making a U-turn after leaving a training centre when a small van struck it. However, the CID Unit refuted the claim because no body-parts of suicide bomber were found from the crime spot to support the notion. Most probably, the blast appeared to have been carried out using a remote - controlled detonator; 25 to 30 kg of explosives were used in the attack.

About 50-55 policemen were boarding the bus; going to various points for duty from their training centre. The rear portion of the targeted bus was completely destroyed in the explosion. The intensive blast was heard in a radius of two kilometres.

During that year's Taliban rule over Karachi, see a script from '***Washington Post***' dated **14<sup>th</sup> February 2014;**

*".....Armoured car sales have soared; and some new luxury apartments feature bullet proof glass. Local police officers, slain this year at an average rate of one per day, are demoralized. And now even the journalists are trying to arm themselves.*

*Pakistan's biggest city has been plagued by crime and political violence for decades, with Urdu and Pashto - speaking groups battling for influence. But the bloodshed is worsening as the domestic Taliban insurgency expands."*

During those months, TTP militant group was largely responsible for 90pc prickles in terrorist attacks in Karachi. The bloodshed in this city reflected the Pakistani Taliban's growing national offensive against the government and religious minorities. But the insurgents are also using violence to take control of some city neighbourhoods, where ordinary residents are forced

to contribute to their cause. The mayhem was raising concerns that one of the world's most populous cities was teetering on the brink of lawlessness.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was depending much on peace talks launched in January that year with the Pakistani Taliban but the city's residents were deeply worried as if the people were just waiting their turn to be killed. A couple hundred thousand Taliban sympathizers were live in the city of 20 million population but the number of active militants was far less — 10,000 to 15,000, including those aligned with groups such as *Lashkar-e-Taiba* [LeT] and *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* [LeJ].

Zia Ur Rehman, author of the book '*Karachi in Turmoil*' told the '**Washington Post**' [paper dated **14<sup>th</sup> February 2014** is referred] '*...at least 10 percent of the city's residents live in neighbourhoods effectively controlled by the Pakistani Taliban*'. Till then 17 ANP party officials were killed in his central Karachi district alone by Taliban insurgents seeking to control Pashtun neighbourhoods.

The fact remained that the rise of Taliban influence was making the city more ungovernable. During prior conflicts between politically and ethnically based groups, there was usually someone who could step in to ease tensions because the various actors had financial and cultural stakes in the city - but the Taliban were not answerable to anyone.

In one killing that shocked Karachi city; head of the CID Police SSP Chaudhry Aslam was assassinated **on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014**; the full details of that event are given on separate pages of this volume. Police could do nothing. Karachi's police force was then roughly the size of New York City's — even though its population was three times as big — but poor Karachi police always felt besieged and plagued.

Indeed, as the threat from militancy grew, other criminals found more space to terrorize residents through kidnapping, extortion and robbery. Criminals increasingly claimed to be working for the Taliban, when they were not connected to any gang – just to have better bets, simply displaying themselves as 'terror for rent'.

On the top of it, the most telling sign of the city's troubles was the sense of helplessness gripping the police force. The bombproof police cars were able to handle 25 kilos of explosives only whereas the Taliban had used more than 200 pounds of explosives in killing SSP Chaudhry Aslam as said earlier. If the militants attacked, it was just not possible to survive.

The '**Wall Street Journal**' [WSJ] in an essay dated **13<sup>th</sup> February 2014** correctly pointed out that:

*"Karachi is likely to pay a steeper price if efforts by PM Nawaz Sharif's government to forge a peace deal with the al Qaeda affiliate's leadership in tribal areas collapsed and a military operation launched there.*

*The Pakistani Taliban are a national threat, with Karachi providing the group a vital financial lifeline. Money raised in Karachi from extortion, land-grabbing, kidnapping and robberies is sent to the group's leadership in the tribal areas along the Afghan border, security officials believed.*

*Mr Sharif, concerned that his economic-revival plans would be undermined by spreading mayhem, approved to commence a security operation in September [2013]."*

### **ANATOMY OF KCY OPERATION [2013]:**

The said operation's implementation depended largely on the Sindh's ruling government of the PPP, an opposition party. There were signs of tension between the Rangers and the provincial government of PPP that to what extent Rangers could be empowered while launching day to day operations along with the Karachi police.

Ahmed Chinoy, head of the Citizens Police Liaison Committee [CPLC], a statutory body that works with the police to reduce crime, said parts of Karachi were still too dangerous for regular patrols, while the crackdown mostly targeted regular crime. The focus of the operation was on other crimes, thus the militants got breathing space and took advantage.

During the years of turmoil, five different police chiefs served Karachi, disrupting the battle against crime. They could not deliver mostly because that at any given time, there were only 7,000 officers available to be deployed on the streets of 23million population city, out of a total force strength of 27,000—9,000 officers were on personal security duty for politicians and other officials. Policemen were being killed day in, day out but the operation continued with an additional challenge of fighting Taliban.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014;** there were four dead bodies of the MQM workers found riddled with bullets. MQM launched protest that they were arrested first – then thrown out dead; why so?

The Sindh government has been hesitantly claiming that Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah was the one with ultimate authority on issues related to the operation. If the Sindh Chief Minister was actually calling the shots, then the MQM could have been briefed with facts before strikes and protests.

**Till mid 2014,** the Rangers were driving through Karachi's 'no-go areas'; raids were fearlessly conducted, arrests were made confidently by the Rangers in the whole city; especially when there were five Inspector Generals of Police changed in three years. Amongst them Shahid Hayat and Ghulam Hyder Jamali were appreciated most by the police and the Lyari residents equally; they had rescued these people with inadequate police strength.

Success was there but the police and Rangers couldn't convince their political bosses to stick to the code of the two forces; civil and military. If Karachi had to be fixed, then politically-backed militias and mafias – the construction-based "raitee bajree" gangs, the land-grabbers, the water hydrant crews, the extortion expert "*bhatta*" collection parties, even the police's own "beaters" – had to be targeted, not just the Taliban wreaking havoc on the outskirts of the killer city. And the process also needed development plans implemented seriously.

The operation seemingly went futile because the political establishments of Nine Zero and Bilawal House dragged their feet with bureaucracy every now and then. Meanwhile, Gen Rizwan Akhtar also left for Islamabad on his three star promotion in mid summer of 2014. The General told '**the News**' in grim tone that:

*"The operation made excellent progress for about three to four months in late 2013 and early 2014. However, the usefulness of the operation started diminishing due to lack of political will and unwillingness to stop supporting criminals - and, of course, bad governance."*

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014;** Ghulam Haider Jamali, IG Police Sindh, claimed that improvement had been witnessed in law and order situation of Karachi; substantial reduction in incidents pertaining to murder, kidnapping for ransom and bank robberies etc. during the past three months. However, incidents of sectarian & ethnic violence in Karachi, continued though less; minority religious sects and groups were frequently targeted.

In 2014, the HRCP reported that 2,909 people were killed in Karachi as a result of violence including sectarian enmity. These violent incidents often lead to retaliatory acts and demonstrations that used to spiral out of control quickly. Over 142 police and Rangers were killed in Karachi in 2014.

The numbers appear impressive; a briefing on the Karachi operation, given by a Sindh Rangers top official to the Senate Standing Committee on Interior, stated that the Rangers had conducted 3,696 raids, arrested 6,835 suspects and seized 5,214 weapons during that first year of the new mandate.

The briefing claimed that the operation had wiped out the TTP network in Karachi [*the later picture divulged that it was not true*], though the crackdown's impact on various categories of criminal offences was still to be evaluated. Police and the people were correct in understanding that the operation had brought down crime by 50pc at least, with the steepest drop in murders committed along political or ethnic lines.

However, Karachi has always been a complex setup where multiple stakeholders keep their conflicting agendas; if one could analyse the political, sectarian and criminal cartels and their manifestos. The decline in political or ethnic murders was indeed noticeable by the international media even. The Rangers' presence with new bundle of power and strategy played a role in reducing friction between political activists – especially through elimination of criminal gangs working in the garb of political affiliations.

The Karachi Operation had been going on in Karachi since about a year but cogent results were still awaited; though 2940 people, including 16 rangers and 170 police officers, were killed in the operation; '**Dunya News TV**' dated **18<sup>th</sup> September 2014** is referred.

In police encounters, about 16000 suspects were arrested whereas 480 were killed. Though the police force and Rangers were struggling to maintain law and order throughout the city, but Karachi remained plagued with target killings, terrorist activities and crimes like kidnappings, murder and extortion – with much lesser extent though.

After the 2013 elections, the main political parties in Karachi, PPP, MQM and ANP, went vulnerable with heavily mandated PML[N] asserting its writ at the centre. This time MQM remained less privileged because of the PPP's limited inclination; mainly because of 'unwanted' and unaccepted role of their leadership in London which used to hurl abuses over the military set up every now and then and without any cogent cause.

Meanwhile, nearly 400 raids on the *People's Amn Committee* during the course of the operation brought down large scale, gang-related violence in Lyari, but it is relevant to point out that almost as soon as the operation began, the gangs' top tier leadership had fled the area, many went abroad along with their dollars and assets. The people immediately felt relief and also the clue that who were behind the loot and killing extravaganzas in Karachi.

Under heading of the TTP in Karachi, the Rangers held that they had arrested 760 terrorists in 403 raids on militant hideouts, but the media reports highlighted that sectarian killers — one faction of whom was said to be closely associated with the TTP — continued to carry on their business without hindrance; might be a chance or a miss-read but it remained a fact.

The above fact was also proved when close family members of prominent Shiite clergymen were targeted and killed, indicating a degree of planning which points to the existence of determined, well-organised of 'other sect's gangs'. The high command of Rangers and Police were required to sort out those simmering controversies amongst the general populace — but they perhaps remained busy in attending more important administrative issues of Karachi.

**On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014;** Sindh Rangers gave briefing to the Senate Standing Committee on Interior on the Karachi operation; stating that the Rangers had conducted 3,696 raids, arrested 6,835 suspects and seized 5,214 weapons during the first year of the initiative.

While the decline in political / ethnic murders had indeed been marked, developments at home and abroad might have also played a role in reducing friction between political activists inclined to 'robust' means of conflict resolution. That was also a fraught year for the MQM anyway with legal problems dogging its leadership in London.

In the backdrop of the TTP in Karachi; the briefing stated that the Rangers had arrested 760 terrorists in 403 raids on militant hideouts but TTP's business appeared to go as usual. Then appeared the most depressing news of

Taliban's brutal attack on Peshawar Army School [**on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014**] that killed 150 teachers and students at one spot and in one event.

The event changed the whole scenario of security all over Pakistan including Karachi. It had lent momentum to a **National Action Plan** [NAP] but gave Pakistanis a strange chain of events: images of hung terrorists, non-state actors carried from the gallows to the media front pages; coward and spineless judges having no move for 'speedy justice'; the strange 'Apex Committees' where corps commanders and chief ministers sit across the table from each other, free lance clergymen; well heeled Facebook activists laying siege to the Red Mosque and what not.

During 2015, however, there was seen a dramatic turnaround in targeted killing cases in Karachi since the authorities had launched an operation against criminals. Referring to '**the News**' dated **25<sup>th</sup> February 2015**;

*"The Emiratis get ready to extradite the Lyari warlord Uzair Baloch, the Afghan National Security Forces have helped nab some of Peshawar's butchers and – believe it or not – ISPR and the Kabul Presidency have thanked each other."*

For Pakistan's largest city Karachi, read the 20 points of the National Action Plan [NAP], and find clearly mentioned the following:

*"[Point 3], a commitment to ensure that no armed militias are allowed to function in the country, which is reminiscent of the '**militant wings of political parties**': argument that was revisited several times during the early days of the Karachi Operation; and*

*[Point 16], which really seals the deal, as it resurrects the 'Unfinished Operation' narrative: **Taking the ongoing operation in Karachi to its logical conclusion.**"*

.... a common talk amongst the leadership minted as "Sharif & Sharif" civil-military alliance that:

**"Seven to eight out of ten cases of organized violence can be traced to the MQM & PPP both. If all roads once led to Rome, they now lead to Azizabad or Lyari.**

*The TTP is a curse for the country, and may be for the Muslims, but at the Karachi level, the MQM and TTP are equal threats."*

These were strong words, from powerful security players. The intelligentsia asked;

- Why the Baldia Town Joint Investigation Team [JIT] report that held the MQM in disdain was suddenly out there.
- Why the ***Citizen's Police Liaison Committee*** [CPLC], a group suspected to be on Nine Zero's 'payroll' was being frisked.
- Why Islamabad didn't hold back from slamming MQM brass on the Exit Control List [ECL].
- Why Imran Khan smelt blood and was closing in for his righteous kill.
- Why even the ISPR was weighing in on Karachi's affairs.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015**, a large cache of ammunition was recovered by Rangers *during a raid at MQM headquarters - Nine Zero*. According to Rangers spokesperson Col Tahir, the ammunition, stolen from NATO containers, was also seized during the search operation. However, while speaking to media, MQM leader Faisal Subzwari had admitted that:

*"...weapons were seized during the raid, but they were all licensed and were being kept for security in view of the threats being received from the Taliban and other extremist elements.*

*After the Army Public School attack, even schools and colleges are now being asked to keep weapons for security. We were also told to keep weapons for our security."*

So the army had to continuously push unwilling political parties to expand the operations into a comprehensive, city-wide urban operation and maintain them. Ch Nisar Ali Khan, the federal interior minister, wanted the operation sustained but his own party PML[N] was generally reluctant to pursue the aimed goal with ifs and buts at each corner. Periodically, Altaf Bhai of MQM and Zardari of the PPP had protested against the operations or threatened the army, but the military leadership simply ignored them.

**In May 2015**, Corps Commander Karachi Gen Naveed Mukhtar—the city's top army official—gave an address to an audience of influential Karachi residents, conveyed message to city's political class and criminals that: ***".....we will take this fight to its logical conclusion."***

As per data from ***Karachi's Citizens Police Liaison Committee*** [CPLC], during the first six months of 2015, murders were down by 60pc compared to the same time period last year. Bank robberies, extortion attempts, and

kidnappings—all key ways to fund militarized political parties and terrorist organizations—had dropped between 70-80pc.

Interestingly, the **American 'FOX News' channel** was the first to run the above as 'breaking news' just after few minutes of the ammunition seizure in Karachi; also adding that:

*".....some of the weapons had originally been used by NATO forces in Afghanistan.*

*.....the weapons cache was near the office of a party with links to London and South Africa, which he declined to name. The Mutta-hida Qaumi Movement [MQM] party fits the description. It has been blamed for several attacks and targeted killings in the city.*

*In recent months Pakistani security forces have detained a number of MQM members over alleged links to multiple attacks in Karachi."*

### **STATISTICS OF KCY OPERATION [2013]:**

**On 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** Pakistan's Security agencies warned that the 'slow' implementation of the National Action Plan [NAP] in Sindh was hampering the fight against terrorism in the country; the statement was made during a Sindh apex committee meeting chaired by Sindh CM Qaim Ali Shah at the CM House. Results of a media poll with a single question were also discussed; the question was:

- ***Are you in favour of the Rangers operation in Karachi?***

The reply of the residents of Karachi was:

**Yes (81%, 223,874 Votes); No (19%, 52,524 Votes); Total Voters: 276,394** - Media reports dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 2015 are referred.

The registration of seminaries also came under discussion, with officials being informed that there was a total 9,590 seminaries in Sindh, of which 6,590 were registered. Unconvinced Corps Commander Karachi Lt Gen Naveed Mukhar asked the Sindh's home secretary that:

*"This is the same figure that was presented in first meeting of the apex committee. We want to know what action has been taken against unregistered seminaries."*

PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held separate meetings with Corps Commander Karachi and DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar before the apex committee meeting. While Bilawal expressed concern over raids conducted by Rangers at various government departments in Sindh, DG Rangers assured the PPP chairman of not taking unilateral action. Gen Mukhtar told Bilawal bluntly:

*".....terrorists have taken shelter in Sindh government departments due to negligence of the provincial government."*

*Banned outfits still exist in society, and we will take actions against them. Those seminaries that train or brainwash people, will be cracked down upon."*

However, the Sindh CM assured both about action against corrupt elements.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015;** while briefing the Parliament on the Karachi crack-down, Interior Minister Ch Nisar said that the homicide rate was down by almost half in the city. The once dreaded targeted killings in the port city had gone down by 43%. Similarly, incidents of murder and terrorism had fallen by 37% and 6.7%, respectively, during the period.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** the Sindh Rangers seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition in Landhi area of the city, foiling a major terror bid in the wake of Defence Day celebrations next morning. The recovered weapons belonged to the armed wing of 'a political party' involved in incidents of targeted killings in the port city. RPG rockets, 7MM and 8MM rifles, 40 Awan bombs, tens of thousands of rounds of LMG and SMG bullets among other arms and ammunition were recovered in the raid.

The Rangers and police gradually intensified the operation which was launched in September 2013 against criminals and terrorists, in the violence-hit economic hub of Pakistan. On the same day, AIG Sindh Police Mushtaq Mahar confirmed that the major crimes had been dropped by 70pc in the metropolis; he had placed the statistics regarding the Karachi operation to mark the completion of two years of the major offensive.

Referring to **the 'Express Tribune'** dated **9<sup>th</sup> September 2015:**

In a meeting held at the CM House to review the implementation of NAP in the province, Sindh Home Secretary Mukhtar Soomro said:

*"As many as 3,662 madrassas in Sindh [2,122 in Karachi, 1,548 Hyderabad] have so far been geo-tagged as part of the National Action Plan [NAP] to see exact location of these seminaries; out of 9,590 madrassas found in the province, 6,503 were registered."*

IG Sindh Ghulam Hyder Jamali disclosed that they had sealed 167 *madrassas* in the province owing to different reasons. Also that while searching 21 suspected seminaries in Karachi, Hyderabad and Badin, they had recovered hate material from some of them. The Home Secretary Sindh added that:

*"Regarding the identification and repatriation of Afghan refugees, it is on record that 92,646 Afghan nationals had so far been registered in Sindh.*

*....that 650 families and 3,021 individuals have voluntarily repatriated since 2015 and as many as 35,278 Afghans had been repatriated by the Sindh government till August 2015.*

*About 720 cases had been registered against illegal Afghan nationals. Further 2,100 of them had been arrested, 1,309 had been nominated in various cases while 953 were under judicial custody.*

*....that 222 illegal Afghans were also repatriated by IG Jails; out of 458 prisoners on death row, 18 had been executed in the Sindh province so far.*

*About 395 appeals are pending in Sindh High Court, one in Federal Shariat Court, 53 in Supreme Court, five mercy petitions are with the President of Pakistan. Meanwhile, four black warrants have been stayed by the Sindh High Court."*

Giving details of armed militias, which had been pointed out by the Rangers in 4<sup>th</sup> June apex committee meeting, the home secretary told that as many as 61 banned religious organisations had been identified till then; while adding that:

*"1,155 terrorists were killed, including 164 leaders of al Qaeda and Pakistani Taliban, 130 Lyari gang war elements, in two years*

*span of September 2013 to September 2015 while the operation is still in progress.*

*Over 63,000 terrorists and criminals are arrested, including 879 men who belonged to al Qaeda and the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan [TTP], and 67 were part of the Lyari gang war."*

Talking about the suspects handed over to Rangers during the Karachi operation up to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015, IGP Sindh Jamali said that **495 had been arrested, 489 had been charged, whereas six were under investigation.** Two of the accused had been convicted by a competent court while four had been acquitted. The IGP said that 462 convicts were in jail whereas 21 had managed to secure bail. 16,650 illicit arms and explosives had also been recovered.

IGP Sindh provided details of the weapons and equipment provided by the army to police; **arms worth Rs:65 million were provided to Sindh police by the Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif to complete the said Karachi operation.**

Referring to an essay on '**Political Violence in Karachi**' placed at **globalsecurity.org** dated **14<sup>th</sup> February 2016:**

*"The city had suffered a major breakdown in law and order until the Pakistan's paramilitary force - Rangers started an operation in September 2013 to clear it out. **The force had, by the end of 2015, carried out 7,000 operations, leading to a 70 percent reduction in target killings, an 85 percent reduction in extortions, and a 90 percent reduction in kidnappings for ransom.***

*Crime and safety in Karachi are major concerns. Criminal gangs, often with political party affiliations, operate with impunity in most parts of the city, and some areas are effectively cut off from the police."*

The law and order situation in Karachi could better be judged from an essay appeared in '**the News**' dated **25th February 2016:**

*"Surely, that's definitely why, after a rollicking few episodes of freewheeling insults against the military and intelligence apparatus, Altaf Hussain started playing nice, sucking up to the military courts theorem when it came to the Baldia inquiry, neatly aligning with*

*the PML[N]'s 'anti-horse trading' initiative in the Senate polls, even as he drafted public service messages to consumers to convert from CNG to petrol.*

*But on the ground, MQM's serious minds admitted that the party was being "commanded and controlled from London and not from Karachi. Every one is afraid of being hit on the street, at home, in college, in mosque or imam bargah, then each one is expected to keep himself armed – that's why the city stands fully weaponized; and state is party to it."*

That's essentially what Gen Raheel Sharif emphasized, and re-emphasized, as well: ***The police must be depoliticized, and beefed up.***

But with the PPP in tow with Islamabad, [*consider deep secret and constant relationship between Zardari an Nawaz Sharif*] and Dr Zulfiqar Mirza's comeback, the old frictional political triad went resurgent again: It's the MQM vs the Army; PPP got itself out of the operational influence tactfully and through Zardari's diplomacy while leaving MQM back alone in the battlefield to face the music.

MQM itself sometimes cited extrajudicial killings. Other times, it played the *Mohajir* card. Of late, it found it convenient to up the secular anti-extremism narrative. Less frequently, it ducked and covered behind anti-Shiite violence, terming it yet another discriminatory wave targeting its rank and file. However, the Altaf Hussain's speeches and love with India kept it reputed as Karachi's most violent political group.

MQM is genuinely known as Pakistan's most organized, secular and moderate party – but on paper only. For those in the practical business of governance, it was the perfect weapon, but also a crucial tool. It exercised methodical control over cable operators, ratings indices, and even entire media houses. It mobilized thousands against Imran Khan's "*Dharna*" and *Jama'at e Islami* [JI]'s "*Jihad*".

MQM successfully grabbed Karachi many times; it burnt the city and brutalized it but remained productive work-horse of Pakistan - choking the economy and energy within hours by the throat almost anytime it wanted.

The MQM remained modern Karachi's institutional memory: past slain cops and missing workers, enduring half-dead chief ministers like Mr Shah and half-baked paramilitary operations – but successfully survived the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 carnage. But it remained a one man show - riders of the target killing

waves always looked at its leader Altaf Bhai with human remote control from thousands of miles away.

**On 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016;** Rangers recovered huge cache of ammunition dumped underground in Orangi Town in Karachi. As per details, Rangers carried out a search operation in Qasba Colony area of Orangi Town and Kalashnikovs, rifles, 7mm pistols, bullet proof jackets and hundreds of bullets were recovered during operation.

The concealed weapons were used by a political party during riots in *Katti Pahari* area.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015;** the IG Police Sindh, told that since **6<sup>th</sup> July 2014**, 998 criminals were killed and 16,583 arrested, 287 terrorists killed and 87 arrested, 7 target killers killed and 41 arrested, 96 kidnapers killed and 60 arrested and 6 extortionists killed and 328 arrested during that targeted operation launched by the police and Rangers.

The Kidnapping for ransom is almost eliminated and killings in Karachi were significantly down. The areas in Karachi least prone to safety issues were the neighbourhoods of Clifton, DHA, and PECHS, but even these areas experienced serious crimes and thefts in those years. *Tehrik e Taliban* of Pakistan [TTP] and *Lashkar e Jhangvi* [LeJ] remained the most active terrorist organizations and demonstrated the capability to plan and execute major attacks any where in the city.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016;** news bulletin at 'ARY News TV' told that an ammunition stockpile had been seized in Karachi which was hidden by a worker of a political party and was to be used for carrying out a terrorist attack in the city; Counter Terrorism Department [CTD] was active in Karachi.

The weapons were to be used in attacks on a shopping centre and the installations of the intelligence agencies. In addition, 49 suspected criminals were nabbed during raids in different parts of Karachi who were directly linked to murders, weapon trade and drugs.

Police carried out a search operation at Manghopir's Pakhtunabad area and took 44 suspects, including two foreign nationals, into their custody; three more criminals were arrested in a raid in Shireen Jinnah Colony. Police also conducted a raid at a gambling den in Baldia Town and nabbed two people.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** a huge cache of NATO weapons and ammunition was recovered by local police during a raid on an empty house in the Azi-

zabad area of Karachi, the headquarter area of the MQM. The seized weapons included anti-aircraft guns, SMGs, LMGs, sniper rifles, hand grenades and rocket launchers hidden in the water tank of the empty house.

Bullet proof jackets and helmets were also recovered during the raid which was conducted after the police was tipped off by an MQM political worker already in police custody. The city police Chief Mushtaq Ahmed Mahar said:

*"It is the biggest recovery of arms and ammunition in the history of Karachi. In light of disclosures made by a detained suspect, **big-wigs of a political party provided help in procuring these arms and ammunition.***

*These weapons were hidden for terror acts to be perpetrated by terrorists of a political faction based in South Africa."*

Karachi police chief claimed that these arms were supposed to be used by the elements residing in London particularly with cooperation of RAW [Indian Intelligence Agency] for terror activities in the metropolis but it was foiled through timely action by security institutions.

According to the press release issued by Sindh Police, recovered weapons included 11 anti-aircraft guns, 17 grenade launchers, 39 LMGs, 9 RPG-7, 82 SMGs, 11 7-MM, one M-16, 32 China rifles 7.62, 10 G-3, 5 sniper rifles, 2 repeaters, 9 short SMGs and 245 magazines of SMGs and G-3. 200 hand grenades, 2000 rifle grenades, 140 bullet-proof jackets and huge quantity of ammunition were also seized in addition.

Forensic tests were being conducted to determine whether the weapons had been used in the past to perform terrorist activities in the metropolis. Police officials were still looking into how long the house had been vacant and who it belongs to.

### **RANGERS CONTROLLED TALIBAN [?]:**

The whole scenario changed in Karachi till ending 2015; hats off to Rangers and police – but more salutes to the local politicians who had distanced themselves from gangsters; of course, some of them were sent to jail amidst PPP & MQM's long and hard protests.

More than body bags, it was the sentiments and perceptions of the local population that were more reliable indicators of the success of the Karachi Operation. The state of fear was far less severe. Karachiites were more willing to go out to eat at night than ever in recent years. And residents of the city's predominantly *Pashtun* areas said they were largely free from the TTP extortion networks that had been haunting them since half a decade at least.

Karachi's challenges with urban violence were not unique in a way; it has its equivalents in Delhi's water tanker mafias, Mexico City's kidnapping networks, and Mumbai's infamous gangsters - but putting together, Karachi's violent dynamics remained among the world's most complex law & order situations.

Terrorism in Pakistan was visibly in decline; the number of Pakistani civilians killed in terrorist attacks during first half of 2015 was the lowest since 2006 when the Pakistani Taliban [TTP] had started its terrorist campaign. This precipitous drop was due to both Pakistani counter-insurgency operations conducted in all seven tribal areas near Afghanistan, and in all four provinces—the most expansive of which was taking place in the mega-city of Karachi.

While foreign observers of Pakistan remained fixated on North Waziristan, the major gains of the Rangers and local police toward pacifying the complex urban environment of Karachi had to be given more credit.

Referring to the '**Express Tribune**' dated **14<sup>th</sup> September 2015**:

A slightly chubby policeman, Azfar Mahesar, senior police officer in the most dangerous, western part of Karachi, pushed his police vehicle deeper into the heart of one of the city's '**Talibanised**' areas; with pride he said:

*"This used to be a war zone - but we have liberated it. Pashtun slums in the city of 20 million, where over the past few years, one word had been on everyone's lips here: **Talibanisation**; but now in Karachi it has [nearly] died down.*

*I can say very confidently 70 to 80 per cent (are purged). There are a few remnants in Karachi but they are not as capable of coming back with the efficiency that they had a year or so ago.*

*The Tehreek e Taliban has been the country's public enemy number one since its formation in 2007."*

Till ending 2015, policemen wearing flak jackets were advancing deep into the bowels of one of the remaining "**no-go zones**", through dug-up streets and up rocky hills that marked the city's western edge; where the local Taliban HQ was also situated nearby.

All this occurred as the military made gains in North Waziristan, from where the Taliban of Karachi received orders. The disconnection between Karachi and Miramshah, the capital of North Waziristan, helped LEAs to keep the *Pashtun* parts of the city safe and clear of the militancy. Taliban fighters instead sought refuge in neighbouring Afghanistan, and Pakistan was seeing its lowest levels of terrorist violence in almost a decade.

In the ill-known Manghophir district of Karachi, businesses started picking up; Extortion and racketeering by the Taliban — or criminals posing as them — were almost a thing of the past till beginning of 2016. Taliban gone; people were scared, they wouldn't go out to the markets; the shrine of the Sufi Saint Pir Haji Mangho — which once served as barometer of militant presence, and last attacked by militants in 2014, is guarded by crocodiles swimming in a green pond. The *Pashtuns* of the ANP held:

*"God knows where they've gone. They're maybe hiding out here, or they've returned to where they came from, that's an unanswered question; however, criminals posing as Taliban were a bigger threat than the group themselves. No doubt things have changed drastically.*

*Now we are mentally liberated. It somehow hasn't felt this way in 15 to 20 years."*

Rauf Khan, the local ANP leader happily said:

*"Yesterday, I went to the cinema and came home late. I haven't done that in years."*

## **Scenario 152**

### **KARACHI AFFAIRS IN YEAR 2014**

#### **SSP CHAUDHRY ASLAM KILLED:**

**On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014;** Chaudhry Aslam, Superintendent of Police [SP] and the head of Karachi's anti-terror operations, and his two police companions died in an attack on a police convoy in the Essa Nagri area of the city. Ch Aslam had survived at least ten previous attempts on his life. A car carrying explosives smashed into Ch Aslam's convoy. Images from the crime scene showed a number of vehicles completely destroyed and nearby buildings damaged. Five other police officers were injured.

The Pakistani Taliban [TTP] said they carried out that attack. Taliban spokesman Sajjad Mohmand promptly released message:

*"Ch Aslam was involved in killing Taliban prisoners in CID cells in Karachi and was on the top of our hit-list. This is a warning to the people who are on Aslam's team. If they don't distance themselves from their agenda, their fate will be even worse than him."*

Referring to UK's daily '**Independent**' dated **9<sup>th</sup> January 2014;**

*"He was the cop who could not be got - Pakistan's toughest policeman, taking on the bad guys in the country's toughest city. But Chaudhry Aslam Khan's enemies eventually did for him."*

*Karachi, Pakistan's sprawling port city of more than 20m people, is notorious for its violence. A combination of common criminals; politically affiliated gangs and well-armed militants have created a situation where killings and murder are a daily occurrence."*

*In 2012, the most recent year for which figures are available, around 2,000 people were killed."*

A year earlier, his vehicle was targeted at the same place where he was killed in that day's blast. In 2010, militants blew up the head office of the

Karachi CID in an attempt to kill him. Each time he seemed to brush off the danger.

On that day, as his convoy was travelling through Karachi in the late afternoon traffic, a bomber targeted his vehicle. PM Nawaz Sharif, paid tribute to Ch Aslam, saying his death was a huge loss to the police force. *"Chaudhry Aslam was a brave officer. We will not let the will of the nation be crushed by these cowardly acts of terrorists."*

A 30-year veteran of the police service, SSP Ch Aslam had since 2010 been serving as head of the city's anti-terror unit. Often working through the night and typically armed with a Glock pistol, he had received countless awards for his work. In March 2013 he was awarded the *Tamgha-i-Imtiaz* award by Pakistan's President.

Ch Aslam's vehicle had been targeted at around 4.40pm as it was travelling close to the city's Lyari Expressway in the Essa Nagri area. Iqbal Mehmood, a senior officer, said the bomber smashed his vehicle into Aslam's convoy. He was returning from an operation targeting militants in which he had killed three of them in a shoot-out.

In September 2011, when a Taliban suicide bomber drove a truck through the front gate of his house in Karachi's Defence neighbourhood and set off a blast that killed eight people, then DSP Ch Aslam had emerged unhurt, stepping through the damage to denounce the attackers. He roared saying:

*"They call themselves Muslims but they are unbelievers. This will make me even more determined to carry on operations against them. Such things do not scare me. I'm staying right here. They can try and come for me whenever they want and I'll be ready."*

***I will give my life but I won't bow to terrorists."***

The general populace was, however, astonished when Pakistan *Tehrik e Insaf* [PTI] Chief Imran Khan on the same day reiterated his stance of negotiating with banned TTP following the killing of SSP Ch Aslam. While speaking to reporters in Lahore, he said that prevailing violence and killings in the country would not end without pulling out from **'someone else's war'**, Khan was referring it to the US and Saudia.

At the same time, the cricketer-turned-politician, Imran Khan, paid tribute to the bravery, commitment and courage of slain police officer. He said that

people were fed up with terrorism and suggested dialogue was a better option than fighting with the militants; while quoting:

*"Dialogue is a better option than fighting against Taliban. At least those (Taliban) groups which are ready to negotiate peace should be contacted for talks."*

Since 2008, SSP Ch Aslam had taken on and taken out countless numbers of criminals, including the August 2009's killing Rehman Dakait, a notorious gangster from Lyari's Baloch dominated area.

Yet Ch Aslam's way of working had sparked controversy and he had been accused on a number of occasions of being involved in extra-judicial killings, or "encounter". Once he was suspended. A series of investigations had cleared him of wrong-doing but the accusations did not stop. He always denied them, once told a local paper that:

*"I have never staged fake encounters in my career, nor have I been involved in extra-judicial killings. All encounters that I have been involved in have been in self-defence."*

**BBC dated 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014** paid rich tribute to SSP Ch Aslam like that:

*"Chaudhry Aslam was one of Karachi's highest-profile police officials, known for leading daring police raids and gun battles against militants in some of the most dangerous neighbourhoods of Karachi. Scores of suspected criminals and militants were killed or captured on his watch.*

*Pakistani TV channels often showed him holding news conferences and brandishing sophisticated weapons he claimed to have recovered in police raids. Mr Aslam carried on with his tough-cop image despite a number of attempts on his life. But on Thursday, the militants caught up with him.*

*His murder is being seen as a major blow to the government's efforts to fight crime and militancy in Pakistan's biggest city."*

A day after the incident, a police team, investigating the suicidal attack which killed the top anti-terror cop Ch Aslam, had identified a suspect through finger prints found at the crime scene. SP Niaz Khoso, an officer of the police probe team, said the suspect had been identified as Naimullah, a

resident of Peerabad Qasba Colony - his father Rafiullah was curator of a local *madrassa* [Islamic seminary].

As per police files, Naimullah was also part of the terrorist group that carried out deadly Abbas Town bombing in 2013.

**[On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2014;** *Police claimed to have killed seven suspected militants including the alleged mastermind and facilitator of the attack on Ch Aslam. The raid was conducted in Karachi's Ayub Goth area near Saudabad but the raiding party came under attack, as militants opened fire and hurled hand grenades.*

*There were up to 16 TTP militants present in the house when it was raided. Police resorted to retaliatory firing during which seven suspected militants were killed.]*

SSP Rao Anwar, the IO in-charge of Ch Aslam's killing case kept on file that three of the seven suspected militants had been identified - including brother of the suicide bomber, another militant who had conducted reconnaissance for the attack and was in contact with the Taliban leadership, and another suspect who had supplied the explosive-laden vehicle for the attack. "*These three militants, who had fled to Saudi Arabia after Aslam's murder but returned home just recently, were experts of making bombs and suicide vests,*" the file contained.

### **TALIBAN GAINED STRENGTH IN CITY:**

The year 2014 could not have a smooth start with respect to Karachi affairs in Pakistan. The Pakistani Taliban [TTP] tightened their grip over the country's commercial hub despite a five-month government crackdown in the said metropolitan city of about 20 million.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014;** nine people were killed in different incidents of violence in Karachi.

The bodies of six men were found near a ***shrine in Gulshan e Maymar*** area; two of the men had been beheaded, while the rest had their throats slit, in the first such instance of mass killing at a shrine that the Karachiites had known. It was ***Ayub Shah Bukhari*** place, considered a saint by Sufi Muslims. Three of the dead worked at the shrine while the others were frequent visitors.

A note reading "***Stop visiting shrines — from the Pakistani Taliban; People visiting shrines will meet the same fate,***" was found at the scene along with a bloodstained knife. All the victims were tortured too before being killed with the knife who were aged between 20-30 years.

Five of the deceased persons were identified as Munawwar, Saleem, Javed, Ramzan and Abid, respectively. One victim could not be identified.

***Separately***, two people, including a police officer, were killed in firing incidents in the city's Pak Colony and Quaidabad areas whereas a body was recovered near *Malir* check-post.

Meanwhile, police arrested a target killer from Karachi's Musharraf colony. Police alleged that the arrested suspect was wanted in the killings of 28 people and that he hailed from a political party. Moreover, two Kalashnikovs, two hand-grenades and two home-made bombs were also seized from the suspect.

Karachi, the largest metropolitan city of Pakistan, since two decades, was riddled with targeted killings, gang wars, and kidnappings for ransom, extortion and terrorism. Targeted operations led by Rangers' forces with the support of police were going in the city but with no mentionable achievements till then even though the criminals were identified by federal, military and civilian agencies.

**On 9<sup>th</sup> February 2014;** unidentified gunmen threw grenades at a *Sunni* Islamic religious gathering in Karachi and then opened fire on the people assembled to offer prayers, killing eight at the spot. Eight others were wounded in the attack.

The four gunmen, who were on motorcycles, first lobbed grenades at a building where a *Sunni* saint was receiving his followers, then raked it with automatic fire; women and children were among the dead and wounded.

*"Pakistan is 95 percent Muslim, and the majority are Sunnis. Sufism is a mystical branch of Islam. But Sufi shrines and followers were suddenly attacked from certain **militants of Taliban school of thought** who did not consider them to be true Muslims,"*  
[**'New York Times'** dated **9<sup>th</sup> February 2014** is referred]

No one claimed responsibility for the attack. But suspicion was on the Pakistani Taliban or their affiliated sectarian groups, which follow a strict interpretation of Islam that considers many other Muslims, like Sufis or minority Shiites, to be nearly non-Muslims. In recent years, militants have often attacked shrines, which they consider to be blasphemous.

After 7<sup>th</sup> January's killing of six people at the shrine, as detailed in earlier paragraphs, the militants had threatened the cleric whose gathering was attacked that day, telling him he should close down the house of worship where he used to receive his followers.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014;** tentative peace talks with the PML[N] government were thrown into disarray when the militants claimed responsibility for a roadside bombing that killed at least 12 police officers when the bus taking them to duty was destroyed near the city's Landhi neighbourhood, an area the TTP claimed they dominated.

Karachi was in fact paying a dearer price as the efforts by PM Nawaz Sharif had aspired to forge a peace deal with the TTP's high command in Waziristan tribal areas while a military operation was being launched there.

A general impression then prevailed that if the peace talks failed, a big terrorism wave would hit Karachi as a result. The Pakistani Taliban [TTP] were a national threat, with Karachi providing the group a vital financial lifeline. Money raised in Karachi from extortion, land-grabbing, kidnapping and robberies used to be sent to the group's leadership in Waziristan tribal areas.

The assassination of Karachi's most prominent counter-terrorism police officer, SSP Chaudhry Aslam on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014, showcased the militants' reach and had a chilling effect on the police force. Everyone then was at loss about who would step into Chaudhry Aslam's shoes; he had become a symbol, someone who was standing up to the TTP and their activities.

In the same month of January 2014, the militant group shot and killed three journalists also; repeatedly bombed paramilitary Rangers who were helping carry out the crackdown; gunned down three polio-vaccination workers, in addition to slitting the throats of six devotees visiting a shrine, as noted above. Karachi police released statistics that 27 officers were killed in January 2014, after 168 were killed a year earlier.

PM Nawaz Sharif was upset that his economic-revival plans were being undermined by spreading mayhem though he had initiated the security operation in September 2013. Karachi, a fast-growing city, having a huge industrial base, the country's only major port and was the nation's centre of banking and financial activity. In fact, Karachi's local political support was fading for the operation, which they had viewed as a last chance to regain control of the city from TTP and other militias.

The operation's success depended largely on the Sindh provincial government, which was run by the PPP, the opposition of the PML[N] in the cen-

tre; Karachi's police was under their control. Signs of tension between the Rangers and the PPP's police were, sometimes, visibly seen in many administrative issues.

Ahmed Chinoy, head of the Citizens Police Liaison Committee [CPLC], a statutory body that works with the police to reduce crime, held that parts of Karachi were still too dangerous for regular patrols, while the crackdown targeted regular crime. Whenever the focus of the operation was shifted at some other issues even temporarily, the militants got breathing space and took advantage to launch a severe, harsh or ruthless activity than before.

During one year of 2013, five different police chiefs served Karachi, disrupting the battle against crime but at any given time, every chief had about 7,000 officers available to be deployed on the streets out of a total force strength of 27,000; a big chunk of 9,000 officers were kept on personal security duty for politicians and other officials – and the practice is still in vogue even today.

More than 13,000 people had been arrested in the sweep operation since September 2013, in more than 10,000 raids by police and the paramilitary Rangers force. But the residents held the police had left largely untouched the poor outlying neighbourhoods that were known to be under TTP control, encircling the city, including one adjacent to the new US Consulate compound.

TTP was the most aggressive armed group operating in multiethnic Karachi, alongside the ethnic Baloch gangs in Lyari, and the MQM, a party that has traditionally dominated Karachi politics.

***[However, the Karachi police and Rangers told the media that their security operation had led to the arrest of 63 TTP members through the end of January 2014.***

***That compared with the arrest of 296 people affiliated with the MQM, 101 with links to the Awami National Party [ANP] and 171 members of Lyari gangs.]***

Sharfuddin Memon, the adviser to the Sindh provincial chief minister on security issues, told the operation had led to a 50% drop in assassinations and kidnapping for ransom in the city - but the conviction rate for serious crimes was just 5%. The impact from the operation got the approval of the general populace but needed to be sustained.

**'The Wall Street Journal'** dated **13<sup>th</sup> February 2014** held that:

*"...based on conversations with security officials and urban planners shows TTP still control or dominate about 470 square miles of Karachi, or nearly a third of its area, where at least 2.5 million people live.*

*TTP's sway in Karachi extends right up to Saddar—the city centre—and into areas such as Sultanabad, a ramshackle community next to the new US Consulate compound."*

Those were districts with a majority population of Pashtuns, the same ethnic group as TTP's leadership. These areas that encircled the city included Baldia and the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate to the west and Gadap in the north. Residents in those areas said TTP's hold had gotten stronger over the past year. Kh Izharul Hassan, MQM's member Sindh Assembly said:

*"There's been no action against the main body of the TTP, just against some smaller factions. In addition to the main TTP faction from the Mehsud tribe of South Waziristan in the tribal areas, long established in Karachi, the city is increasingly plagued by another TTP faction from the Mohmand tribal area, along with TTP Swat.*

*Islamist militants also have influence over some non-Pashtun districts of the city, such as Lyari in the southwest where TTP ally Lashkar-e-Jhangvi has a base. TTP has ability to stage attacks across Karachi."*

It was an established fact then that TTP dominated 33 of Karachi's 178 administrative units—known as union councils. The militants had started getting more educated recruits, including non-Pashtuns, largely due to wide spread un-employment. They were spreading to neighbouring areas outside Karachi, including Hub to the west and Jamshoro to the northeast. In the areas of its control, TTP was levying a tax on residents and businesses; *'bhatta'* in state books terminology and *'security money'* for the people.

The TTP's militant group had also set up courts in neighbourhoods to resolve mutual disputes, used to give written judgments, handling matters that included disagreements over land ownership and regulating levels of theft from power lines that they allowed – and the residents had silently admitted it. The businessmen believed that:

*"The Taliban milk money from their own communities; they have calculated the worth of every person here."*

For instance, on a monthly income of Rs:40,000, TTP used to take a levy of Rs:1,000; equivalent to the Islamic Tax of 2.5% - and the TTP's hold had hardened over the year gradually. Even the ANP leadership kept the opinion that '*.....the Taliban have complete control of Karachi; they can go anywhere and do what they want.*'

**On 5<sup>th</sup> May 2014;** a US citizen, later identified as Joel Cox, was arrested by ASF at Karachi airport; he was carrying 15 live 9mm bullets, a magazine, three knives, Brass Knuckle, Spy cameras, miniature voice recorders and other tools of spying in his baggage. He was going to Islamabad by a PIA flight [PK 308].

Joel Cox presented himself as a US citizen but soon after the arrest the US media reported that the man works for the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], the key investigation and intelligence agency of the United States. A case was lodged against him under Section 23 1(a) of the Sindh Arms Act 2013. When he was presented before the district Malir court the following day, the court sent him into judicial remanded till 10<sup>th</sup> May. The District & Sessions Court Malir released Cox after the payment of a surety bond worth Rs:1,000,000 on 8<sup>th</sup> May. SSP Malir said:

*"He arrived in our homeland for a three month mission but we have yet to ascertain what the mission is as our investigations are still in progress. Each and every object is being examined by our forensic team; it will definitely help ascertain the motive of the suspect's visit to Pakistan.*

*He is not a diplomat who is required to go through some other kind of process for such a crime; he is a US citizen who is here on a visit visa, but carrying arms and spy gadgets to travel to the country's capital."*

The Washington Post said the suspect, who was assigned to the FBI Miami Field Office, was in Pakistan on a temporary duty; scheduled to be there for three months for '**office-type work with a non-FBI-type**' entity.

Officials contended that employees of the FBI and other US agencies were allowed to carry weapons in Pakistan when authorized. The US officials asserted that he was on a temporary duty assignment to provide routine assistance to the legal attaché at the US mission.

But if he was in Pakistan for such job then what was the purpose of carrying suspicious gadgets. It was evident that he was certainly not here for that 'office-type' job which the US Mission was quoting.

According to US officials and the reports of International Media, Joel Cox forgot to remove the loaded magazine from his luggage; a naïve act that cannot be expected from an FBI Agent. Secondly, the question was not just about 15 live bullets and a loaded magazine, the guy was also carrying spy gadgetry.

Joel Cox was travelling on a passport which was issued only five months ago and he came to Pakistan for 3 months appointment. These facts lead to speculation that he was travelling on a fake identity. All these question-marks gave an idea that this was not simply an issue of law violation rather it was a matter of espionage – another assignment like of Raymond Davis, an American CIA contractor, who was arrested after shooting down two civilians in Jan 2011.

Ironically, the radical elements and TTP sympathizers started their hate-speech against respective institutions of Pakistan soon after the arrest of Joel Cox and throttled their anti-Pakistan Propaganda after the bail. Whereas, both the elements, TTP and US operatives, were up to destabilize Pakistan and malign its institutions – especially the Pakistan Army.

It also proved true the age-old allegations on our legal and political system that they have been providing shelter and immunity to such elements. One could recall the cases like of Delcan Walsh and Riz Hussein, where the intelligence provided by the agencies had been swift and fruitful.

Thus, either the Government itself was not interested in the security of Pakistan or it was under undue pressure of diplomacy. The question arose that who the real enemy of the people of Pakistan was – Pak Army, its ISI or the corrupt politicians ruling Pakistan in the name of democracy.

#### **KARACHI INT'L AIRPORT ATTACKED:**

**On 8th June 2014;** Karachi International Airport was attacked and ransacked by the terrorists under the banner of Taliban. The attack on Karachi International Airport began at 2300 hrs and lasted until the morning around 400 hrs of next day. Ten attackers divided in 2 groups, stormed at two different check points and attacked the cargo terminal of the airport with au-

automatic weapons, hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, and other explosives.

The attackers were dressed as security guards, with some also wearing suicide vests. They were wearing uniforms of the Airports Security Force [ASF] – the militants also tried to hijack a plane, but were unsuccessful.

Within 2 hours, eight of the ten militants were shot dead by the ASF troops and the remaining two blew themselves up when they were cornered. The siege officially ended after five hours; 36 people, including the ten terrorists, 12 ASF personnel, one Pakistan Rangers official, one Sindh Police official, and four PIA employees [including two senior aircraft engineers] were killed in the incident. At least 18 security personnel were also injured in the attack. Seven bodies that were burnt beyond recognition were also recovered from the airport's cold storage facility after a 28-hour rescue operation.

The militant organization *Tehrik e Taliban* Pakistan [TTP] claimed responsibility for the attack describing it as retaliation for the death of its former chief Hakimullah Mehsud, who was killed in North Waziristan in a drone attack in November 2013. TTP spokesman Shahidullah Shahid explained why the airport was targeted:

*"We chose a location where there would be less civilian and more official casualties. The group will engage in a full-out war with the Pakistani state, starting on June 10. But if even now the Pakistani government backs down, we are ready to engage in meaningful dialogue. The main goal of this attack was to cut off the supply to NATO Troops in Afghanistan."*

The attackers were foreigners of Uzbek origin who belonged to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan [IMU], allegedly an Al Qaeda-linked militant organization working closely with TTP. The TTP later confirmed that the attack was a joint operation they executed with the IMU, who independently admitted to having supplied personnel for the attack.

In an online statement, the IMU accepted its role in the attack, claiming it as a revenge for Pakistani military operations against Uzbeks and other foreign militants, and provided photographs of the ten Uzbek fighters who participated in the airport attack. In the photographs, the militants were seen wearing green tunics and white trainers while carrying assault rifles in what appeared to be a mountainous region. The men looked young and in their early 20s.

*[As per defence records, foreigners including IMU fighters had fled Afghanistan following the US-led invasion in October 2001, and had established a presence in the tribal areas along the Afghan border. They enjoyed protection and shelter of the TTP and used to provide foot soldiers for TTP's operations.]*

*Uzbek militants were previously involved in large-scale attacks in Pakistan, including the attack on PNS Mehran airbase in Karachi in 2011, the attack on Bacha Khan International Airport in Peshawar in 2012, and the orchestration of jail breaks in Bannu and Dera Ismail Khan in 2012 and 2013 respectively.]*

Following the attack, the Pakistani military conducted a series of aerial strikes on militant hideouts in the tribal areas along the Afghan border. At least 25 militants were killed on 10<sup>th</sup> June, including foreign fighters. Two drone attacks on 12<sup>th</sup> June also killed Uzbek, Afghan and some local militants.

**On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014;** just two days after the airport attack, four unknown militants opened fire over civilians near Airports Security Force Academy in Pehlwan Goth, Karachi. Pehlwan Goth is a rundown area that is considered a hub of criminal elements, with police and rangers having previously conducted several raids there following increased incidence of targeted killings in Karachi in 2011.

Inter-Services Public Relations [ISPR] soon posted on Twitter that the ***"chase is still on. Three to four terrorists fired near ASF camp, ran away. No breach of fence, no entry, situation under control."***

Deputy Director General ASK, Col Tahir Ali told there were no casualties in the new attack; the airport was secure and that operations resumed. He also said that:

*"...two attackers opened fire near the ladies hostel near D gate, which is located behind the ASF camp. The ASF check-post is about 100 metres from the scene. We were informed of the incident by our sentry posted there."*

Initial reports suggested that the number of attackers could be between four and seven. Following a search operation in *Gulistan-e-Jauhar*, two suspects were picked up by security forces.

The camp no:2 was situated near the Jinnah International Airport Karachi which the Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] had cleared a day earlier after a long battle between security forces and terrorists which had left 28 dead.

It was described as a hit-and-run incident aimed to create panic. The TTP accepted responsibility for the incident, too. All operations at the Karachi airport were suspended, all flights were diverted, and the airport was evacuated following the attack. The PIA had to delay or cancel 20 flights immediately after the attack. Following news of the attack, other international airports in Pakistan were put on red alert and security was increased. Airports in neighbouring India were also put on high alert.

The major implication of the attack was the fact that it made foreign airlines wary of expanding operations in Pakistan, with many international air carriers already had scaled back their activities since 2008. Before that attack, there were 19 international airlines serving Pakistani airports but then the situation changed drastically; see below:

- On 11<sup>th</sup> June, Cathay Pacific Airways notified temporary cancellation of its flights to Karachi and stated it would continue to monitor the situation closely.
- 
- ***The same day, Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen also postponed his state visit to Pakistan indefinitely, in view of the prevailing situation.***
- 
- The Ireland cricket team was scheduled to play three One Day International cricket matches in Lahore Pakistan in September 2014 but cancelled their matches after the attack.

The cancellation of Irish team's tour ended a five-year waiting of light and hope of international cricket in Pakistan, with no international teams having toured the country since the 2009 attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team by militants. The attack was thought to have dashed the Pakistan Cricket Board's recent efforts to arrange international teams to tour Pakistan.

The airport and PIA were estimated to have suffered losses worth billions of rupees, with one estimate putting the accumulated loss at over Rs:180 billion. Chief Minister of Sindh Qaim Ali Shah announced monetary compensation for victims of the attack.

**On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2014;** the Pak-Army intensified air strikes in North Waziristan, and bombed eight foreign militant hideouts. At least 105 insurgents were killed, a majority of whom were Uzbeks, including those linked to the airport attack. A key Uzbek commander and mastermind of the attack, Abu Abdur Rehman Almani, was also killed in the operation. These military responses had given birth and strength to the famous Operation ***Zarb e Azb***, Pak-Army's comprehensive operation against militants in North Waziristan.

Karachi, the biggest business hub of Pakistan, is unfortunately being known as the main epic centre of terrorist activities since at least May 2011 when a similar attack had taken place on the Mehran naval airbase in Karachi, and in 2012, the Bacha Khan International Airport in Peshawar Khyber PK was attacked by militants.

Two aircrafts of PIA, one Boeing 747 and an Airbus A310, and one Air Indus plane were damaged during that terrorist attack. Two cargo warehouses stored with NATO Supplies i.e. jeeps, drones, medicines and explosives to be exported to Afghanistan caught fire and took 4 days to get reduced to ashes - multiple explosions continued to be heard inside from time to time till about four days later.

Under the then prevailing circumstances and deteriorating security situation, even domestic travelers got afraid of visiting Karachi due to the airport attack whereas the rising lawlessness across the city along with live coverage of such incidents by TV channels kept foreigners, particularly the businessmen and investors, away from Pakistan.

***Killing Continued as Usual in Karachi;*** as on **18<sup>th</sup> August 2014**, a policeman was shot dead in an act of target killing in Baldia Town within the limits of *Ittehad Town* police station. The deceased was identified as 40-year-old Abdul Wakeel, son of Khair Muhammad. The victim was shot multiple times by unidentified assailants. He was subsequently rushed to Civil Hospital, Karachi, where he breathed his last.

Separately, a man was shot dead in an act of target killing within the limits of Manghopir police station. Police officials said that the deceased was a resident of Baldia Town and was killed by unidentified assailants over unexplained reasons. His body was taken to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for autopsy where he was identified as Habibur Rehman, 55, son of Shamsur Rehman.

In another incident, the body of 33-year-old Farhan, son of Tanvir, was found from a garbage dump within the limits of Liaquatabad police station. No torture marks or bullet wounds were found on the body. Police suspected that he might have been killed by being given a poisonous substance. The body was shifted to Edhi morgue to trace his family after medico-legal formalities were completed at Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.

Meanwhile, the body of an unidentified young man, was found from Yousuf Goth within the limits of Saeedabad police station. Police officials believed the victim might have been kidnapped earlier. They suspected

that he was brought to the site by the assailants who shot him dead before fleeing. The motive behind his killing could never be ascertained.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014;** three people were killed when armed motorcyclists opened fire at a shrine in District East. Meanwhile, two supporters of a religious organisation were shot dead in Shah Faisal Colony.

They were shot dead when armed men riding a motorcycle opened fire at ***Dargah Nazar Shah***, located near Nasir Jump in Korangi, within the limits of Zaman Town police station.

*"The two assailants initially came to the shrine and left after shaking hands with the caretaker, then about two minutes later, they entered the shrine again and opened fire."*

As a result of firing, two victims were killed on the spot, while a third succumbed to his injuries during treatment at Civil Hospital Karachi. One of the deceased was later identified as 45-year-old Zakir Hussain, son of Yaqoob. The other two victims were identified as Nawaz and Younus.

The shrine called '*Dargah Nazar Shah*' had been running since the last 20 years. The police found at least 23 empty shells of pistols. In this case too, the police suspected the involvement of Taliban militants.

Shortly after this incident, two men were shot dead in Sa'adat Colony within the limits of Shah Faisal Colony police station. The deceased were identified as 37-year-old Asif, son of Shakeel and his maternal uncle, 50-year-old Abdul Shakoor. The victims were residents of the same area and used to run a motorcycle mechanic shop. The two assailants had come to the shop and after paying them for repairing their motorcycle, they shot the victims.

They were shot multiple times and died on the spot. The ***Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat*** [ASWJ] spokesperson, while claiming their affiliation with the party, said that they were killed over sectarian basis.

**Separately**, three people were shot dead and another wounded by gunfire in Sohrab Goth. The deceased were identified as Hameedullah, Abdul Hadi and Muhammad Ahmed. DSP Qamar Ahmed told that the victims were of Afghan origin and were involved in a dispute with the Mullah Samad group; Mullah Samad's men could be behind the incident.

**PROF DR SHAKEEL AUJ KILLED:**

**On 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014;** Prof Dr Muhammad Shakeel Auj, dean of the faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Karachi, was shot dead on University Road in *Gulshan-i-Iqbal* and a girl student was wounded. He was on his way to attend a ceremony organised in his honour at the Iranian Cultural Centre in Clifton for getting *Tamgha-e-Imtiaz* for his meritorious services in Islamic studies.

Dr Auj, author of over a dozen books, was probably targeted over his religious thoughts and his efforts to unearth an alleged fake degree scam in the Karachi University [KU].

A friend of Dr Auj had sent a chauffeur-driven car to pick him up from the university. Dr Auj, his teenage niece Dr Amna and one Dr Tahir Masood sat in the backseat while the front seat was left vacant for the professor's friend who was to join them on their way. As the car drove down the NIPA flyover ramp, two bursts were heard - there were two bullet holes in the windowpane of the car.

The driver accelerated the vehicle. The professor's niece started crying "*.....cruel persons had killed him as he lay down on the seat*". The driver rushed to the Agha Khan University Hospital [AKUH], ignoring the traffic lights on his way.

Dr Amna also got hit by a bullet on the hand. Soon after the arrival, at the AKUH the doctors declared Dr Auj dead and stated that a bullet had struck him in the head, piercing his skull and exiting through an eye. Later, the body was taken to the JPMC for a post-mortem examination. Dr Auj had received two bullets fired from a 0.9mm pistol.

During investigation, two persons including a former dean of the faculty of Islamic Studies of the KU, Dr Abdul Rasheed, were 'interrogated'. He revealed that the late Dr Auj had received a threatening message over his purported controversial lecture and the message contained that a famous seminary in *Korangi* had issued a fatwa against him over his alleged blasphemous uttering. But when Dr Auj approached the seminary, they denied having issued such a fatwa against him.

It was also a fact that the late dean, Dr Auj, had taken a 'serious notice' of 'fake degrees' in Islamic Studies awarded by some KU professors. Prof Shakeel Auj had received such threatening texts when he took up the fake degrees issue. However, Dr Rasheed, later dean of the faculty of Theology at the Federal Urdu University, told media that it was an "old case" and he

was “acquitted” in it. Later on, he had filed a defamation suit against Dr Auj, which was also confirmed by the police record.

**SSP FAROOQ AWAN ATTACKED:**

**On 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014;** unknown assailants carried out a bomb attack on a senior police officer near Karachi's upscale Defence Housing Authority [DHA], killing two people and injuring at least seven others. The attack targeted a convoy of SSP South Farooq Awan in DHA Phase IV – luckily the SSP suffered minor wounds.

The blast was heard far and wide and a large trail of smoke was visible as well. It caused a suspension of electricity supply in the vicinity. The vehicle of SSP Awan was completely destroyed in the attack, whereas another police mobile van escorting him was also badly damaged. The attack did not appear to have been carried out by a suicide bomber; probably a bomb had been planted in a Suzuki pickup van which was remotely detonated.

A banned militant group **Jundallah** claimed the said attack. The CID Counter-Terror unit's record also confirmed the involvement of **Jundallah** because earlier the murder of Ali Akbar Kumaili, son of prominent Shia scholar and former Senator Allama Abbas Kumaili and a grenade attack on 15-*Madadgar* police at Nursery on *Shara e Faisal* in Karachi, were also claimed by **Jundallah**. The group had been 'reactivated' after a gap of about two years in the city.

Karachi has been a cauldron of ethnic and political tension for decades, where political parties have militant wings; gangs make money through drug-trafficking, land grabbing and other forms of crime, and sectarian violence also seen at high scale.

Targeted operations by Police and Rangers' forces were afoot in the city under a directive issued by the federal government against criminals already identified by federal, military and civilian agencies but the ghost was free to move and play.

In a bid to eliminate Taliban militancy from the country and to wipe out militant strongholds in North Waziristan tribal agency bordering Afghanistan, Pakistani military had launched operation **Zarb e Azb** in mid June [2014]. Pakistan Army claimed that hundreds of high profile TTP commanders and fighters had been killed in the operation ever since.

SSP Faisal Awan was the Station House Officer of Karachi's Clifton Police Station when Mir Murtaza Bhutto was killed in the police station's jurisdiction in 1996. His name was also included in the list of six police officers who were in the TTP hit-list. He also had narrowly missed a militant attack on him in 2005.

However, he was also among those 71 unlucky police officers who were demoted in August 2013 on the orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The apex court had withdrawn all out-of-turn promotions — known as shoulder promotions in bureaucratic parlance — which were handed out in the decade for courageous performance of certain police officers of Karachi.

#### **KILLINGS' DATA FOR 2014:**

As many as 7,655 people were killed in terrorism, militant attacks, sectarian violence, targeted killings, security operations and drone strikes in 2014 compared to 5,687 similar deaths in 2013's Pakistan. Fatalities from the militant attacks, terrorism and targeted killings decreased by 15pc; however, 35pc increase in the overall deaths was recorded during the year 2014. **Daily 'Dawn'** dated **10<sup>th</sup> January 2015** referred to the research report of **Centre for Research and Security Studies** [CRSS] for 2014.

*"The major increase in violence was observed in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas [FATA], where fatalities more than doubled from 1,457 in 2013 to 3,399 in 2014. The major reason for the increase in deaths in FATA is the military-led operation **Zarb e Azb** in the North Waziristan Agency.*

*The second largest increase was in Punjab where deaths from violence rose by 158pc from 120 in 2013 to 309 in 2014. A part of this increased figure may be attributed to the November 1, 2014, bombing at the Wagah border which left 60 people dead."*

The report added that Khyber PK province saw a decrease in violence-related deaths - 945 in 2014 compared to 1,031 deaths in 2013. Gilgit - Baltistan saw the largest decrease in violence-related casualties from 20 in 2013 to just three in 2014.

The sudden increase in deaths started from June 2014 which can be attributed to the start of the military operation but most were counted under the security force's action. Deaths from violence accelerated towards the end of

the year compared to year 2013. The last three months of the year 2014 were especially bloody with an alarming 258pc increase compared to 2013.

The report said 1,498 of the total fatalities were a direct result of terror attacks, of which militant organisations claimed responsibility for 613 killings. As many as 40.9pc of all the fatalities attributed to terror attacks were claimed by the militant groups.

A total of 133 women and 270 children were also killed in violence of one form or another. About 40 schools and three colleges were also bombed while 26 principals, professors and teachers as well as 143 students were killed.

The highest fatalities - 2,029 - were observed in Karachi while North Waziristan Agency and Khyber Agency witnessed 1,825 and 1,187 deaths, respectively. As many as 431 people were killed in Peshawar and 170 in Quetta.

The report said the largest number of deaths in 2014 were militants - 3,460 and criminals - 595. The second largest group to be killed in violence incidents was civilians [2,395], followed by security officials [741]. Moreover, 186 politicians, including party workers, 52 individuals affiliated with religious organisations and nine journalists were also killed in 2014.

*"As many as 2,125 people lost their lives in targeted killings, 982 in militant attacks, 516 in terror incidents and 209 in drone attacks.*

*As many as 30 suicide attacks were reported in 2014 but these suicide bombers were not included in the list of people killed during the year."*

Intiaz Gul, the head of the CRSS, confirmed that the information about the deaths in 2014 was collected from the print media.

## **Scenario 153**

### **MQM - FUNDING FROM INDIA**

Referring to media reports dated **23<sup>rd</sup> December 2014:**

Once, the MQM demanded that foreign funding to religious seminaries in Pakistan, especially in Karachi, should be stopped.

Speaking during a session of the Senate, MQM senator Nasreen Jalil said that *Jamiat UIema e Islam Fazl* [JUI-F] chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman should take the lead in offering details of foreign funding to his religious seminaries.

Next Sunday, an FIR was lodged against Maulana Aziz on charges of threatening MQM chief Altaf Hussain over terrorism, provocation and cyber crime. It was the second FIR against the Lal Masjid cleric in a span of two days, the earlier one being filed by civil society activists in Islamabad.

The MQM's case against the cleric was lodged by Advocate Arif Khan. The complainant had submitted as proof the video message as well as the written document in which Maulana Aziz had threatened Altaf Hussain, who had urged the government to demolish Lal Masjid.

JUI[F] and MQM both were sailing in the ***same boat of foreign funding.***

Referring to **'the News' dated 5<sup>th</sup> July 2015:** former RAW chief AS Dulat said that MQM Chief Altaf Hussain was 'guest' of British intelligence agency MI-6 in London. However, he refused to answer a question about India's funding of MQM. He maintained that Altaf Hussain was being hosted by MI-6 and therefore, MI-6 should be questioned about MQM funding as well.

AS Dulat's statement had come amidst rumours that two MQM leaders had confessed to MQM's funding from India.

Referring to **'the News' dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** calling itself a patriotic political party of Pakistan, the MQM *Rabita* [coordination] Committee distanced itself from those workers who had gone to India following the 1992 operation against the party. The committee, in an **'important policy statement'** said that:

*"These workers, who had gone to India for saving their lives, did so without informing the MQM and this cannot be called the policy of the MQM. The MQM has nothing to do with the training of these people in India."*

The statement appeared against the backdrop of the then ongoing crack-down on criminals and terrorists in Karachi by Rangers and police. The party said thousands of MQM workers were forced to go to different parts of the country for saving their lives after the 'state' operation in 1992 - some headed to foreign countries where they claimed asylum. The Committee maintained that:

*"The countries where the MQM workers headed included USA, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Australia, Middle East states etc. Some went to India for saving their lives as they could not go to any other country.*

*These MQM workers chose to go to India because they had family ties in India, and they thought that they will not face hardships of homelessness and hunger."*

The *Rabita* Committee urged that just as clemency is being announced for the estranged Baloch people who were highly praiseworthy, the establishment should also heal the wounds of *Muhajirs* by forgetting past bitterness. Also that such a step would be in the interest of the nation and the country, and vowed to extend its fullest support to it.

**The matter, however, travels far back – even to 1990s.**

### **HOSTILE TARIQ MIR SPILLS BEANS:**

**On 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012;** as per transcripts of an interview conducted by the London Metropolitan Police at ***Egware Police Station London***, Tariq Mir, a senior leader of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement [MQM] made startling revelations about the nexus between his party and the Indian intelligence, claiming that the Indians used to pay £800,000 to the MQM per annum for running its operations.

Tariq Mir had made the statements 'voluntarily' and was 'not under arrest or threat'. The transcripts appeared on social media after MQM top leaders in Karachi used absurd and ridiculous language against the Pak-Rangers and army establishment a week earlier. [***Pakistan Today***' dated **27<sup>th</sup> June 2015** is referred]

According to the transcripts, Mir told the British police that Indian money was initially received by the party through couriers. He further told that:

*'At some stage our expenses (of the Secretariat) were about 100,000 pounds per month. I was aware of our significant increase in funding as a result of the Indian connection.*

*That funding continued for, I cannot be exact.... But due to pounds 10k cash limit (on importing currency), on some occasions, we got businessmen to receive the money and use it to pay MQM's expenses.'*

During the same days the police had also interviewed MQM senior member Mohammad Anwar about Indian funding, Tariq Mir said the MQM sought money from all over; and added that:

*'The Indians approached us – questions were asked about people without passports, etc. ... In about 1994, we started getting some money; some of our frozen accounts were released. In 1995-96, I took-over the finance from (Nadeem) Nusrat and ... that money was coming from India.'*

Asked whether MQM Chief Altaf Hussein knew about the Indian money, Tariq Mir said that Hussein himself was getting money from India. **'He [Altaf Hussein] got his money from different sources. The Indian government funded us because they thought it was good to support us,'** Mir added.

Replying a question that who else in MQM knew about Indian funding; Tariq Mir said that:

*'It was very secret... The money would have come via Mr Anwar, because apart from me, Anwar and Dr F and Anwar knew about the money. So far as I know, no one else in the party, apart from Anwar, had the money details.*

*No one but the four of us knew about it, we did not want to come out open that MQM was receiving from Indians'.*

About who initiated Indian money, Tariq Mir said he did not know for sure who facilitated getting the money to Altaf Hussain. Added that the largest amount of money he ever received was for house purchase, but he did not know what part of that funding came from India.

*'I would say a large part of the funding for houses came from the Indian money. I said earlier that London gets about Pounds*

*800,000 per annum (this is not to include cost of purchasing houses) that has been fairly steady over the years.*

*The request to Indians for money used to be done for more workers. We asked for the funding but I do not believe the Indian people ever paid anything like what we wanted. Some of the expense may have gone on weapons training. People would have been sent to India to get some weapons training.'*

According to the transcripts, Mir said he did not exactly remember when the meetings with Indians started but:

*'[If I could recall exactly]. ... First meeting, with the Indians was in Vienna or Rome. (Mohammad) Anwar and (Altaf) Hussein were present. We had three or four meetings. One was definitely in Rome, one in Vienna, one in Zurich, one in a small city of Austria (Salzburg); a meeting in Paraguay [or Prague]. First meeting was probably in Rome.*

*The meetings were held whenever they wanted to meet. The purpose of meetings was to get to know one and other; I believe their names were not the real names, they never gave their names.'*

Tariq Mir said the Indian visitors who met with MQM leaders were from the Indian intelligence agency [RAW] as he understood and the head of delegation had direct access to the Indian Prime Minister.

**On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012;** The London Met Police had found the cash at first place ... Before this, money laundering issue was not raised ... And raid was conducted to find out clues in Imran Farooq murder case.

*"..... the cash was found when a counter-terrorism unit of police raided Mr Hussain's office on 6<sup>th</sup> December last year under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act in connection with the investigation of Dr Imran Farooq murder case."*

The reason money laundering issue was not raised before this was that they didn't have reliable evidence. These statements by Tariq Mir could have been enough to grant them a search warrant but not enough to start a money laundering case.

*"If you read through the documents, you will see that a lot of it is based on the possibility of MQM having '**killling teams**' - which*

*easily fits in with the Imran Farooq murder case investigation. It isn't the British police's fault if Mir sahib gave them some extra information."*

However, the London Metropolitan Police, **on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015**, denied that a purported confession statement by MQM leader Tariq Mir was an official document which had been leaked. The London Police spokesperson Alan Crockford, after reviewing the purported testimony carefully, confirmed that they were not official documents of record.

In the short e-mailed reply, Mr Alan told that the London police had carefully analysed excerpts from this alleged confession, printed in various newspapers of Pakistan. In the above paragraphs, the disclosures made by Tariq Mir, it was alleged that the MQM had been receiving funds from the Indian government since 1994 with only four top leaders kept in the loop.

The alleged statement lent credence to the BBC report published on 24<sup>th</sup> June about two MQM leaders telling the British authorities about the MQM-RAW nexus. However, it must be kept in mind that ***the London Police officer had only denied that no document from their police files were removed or copied – but it did not comment that whether the record available with Tariq Mir was false.***

#### **BBC-2 DOCUMENTARY ON MQM:**

**On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2013:** The London Metropolitan Police confirmed that investigations against MQM's Chief Altaf Hussain had initiated on charges of money laundering worth at least £400,000 and incitement to violence.

The news was part of a short documentary prepared by **Newsnight** on the MQM, and included video clips of Mr Hussain making violent statements, an outline of the death of assassinated party leader Imran Farooq, as well as interviews with a former MQM leader, a policeman accusing the party of murder and party leader Farooq Sattar. The said program was hosted by Owen Benett Jones.

The UK authorities had started investigating the MQM in 2010 when a senior party leader, Imran Farooq, was stabbed to death outside his home in north London. During those inquiries the police found around £400,000 in

the MQM's London offices and in the home of MQM leader Altaf Hussain. That prompted a second investigation into possible money laundering.

In the course of the inquiries the UK authorities found a list itemising weapons, including mortars, grenades and bomb-making equipment in an MQM property. The list included prices for the weapons; when asked about the list, the MQM made no response.

As the UK police investigations progressed, the British judiciary adopted an increasingly tough line on the MQM. Back in 2011 a British judge adjudicating an asylum appeal case had found that ***"the MQM has killed over 200 police officers who have stood up against them in Karachi"***.

Before 2005-06 the training was given to a small number of mid-ranking members of the MQM; later, greater numbers of more junior party members had been trained.

A year earlier, another British judge hearing another such case found that:

***"There is overwhelming objective evidence that the MQM for decades had been using violence."***

The MQM was also under pressure in Pakistan due to those developments.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015**, the Rangers raided the party's Karachi HQ at Nine Zero. They found a significant number of weapons there for which the MQM said they were planted by the Rangers themselves.

*BBC portrayed Altaf Hussain under caption: Who is Altaf Hussain?*

- Born in Karachi in 1953 to a middle-class family; studied pharmacy at university.
- Formed MQM party in 1984 to represent *Mohajirs* - descendants of Urdu-speaking Muslims who migrated from India to Pakistan.
- Requested political asylum in UK in 1992, later gained British citizenship; continues to run MQM from north London.

***BBC continued*** that - [He] lived in self-imposed exile in the UK for more than 20 years. He was given a British passport in 2002. Till recent past, MQM had been accused of using violence to impose its will on Karachi. On other counts, many MQM officials, including Altaf Hussain, were called to police station in relation to the money-laundering case but no-one was

formally charged. The party insisted that all its funds were legitimate and that most of them come from donors in the business community in Karachi.

The latest developments in the MQM case suggested that Pakistan would counter such complaints with demands that India should stop sponsoring violent forces in Karachi; especially the MQM.

Next day, the BBC also declared that the Indian government denied the allegation, telling the BBC that the charges were completely baseless. The MQM also strongly denied the claims, saying it never received any funding or training from India.

The MQM has long been a dominant force in the politics of Pakistan's largest city Karachi but as the BBC's Owen Bennett Jones reported, pressure on the party was mounting.

BBC Urdu Service report then released had confirmed that '*a considerable amount of money*' had been found during raids on Mr Hussain's residence and office in London on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 as detailed above, but no arrest was made at the spot. The cash was found when a Counter-Terrorism Unit of Police raided Mr Hussain's office in connection with the investigation of Dr Imran Farooq murder case.

However, no further detail was provided by the London police but the money was seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

**The BBC** told that on **18<sup>th</sup> June 2013** two more raids were carried out in MQM's more houses in north London **and again a considerable amount of money was seized**. It was being investigated as to how and under what circumstances the money had reached the three places.

While talking to the host of **BBC Two NEWSNIGHT** referred above, senior MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar also admitted the seizure of some money during raids in London. However, he was not able to comment on the investigation into possible money-laundering while police inquiries were in progress. BBC News told that in raids on MQM-owned properties in London, police seized hundreds of thousands of dollars in unaccounted-for cash.

The London police had also received thousands of complaints against Mr Hussain for a controversial speech from London to his followers in Karachi and police sent the transcript of the speech to Home Office for translation and analysis. However, the police did not tell the BBC anything about the advice they got from the Home Office on those speech scripts.

BBC's **Newsnight** also confirmed that in 2001 Mr Hussain had written a letter to the then British prime minister Tony Blair in which the former had offered the British government his party's help in getting secret information about **Jihadi** networks in Pakistan. **Newsnight** got this letter under the Freedom of Information Act.

*[The said letter **verbatim** has been placed in '**The Living History of Pakistan**' Vol-III with reference to Karachi's former Mayor Mustafa Kamal.]*

Dr Sattar was also shown clips of certain speeches of Mr Hussain. Rejecting allegations levelled in the **Newsnight** programme, Dr Sattar said it appeared that **"there has been an influence of pro-Taliban and radical forces while this documentary was being prepared"**.

Meanwhile, another MQM leader, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, told a press conference in Karachi that parts of certain speeches of Mr Hussain had been presented out of context in the BBC programme. Condemning the BBC programme for what he called out-of-context presentation of Mr Hussain's speeches, he asked people to exercise patience and vowed that MQM would raise its voice in a democratic manner at every forum against the propaganda.

In January 2014, another BBC news report had identified the names of two suspects in the Dr Imran Farooq murder case.

The report said that based on the documents received from Pakistani officials the two suspects were identified, for the first time, by the names of Mohsin Ali Syed and Muhammad Kashif Khan, who had been staying on student visa in England.

*[Owen Bennett Jones, a former BBC Correspondent in Islamabad, presents **Newshour** on the BBC World Service and is the author of **Pakistan: Eye of the Storm**.]*

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014;** the MQM leader, Altaf Hussain, was dramatically arrested from his home in North West London. The Scotland Yard confirmed that a 60-year-old man had been arrested on suspicion of money-laundering but did not name Altaf Hussain. The MQM itself and the police later confirmed that it was Altaf Hussain who was taken in police custody.

The media filmed the North London property of Altaf Hussain being searched by around three dozen detectives from the Specialist Operations

Unit. The operation began at 5:30am and all members of the household were asked to leave the property except Altaf Hussain. Initially, the MQM denied the news of the arrest and issued several denials but later on issued a detailed press release and accepted that Altaf Hussain had been arrested.

The media live news bulletin carried that: 'A British citizen, Altaf Hussain, lived in exile in the UK since 1991 after he fled Karachi and sought asylum here. He was attacked in Karachi several times before he left Pakistan'. The MQM said in the afternoon:

*"Altaf Hussain has been taken to the police station where the police doctor will examine his health and decide if Mr Hussain is fit to be interviewed. Mr Altaf Hussain is at present in the police station.*

*The Metropolitan Police arrived at the residence of Altaf Hussain in North London. They had the search warrant and they wanted to arrest Mr Hussain and take him to the police station where he will be questioned about money laundering investigation.*

*We would like to inform that Mr Hussain has been very ill for past several days and only yesterday the MQM Central Coordination Committee discussed his health situation and contacted his personal doctor. The doctor visited the residence of Mr Hussain and examined him.*

*The doctor advised to shift him to the hospital. He also consulted various specialist consultants and it was decided that today in the morning Mr Hussain will be admitted to a London hospital where he will undergo treatment for the next few days."*

*Today [on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014], Mr Hussain was getting ready for the hospital when the police arrived at his house and informed him that he is being arrested for investigation."*

The Scotland Yard confirmed late on Tuesday that Altaf Hussain had been taken to hospital for the previously scheduled medical appointment.

The police also told that the arrest took place at a residential address in NW London. Officers were then searching the address. The man [Mr Hussain] had an existing medical condition and we would ensure that he could attend pre-arranged hospital appointments. He would remain in the custody of officers throughout.

As news started filtering through the airwaves that the MQM's Chief Altaf Hussain had been arrested in London on money laundering charges, everybody went scared in Karachi. Petrol pumps were cordoned off; markets and offices emptied out; panic spread, and fear and anxiety was writ large on the city's streets. The city – which kept a terrible history of violent protests – seemed like a ticking time bomb, which, upon explosion, could destroy everything any time.

MQM had the capacity to shut down the city if and when it wanted; moreover, Karachi had acquired over the decades of reacting violently to anything directly or indirectly linked to the politics of the city. Rivals and critics of MQM were comprised of a bunch of goons with their leader as don. However, for sympathisers and die-hard supporters, the party and its leader had been saviours of the *mohajirs*; they have given *mohajirs* an identity, and had successfully mobilised the community to stand up against economic injustice and ethnic prejudice.

*Main teen tak ginoon ga* [I will count up to three], Altaf Hussain roared at a rally held under the shadow of Quaid e Azam's mausoleum in 1989. *Uss ke baad aap sab bilkul khamosh ho jaayengey* [After that everyone of you will become silent].

A quarter of a century later and now from thousands of miles away, Altaf Hussain could still make Karachi fall silent whenever he wanted. His followers used to say:

**'Humein manzil nahin rehnuma chahiye'** [We don't need the destination but the leader]

MQM was the party its followers would do anything for — no questions asked. Even though Altaf Hussain has been away from Pakistan since December 1991, hardly any serious contenders to his authority could match him in the MQM. More importantly, for sympathisers and supporters, the party's ideology, or whatever remains of it, had become subservient to the personality of its Chief – Altaf Hussain.

The turning point; with war raging in Afghanistan during the 1980s, Karachi became the central transit point for foreign weapons being delivered to the Afghan factions. Weapons started fascinating the youth, pilferage and dissemination were there – so the weaponisation of Karachi became a marked feature of that age.

MQM got strengthened with new weaponry and started taking control of the city. Due to the radical preaching of Altaf Hussain, deadly skirmishes

between MQM and the state apparatus got mentionable space on the front pages of the print media. This triggered a siege mentality - the party was 'in a constant state of confrontation'. The next few years, especially between 1986 and 1990, Karachi was trained enough to write its own history with blood.

During those four years, the MQM managed to sweep elections for local governments in Karachi and Hyderabad, and won the National and Sindh Assembly seats falling in the two cities with unprecedented margins. Altaf Hussain, however, never participated in any of these elections. The strategy worked; as MQM was able to claim it had brought a middle-class revolution - Hussain emerged as the ultimate kingmaker.

### **UPROAR IN KARACHI AFTER BBC-2:**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015;** Pakistan's Federal Defence Minister Khawaja Asif had claimed far back that India was helping terrorist groups in Pakistan to carry out "*heinous acts*". In an interview on Dawn News's programme '**News Eye**', the minister alleged that India "*has designs on Pakistan. Taliban have links with India. Also, India's involvement in the insurgency in Balochistan cannot be ignored.*"

A day earlier, Adviser to the PM on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz had also said that India was involved in acts carried out from Afghanistan's soil in Pakistan.

Pakistan Military sources had also claimed on the same day that the evidence with them would credibly identify financial support, training and provision of weapons to militants from India.

**[On 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** *SSP Malir Rao Anwar, while speaking to media, announced the arrest of two terror suspects a night earlier, who were members of Indian spy agency RAW. the two suspects – Tahir alias Lamba and Mama Junaid – also belonged to the MQM and had been sent to India (through Indian-held Kashmir) for training in the past.*

*"We have solid evidence to prove these allegations. We recovered a large number of explosives, hand grenades, 9mm pistols from these suspects. Zulfiqar Haider and Nadeem Nusrat, the deputy*

*convener of MQM, have been funding these terrorist activities from London," the SSP held.】*

**On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** the Pakistan military's media wing, the ISPR, in a statement following a conference of the corps commanders presided over by army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif at the GHQ in Rawalpindi, said:

*"The conference took serious notice of RAW's involvement in whipping up terrorism in Pakistan. The corps commanders confirmed India's hand behind the unrest in the country, although Islamabad has long suspected RAW's involvement."*

The statement came days after a senior police officer in Karachi arrested two MQM workers for inciting violence in the metropolitan city at the behest of RAW. The controversy led to a verbal duel between MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and the security establishment.

MQM's Altaf Hussain launched scathing criticism against the military establishment in a frustration on his part. MQM leader was upset over the then ongoing targeted operation in Karachi. Subsequently, the army said it would pursue legal action against Altaf for his unsavoury remarks.

Though the MQM chief apologised for what he called sarcastic remarks, Defence Secretary Lt Gen [rtd] M Alam Khattak told the National Assembly Standing Committee on Defence next day for the proposed legal action. The committee chairman, Sh Rohail Asghar, also supported action against Altaf for his disparaging remarks against the army. The army chief, while addressing the conference, said:

*"A terror-free Pakistan is now a national resolve. Law enforcement agencies and our brave armed forces have given a lot of sacrifices in fighting these misguided and hardened criminals to safeguard a peaceful and better future for our next generation.*

*These sacrifices will not go waste. We will take this war to its logical conclusion. Dignity and honour of our country, its people and gallant armed forces will be safeguarded at all costs.*

*With the overwhelming support of the entire nation, Operation **Zarb e Azb** [in North Waziristan Agency] has inflicted significant damage on terrorists."*

**On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** Sindh High Court [SHC] directed the police to produce in court the alleged MQM worker, Rehan Tahir, whom SSP Rao Anwar had declared an agent of the Indian intelligence agency, RAW.

A division bench, headed by Justice Ahmed Ali M Sheikh, passed this direction on a petition filed by the suspect's wife, Najma Tahir - for keeping him under illegal detention and extracting a confession under duress.

The petitioner said that law enforcers had arrested him near Mukka Chowk in Azizabad on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015. Later SSP Anwar said that they had arrested her husband on 30<sup>th</sup> April. Najma Tahir requested the court to order a medical examination of the suspect to prove the torture he was subjected to. She sought an inquiry into the confessional statement of Tahir regarding his association with Raw.

The details of the *BBC* report pointing out that how the MQM had allegedly received weaponry training from India and also funds from that country, created a major stir in Pakistan. Such allegations had also surfaced before — Kh Asif Defence Minister's loud announcement on Parliament's floor **on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015**.

SSP Rao Anwar's media conference in Karachi **on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015** and Pak-Army's media briefing **on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015** were on the record stating the same facts. But as a credible, independent news source, every Pakistani national believed that the *BBC* report carried much credence.

The allegations that certain MQM officials and the party notables used to receive funding from India, and a Pakistani official revealing that MQM's mid-level operatives had allegedly received weapons training in India a decade ago followed by more junior level members of the party, surfaced at a time when relations between Islamabad and New Delhi were tense.

India categorically denied the charges as did the MQM but the saga could not be cooled quickly. The **BBC** also reported that an itemised list of weapons allocated to the MQM members was found on one of the premises of the party raided in London. The raid was done in connection with the murder of the senior party leader Dr Imran Farooq years earlier.

The **BBC** report appeared at a time when an operation was on in Karachi against criminal elements backed by political ones, and it was widely aired that the Pakistani establishment was seeking a treason case against the MQM leadership. The PML[N] government was also under tremendous pressure to pursue the matter. Receiving funds and weapons from India, as well as training on its soil, were generally considered the offences un-

der high treason thus the concerned authorities had to proceed sensibly and on the basis of rationality rather than emotion.

The MQM has been a major party with a huge following in Karachi so the MQM were invited to explain its position given the seriousness of the allegations. While any criminal elements within the party were being apprehended, the general populace was disturbed over the ineptness of the courts and the useless judicial system ever prevailing in Pakistan.

The '**BBC News**' dated **24<sup>th</sup> June 2015** made it more open that:

***".....officials in Pakistan's MQM party have told the UK authorities they received Indian government funds.***

***UK authorities investigating the MQM for alleged money laundering also found a list of weapons and explosives in an MQM property.***

***.....that India has trained hundreds of MQM militants over the past 10 years in camps in north and north-east India."***

**MQM & INDIA BOTH DENIED:**

The Indian authorities described the claims as "completely baseless"; the MQM also strongly denied the claims. MQM Coordination Committee Member Wasay Jalil in response to the report posted a short statement to Twitter, rejecting **BBC's** allegations. In response to a question on Twitter about a confessional statement available with Scotland Yard, Jalil said, ***"We have seen these confessions since '92"***.

In its counter statement, the MQM termed the BBC report a part of the ***"media trial that has been ongoing for past several years against the party. All allegations against the MQM in the BBC report originate from a 'Pakistani source,' which in itself speaks for the authenticity of these allegations."***

London-based leader Mohammad Anwar's response to the BBC report was:

*"Dear Ms Peavor [of the BBC]*

*As you will have guessed from my last response, I am frustrated that you are not willing to be more specific. We are not prepared to comment on rumours.*

*In addition, as far as the UK is concerned you will be aware that there is an ongoing police investigation, although no charges have been brought, and the legal advice which we have received is that we should not comment.*

*I would urge you not to broadcast these defamatory allegations. They will do nothing to assist a fair trial should any prosecution be brought here, and are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the already tense situation in Pakistan.*

*Yours sincerely    Mohammed Anwar"*

Despite the said denials, the British authorities held formal recorded interviews with senior MQM officials who told them the party was receiving Indian funding. Asked about the claims of Indian funding and training of the MQM, the Indian High Commission in London said: **"Shortcomings of governance cannot be rationalised by blaming neighbours."**

Next day, **on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015**; after viewing the BBC documentary Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry said that **'action will be taken against the MQM if the BBC's allegations that the party received funds and training from India are authenticated.'** Secretary said during a briefing to Senate's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs:

*"Institutions relating to national security are handling this matter and are collecting the facts.*

*Pakistan reserves the right to raise this matter on every international forum once we have gathered credible information.*

*It is time the government should move against him [Altaf Husain] in the light of the BBC report on the MQM-India nexus.*

*Our atomic / nuclear weapons are only for deterrence as we perceive threats from India."*

The panel discussed developments regarding the US, Pakistan Working Group on Security, Strategic Stability and Proliferation. Pakistan has seri-

ous concerns over India and the United States open deal over civil nuclear technology programme in those days.

During those days, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had acknowledged that his country played a part in the events of 1971 that led to the break-up of Pakistan. The latest BBC revelations soured the already tense relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

Referring to the '**Express Tribune**' dated **25<sup>th</sup> June 2015**; while citing an 'authoritative' Pakistani source, the report by Owen Bennett-Jones claimed that senior MQM officials, in formal recorded interviews, admitted before British authorities that the [MQM] party has been receiving funds from the Indian government.

Quoting a Pakistani official, the above quoted media report said India had trained hundreds of MQM militants in explosives, weapons and sabotage over the last 10 years in camps in north and north-east India. The same official was quoted as saying:

*"Before 2005-06, the training was given to a small number of mid - ranking members of the MQM but more recently greater numbers of more junior party members have been trained."*

The claims, according to the BBC report, followed the statement of SSP Rao Anwar of Karachi police that two arrested MQM militants said they had been trained in India. As stated earlier, in a press conference on 30<sup>th</sup> April, SSP Anwar gave details of how the two men went to India via Thailand to be trained by the Indian intelligence agency RAW.

he MQM, however, rejected the BBC report, saying it was a part of a campaign to smear the party's image in Pakistan and abroad. *"The allegations [made by the BBC] are nothing new. Such accusations have been levelled against us in the past as well,"* MQM spokesman Wasay Jalil once told the media.

Reacting on the surprising revelation made by the BBC that MQM 'received Indian funding', Defence Minister Kh Asif said:

*"...it is not 1992 but rather 2015 and MQM has to prove its innocence. Just issuing a statement that the BBC report is a table story is not sufficient - the party has to clarify its position in London."*

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The minister said if allegations levelled by the *BBC* news story against the MQM proved right then the party would face consequences, adding that *'if it proves that MQM got funding from India then there will not be any difference between India and MQM.'*

JUI's spokesperson Jan Achakzai and JI's Ameer Sirajul Haq said:

*"India is involved in an organised proxy war in Pakistan from Balochistan to Karachi to Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and RAW, India's spy agency, has cultivated proxies and was providing funding, logistics, travel documents and training."*

They said in separate statements that the rulers had been turning a blind eye towards the MQM during the last three decades due to political considerations - the silence of rulers had entrapped our biggest city [Karachi] and economic hub of Pakistan.

PTI senior leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi said: *"They [MQM] should come out and clarify to the people that this report is not correct; if they think it unjust, they should take legal action."*

Referring to a news bulletin at **'Dunya News TV'** on **15<sup>th</sup> October 2015**;

Scotland Yard handed over to Pakistan the evidence of Indian intelligence agency RAW funding MQM party; it was a list of over 10 names who were involved in the process. Reportedly, these people used to take direct funding from the Indian agency and provided it to the MQM.

The Scotland Yard had prepared the said list after interrogation from Altaf Hussain and Muhammad Anwar. Adviser to the Prime Minister, Ishtar Ausaf held meetings with the Scotland Yard police regarding the case. The government started investigation over the issues of RAW funding and money laundering apparently in a serious way but with no results.

Rangers' massive operation against terrorism and target killing in Karachi was ongoing and the authorities were also investigating and taking to task the outfits or parties who allegedly had links with foreign funding sources.

MQM strongly condemned and had been vocal against targeting the MQM in guise of the operation. Their lawmakers even had once resigned from the assemblies in protest.

*[Earlier, on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015; MQM workers protested outside United Nations [UN] during the UN General Assembly session and **demanding freedom from army and the country as well.***

*PML[N] leader Marvi Memon demanded immediate apology over the action and said that she was shocked to watch the video.*

*Airing the video on his show 'On the Front' on **Dunya News**, Kamran Shahid asked MQM leader Rehan Hashmi about MQM's policy over the slogans raised in the video. Though he denied the video at first, Hashmi later admitted that the protest and the slogans raised in the video were completely unjustified and said that it had nothing to do with MQM's policy.*

*The video showed protesters lined up outside UN building and one of the protesters raising slogans, **demanding 'freedom' from 'Generals', 'Colonels' and even the 'country'.***

*Condemning the video and the slogans aired in the video, the intelligentsia was shocked to see it. Rehan Hashmi could in no way defend such an act. Later, Rehan Hashmi also said that MQM had nothing to do with this video and the party fully supported Pakistan army and the government's policy over Kashmir.*

*Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf [PTI] leader Ali Muhammad Khan responded to the video saying that the protester raising the slogans seemed to be an Indian agent. He said that Rehan Hashmi should never defend such an action, which was no less than treason. Rehan Hashmi responded, saying that he condemned the video.]*

Referring to the daily '**Pakistan Today**' dated **19<sup>th</sup> March 2016**;

*"MQM leader Tariq Mir made startling revelations about party's links with Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing [RAW] in his confessional statement to the London Metropolitan Police.*

*Mir's eight-page-long confession details that the Indian government used to provide funds to MQM chief Altaf Hussain through various sources and the meetings between MQM leaders and RAW officials used to take place in different European cities such as Rome, Zurich, Vienna and Prague."*

The confessional statement revealed that MQM's funding by the Indian spy agency started back in 1994 and initially the party used to receive GBP 800,000 annually. With these initial funds, Mir further discloses, nine houses had been purchased in London.

It added that some MQM members did not want to see [slain leader] Dr Imran Farooq in the party, while only four MQM leaders, including Altaf Hussain, had the knowledge of party's RAW funding.

Mir further said that after MQM's inclusion in the government of former president Gen Musharraf, Indian officials were notified that further funds would not be needed.

### **UK DROPPED CHARGES AGAINST MQM:**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** Scotland Yard announced that no **"further action will be taken against Altaf Hussain and others"** in the long-running money-laundering case, while deciding to drop the investigation altogether and effectively ensuring that the sensitive evidence involved in this case wouldn't go to public for fear of causing rifts between Pakistan, the UK and India.

*[As detailed before; the case against the MQM Chief Altaf Hussain started in December 2012 when the police found a large amount of cash at the MQM's International Secretariat. Scotland Yard had said during the course of investigation that:*

***"it had credible evidence that the MQM received funds from the Indian government sources and broke the electoral laws of Pakistan and the UK".]***

The Hammersmith Magistrates Court had given a deadline to the police to produce evidence in the court on the application of Sarfraz Merchant, a co-accused in the money-laundering case, along with Tariq Mir, M Anwar, Yasin Haji, Latif Jiwa and others.

The police and the prosecutors had to decide whether to reveal evidence before the court and thus let the media swoop and jump on it or suppress it by dropping the case altogether so that nothing ever could come to the public light. Said the police in a statement:

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*"The Metropolitan Police Service on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016, following a detailed evidential review and upon receipt of legal advice, made the decision to withdraw their application in that civil case under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 for the forfeiture of over £500,000 in cash.*

*The cash had been seized from a number of venues between 2012 and 2014. Having examined all of the evidence the Met has accepted that there is insufficient evidence to prove that the money seized was the proceeds of crime or was intended for use in unlawful conduct.*

*Since 2013, officers from the Met's National Terrorist Financial Investigation Unit investigated allegations of money laundering to which the civil proceedings were linked. Officers have worked diligently on the investigation and thoroughly investigated all of the evidence to establish if any laws had been broken in the UK."*

The Met Police record maintained that during the course of investigation, six people were arrested, 11 other people were interviewed under caution, a total of 28 interviews were conducted at police stations of persons under investigation, over 100 witness statements were taken, nine premises were searched, which were located in the south and north of England.

The Police said that all reasonable lines of enquiry had been exhausted, including international enquiries; a case file had been submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service [CPS] for their careful consideration. The CPS advised, taking into account all of the evidence identified during the course of the investigation, that there was not a realistic prospect of successful prosecution under UK law, therefore the investigation was being declared complete but not recommended for any further action.

The police found £167,525.92 in the MQM's offices in London and a further £289,785.32 in Altaf Hussain's home during raids. Altaf Hussain was arrested on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014 by the Metropolitan Police but then released on bail. **On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2016**, the Scotland Yard had passed an incomplete case file to the Crown Prosecution Service [CPS] for the charging decision, giving birth to questions about the very future of the whole investigation.

That the said police file was passed to the CPS despite the fact that the Counter-Terrorism Command Unit [CTCU], responsible for investigating the money-laundering case, was aware that the case file at the stage of submission to the CPS, in April 2016, was incomplete because ***of the fact that several people refused to cooperate with the police in its in-***

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**vestigations** and the police didn't pursue the suspects rigorously as per their routine working.

Meanwhile, British High Commissioner to Pakistan Thomas Drew called on Minister for Interior Ch Nisar Ali Khan and informed him about the dropping of the money laundering case against MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and his companions. In response, Ch Nisar vowed to pursue the case amidst discussions on the relations between Pakistan and Britain and other issues, including security. They exchanged views on the subject but agreed that their relations should not reach dead-end because of a single issue.

Thus the whole issue went buried despite Interior Minister Ch Nisar's high-tone media addresses that PML[N] would raise the issue strongly before the British government – but ultimately Tain...Tain...Phish.

## **Scenario 154**

### **MEDIA KILLINGS ALL OVER [2013-16]**

**CPJ's REPORT OF 2012-13:**

'Committee to Protect Journalists' [CPJ]'s Robert Mahoney once identified the 10 countries where press freedom suffered the most in 2012. They included Syria, the world's deadliest country for the press; Russia, where repressive laws took effect; Brazil, where journalist murders soared; and Ethiopia, where terror laws were used to silence the press – then there was Pakistan, of course.

Thus Pakistan was the world's fifth deadliest nation for the press since 1992, CPJ research told. About 60 percent of the fatalities were targeted murders, with the rest coming during dangerous assignments.

With at least seven journalists killed in 2012, that was why the country was ranked one of the world's deadliest for the press. The strangest attack was of **27<sup>th</sup> August 2012**; occurred in Gulshan e Iqbal Karachi, Zainul Abedin, Editor of *the News*, was beaten up by four men outside his home for watching TV and listening to music. The assailants who attacked the journalist were members of some extremist group – but could not be identified.

**On 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013**; unknown gunmen killed Mehmood Jan Afridi while he was headed to a local press club from his home in the city of Kalat. Afridi had worked for the Urdu-language print and online *The Daily Intekhab* for 20 years he was the head of the Kalat Press Club. It was not clear if Afridi had published any controversial stories before his death, but his colleague Sajidi said that he had often covered politics and crime and operated under the same pressures faced by other journalists in Balochistan.

Journalists in Balochistan were working in a dangerous climate, under pressure to report in line with the views of several elements, including pro-Taliban groups, security forces, Baloch separatists and anti-separatist militant groups. Afridi's colleagues told he had received threatening calls from a Baloch nationalist group. The CPJ held:

*"The level of violence against journalists in Pakistan remains alarming. Authorities must work to reverse this trend and identify the motive behind the murder of Mehmood Jan Afridi. The perpetrators of this crime should be apprehended immediately."*

Two days ago, **on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013**, senior journalist Malik Mumtaz was gunned down in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas along the border line with Afghanistan. At least three other Pakistani journalists had been killed in 2013, all of them at the site of a twin explosion in Quetta on **10<sup>th</sup> January the same year**.

**On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2013**—Pakistan's interim government announced that they had apprehended a militant who was allegedly involved in the 2002 murder of **WSJ** reporter **Daniel Pearl** in Karachi. The fact remained that the killer might have been in the Police custody since months or years but the PPP government could not show guts to declare him arrested. Just after two days of the PPP's departure, the announcement appeared.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> March 2013;** Haji Razzaq Baloch was kidnapped when he was leaving his friend's house in the Lyari neighbourhood of Karachi. Razzaq was working as a copy editor for the news desk of the Urdu-language pro-Baloch nationalist newspaper **Daily Tawar**. He was also a member of the Baloch National Movement, a nationalist political organization. The paper was known for its coverage of the many conflicts between rival groups and the government.

Razzaq worked for the *Daily Tawar* since 2009, but left the newspaper after Rind's murder in 2011 – but again resumed his work at the paper in December 2012. ***His dead body was found there in Karachi on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2013.***

**On 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013;** just a day before the general elections in Pakistan expelled **NYT** bureau chief **Declan Walsh** from the country; reasons not told. However, the paper claimed that:

*".....expulsion of Declan Walsh shows just how much the authorities fear independent media coverage. The vagueness and the late night delivery of the expulsion order smack of a need to intimidate foreign and local journalists on the eve of historic elections that could herald the growth of democracy in Pakistan.*

*Instead, Walsh's expulsion only mars the event, and undercuts hopes for a free press."*

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013--** the Committee to Protect Journalists [CPJ] calls on the incoming PML[N] government of Pakistan to urgently address the issue of violence against the press by bringing perpetrators of past crimes to justice. The report held:

*"Pakistan has one of the world's worst records of prosecuting anti-press violence, with authorities failing to convict a single suspect in 23 journalist murders over the past decade.*

*The situation is dire as journalists are targeted not only by militants, criminals, and warlords, but also by political and military operatives. These threats have gone completely unpunished over the past decade and have made the country one of the deadliest in the world for the press."*

The report, written by an independent journalist Elizabeth Rubin, exposed the intricate web of manipulation, intimidation, retribution, and impunity that led to a significant rise in journalist murders over the past five years. Criminal elements of political parties threatened and attacked the news media without fear of punishment.

The body expected that the newly elected government led by Nawaz Sharif got an opportunity to stem the murderous silencing of the press by implementing security mechanisms for the media and delivering justice in the said killings.

The report examined the targeted killings of journalists **Wali Khan Babar** in Karachi and Mukarram Khan Aatif in the tribal area. Babar, a correspondent for **GEO TV**, was shot on a busy street in Karachi in January 2011. Police arrested several suspects affiliated with the MQM, a leading political party, but the case was derailed by threats, intimidation, and murders of key figures in the investigation.

***[Five witnesses or law enforcement officials connected to the case were also murdered, and two prosecutors were fired without explanation pursuing Babar's case.]***

Rubin's reporting alleged that Pakistani officials could be behind the targeted killing of Aatif of a reporter for **Deewa Radio**, the Pashto-language service of the US funded Voice of America but his media fellows were raising fingers towards Taliban. Aatif was murdered at a mosque north of Peshawar in January 2012.

Pakistani authorities had pledged to address the utter lack of justice in press murders, but a weak civilian government of the PPP was unable or unwilling to stand up to the criminal political elements. Given this climate of fear and injustice, Pakistani journalists began taking measures as the UN plan had aimed.

CPJ's report called on the government to bring about successful prosecutions in the 23 unsolved cases of journalist murders over the past decade; to provide sufficient staffing and funding for police and prosecutors; and cooperate fully in the implementation of the UN plan.

CPJ's report, which was also made available in Urdu, included detailed recommendations to the new government of Pakistan and the country's news media. ***An appendix provided details on each of the 42 journalists killed in Pakistan since 2003, including the 23 who were targeted and murdered during the past few years.***

**On 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013;** four armed men fired indiscriminately outside the entrance of the **Express Media Group** office in Karachi, injuring two members of staff, including a guard who went paralysed.

**On 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013;** Ali Chishti of '**The Friday Times**', who writes on national security and counter-terrorism, was abducted and beaten and released the next morning. The international media roared saying:

*"The abduction by police and subsequent abuse of Ali Chishti must not go unpunished. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government should make every effort to bring the perpetrators to justice.*

*PM Sharif should make a priority of addressing the impunity with which attacks on journalists have taken place over the years.*

*Pakistan's record is abysmal in protecting its journalists from harassment, abduction, beatings and even death."*

**On 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013;** Ayub Khattak, a reporter for the **Karak Times** in Khyber PK southern Karak district, was shot dead outside his home. Eyewitness accounts said two unidentified assailants riding a motorcycle waited outside Khattak's home, fired at him when he appeared and fled the scene.

Khattak's colleagues said he had recently published a story on the sale of illegal drugs and a local gang of drug peddlers. Khattak had worked as a journalist since 2004, and had received threats in the past after his reports exposed criminal elements in the region.

A day earlier, three unidentified men used iron rods to attack Sardar Shafiq, another reporter for the Urdu local daily **Ittehad** and the former General Secretary of the Abbottabad Union of Journalists. The journalist was leaving his office in Abbottabad city **on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013** late night. Shafiq suffered injuries including his nose broken; motive of the attack was unclear.

Both attacks followed a statement by Minister of Information Pervaiz Rasheed at a meeting in Islamabad on 8<sup>th</sup> October instant. Rasheed expressed his support for the appointment of a special prosecutor

to investigate attacks against journalists as part of the implementation of the larger UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and Issue of Impunity. The media community held:

*"We call on Minister Rasheed to match his words with actions by pressing his government to thoroughly investigate this latest murder and bring the perpetrators to justice. The minister should use these cases to underline his stated commitment to ending violence against journalists in Pakistan."*

**On 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013;** three journalists were injured during three consecutive explosions in Karachi. The first explosion occurred near a shrine in the Pahar Ganj area where Shias were gathering at night to commemorate the holy month of *Muharram*.

Law enforcers, rescue workers, bomb disposal squads, and media personnel rushed to the scene after the explosion. An hour later, a second improvised explosive device exploded in the vicinity. The third explosion took place in North Karachi, where unidentified men hurled an IED outside a Shiite gathering hall, injuring two policemen. The **CNBC** reporter Khizrudin, CNBC photographer Syed Shariq Hussain, and **Waqt** TV reporter Raza Abdi were among those injured during the explosions; Taliban later claimed the responsibility.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013;** three people were injured when the Karachi office came under attack. Two hand grenades were hurled at the office building, while unknown assailants opened indiscriminate fire.

#### **ATTACKS ON MEDIA IN 2014:**

**On 17<sup>th</sup> January 2014;** three people linked with **Express News** were killed when a van belonging to the channel came under attack near the Matric board office in Nazimabad area of Karachi. The TV van was parked near the Matric Board Office as part of routine field deployment when it came under attack. The attack left technician Waqas, driver Khalid and guard Ashraf injured. They were rushed to the hospital where they succumbed to their wounds.

Police told that there were four attackers on two motorbikes who leaned into the vehicle and fired seventeen bullets using 9mm pistols and suppressors. It was the third attack on *Express News* following firing by un-

known men at the offices in August 2013, and an attack with crackers in December 2013. The attacks had left at least four people injured.

Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan [TTP]'s Ehsanullah Ehsan had accepted responsibility for that attack - the enraged TTP had decided to extend its war by declaring the country's media as '*party*' to the conflict.

For the first time since its inception in 2005, the banned militant outfit had not only issued a **fatwa** against the media but also prepared a media hit-list which was then communicated to selective media offices.

The 29-page fatwa accused the media of siding with '*disbelievers*', against Muslims, in the '*war on Islam*' and inciting people against the *mujahideen* through propaganda as well as of propagating secularism. The fatwa defined three major categories for journalists: "***murjif, muqatil and Sa'ee bil fasad.***" Sheikh Khalid Haqqani, Deputy Chief of the TTP and one of the main authors of this fatwa, explained:

*"Murjif is someone who engages in propaganda against Muslims during a war between Islam and disbelief; Muqatil is someone who incites disbelievers and their allies to act against Muslims while the third category, Sa'ee bil fasad, includes those who corrupt Muslim society through different means such as replacing the Islamic ideology with secular ideologies.*

*The media has continuously been lying about us and about our objectives. It has attributed to us some attacks which we did not carry out and it continues to lie about our objectives."*

The **fatwa** was issued in response to a question submitted to the TTP's religious committee by its former chief spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehsan who later told about back ground reasons:

*"For a long time, we have been asking the media to be impartial. We are not forcing it to change beliefs. We are simply asking the media to be fair in coverage.*

*Despite the tall claims of truth and nothing but the truth, the media has been acting as propagandists."*

The initial hit-list prepared by the TTP named nearly two dozen journalists and publishers. It included names of a number of media-group owners, the news chiefs of various TV channels, prominent anchors, the editor of a

leading English-language newspaper and even some field staff. No specific reason for those particular journalists given but the campaign was meant to frighten the country's media into surrender and compliance.

TTP's spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan claimed that:

*"The job of a journalist is to be fair and tell all sides of a story but we know of journalists who are completely one-sided propagandists. We even know of journalists who work as spies for the police and other departments."*

Hasan Abdullah in his essay titled '[Media now in TTP crosshairs](#)' appeared in daily '**Dawn**' dated **23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014** claimed an insider information that:

*"Some people within the [TTP] organisation had initially opposed targeting the media on 'strategic grounds. But later on it was decided that the media was basically the institution driving this war and public opinion.*

*When it is already defaming us, we really don't have much to lose and may as well deal with the media as a party to this war."*

TTP's Ehsanullah Ehsan, however, asserted that:

*"Even at this stage the media could mend its ways and become a neutral entity. Otherwise, the media should not feel secure. A few barriers and security escorts will not help.*

***If we can get inside military installations, media offices should not be too much of a challenge."***

**On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014;** the Express Media Group came under a fifth attack. The repeated attacks thus raised serious questions about the government's ability to provide security to media houses in Pakistan.

Unidentified gunmen opened fire on the car of **Express News** anchor and analyst Raza Rumi in Lahore, injuring him and killing his driver. The attack took place just a few hundred yards away from the Express News office in Raja Market, which Raza Rumi had just left after hosting his programme '**Khabar Se Agay**'.

*Express News'* driver Mustafa succumbed to his injuries later. Rumi himself received minor injuries from glass shards which flew at him when the windscreen of the car shattered. Eleven bullet casings were recovered from the crime scene.

A week earlier, a bomb was found outside the residence of *Express News* Bureau Chief in the Murshadabad area of Peshawar city.

Raza Rumi talked to his media fellows after the attack that:

*"We [journalists] will continue to speak the truth and not back down. Politicians will not benefit from remaining quiet while journalists are muzzled... these bullets will target them tomorrow if they do not take notice today. There will be no security or governance left in Pakistan."*

There was condemnation from the government and their agencies but much of it was standard fare of course. There was outrage [*but impotent*] at the usual suspects as well. And there were also calls, well-intentioned but idealistic, for the media to pull together and announce a boycott – but next day every thing fizzled out.

The fact remains that most of the Pakistani journalists and anchors did not show due care while writing or speaking. For instance; what difference was there between labelling one person a Taliban sympathiser and him labelling his opponents US agents? Prima facie, there wasn't much difference but actually the words mattered.

Calling the opponent anchor a '*traitorous paid agent*' would put him or her on a target list. Similarly, some were accused of being a terrorist just in routine and another of having committed blasphemy and then; one could wait and see who got arrested, who got killed and whose house was burnt – the answers were not far lost.

On the other hand, speaking out against religious extremists did have many shots. Might be so, such was the poison that had seeped into media men's collective consciousness that many out there would think Raza Rumi asked for it, and that his driver was just unfortunate collateral damage - there might be some very real dragons in the depth.

Referring to an internet media report [[eturbonews.com/44502](http://eturbonews.com/44502)] dated **9<sup>th</sup> April 2014**; after a lethal attack on TV anchor and journalist Raza Rumi that resulted in the murder of his driver, militants sent serious life

threats to one of the most senior writers, journalists, and television anchors of Pakistan, Imtiaz Alam.

Imtiaz Alam is also an icon of peace throughout the media in South Asia, leading the **South Asia Free Media Association** [SAFMA]; he had been on the list of militants for a long time due to his resolve and outspoken behaviour for the tolerance of narratives expressing freedom of the press.

Attacks on media workers and groups had been escalating since the day the government of Pakistan began negotiating a peace plan with Pakistani Taliban [TTP]. **The security of journalists' right of freedom of expression was not on the agenda of these negotiations.**

Thus, a resolution was passed - here is the text of the resolution:

*"We, the journalists and representatives of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society [APNS], the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors [CPNE], South Asian Free Media Association [SAFMA], South Asia Media Commission [SAMC], South Asian Women in Media [SAWM], Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists [PFUJ], Balochistan Union of Journalists [BUJ], Punjab Union of Journalists [PUJ], Rawalpindi - Islamabad Union of Journalists [RIUJ], the National Press Club, the Lahore Press Club, the Karachi Press Club, the Peshawar Press Club, and the Quetta Press Club express our deepest concerns about the reports of death threats on Imtiaz Alam, Editor of the quarterly South Asian Journal and Secretary General of SAFMA.*

*Intolerance for diverse points of views has a bearing on media freedom and quality journalism. But edicts and threats continue to be hurled at the media and media persons, among them Mr Alam, who also anchors a talk show on Express News TV.*

*The targeted attacks and death threats are meant to create fear among the democratic intelligentsia and the media persons. It is more disturbing that the state is failing in its responsibility to protect citizens and its writ.*

*Despite UN Security Council Resolution 1738 on the safety of journalists and several international resolutions on the protection of journalists, lives continue to have been lost in Pakistan in the course of journalists doing their jobs.*

*Last year 10 journalists have been killed in connection with their work in Pakistan. Courtesy these killings; Pakistan made it to the shameful club of the world's five deadliest countries for the media.*

*We urge the media associations to take joint stand on acts of violation of and threats to media rights and freedom of expression. Attack on one should be taken as an attack on all.*

*It's time that the state and the government of Pakistan fulfilled their responsibility to their citizens protecting their fundamental rights of freedom of information and freedom of expression guaranteed in the Constitution."*

**85 MEDIA MEN KILLED IN PAKISTAN:**

Here is a list - names, dates, associations with and places, in descending order, for 85 Journalists and media men killed since 1994 in Pakistan:-

Khurram Zaki, LUBP site; May 08, 2016, in Karachi.  
Aftab Alam, Geo TV & Samaa; Sep 09, 2015, in Karachi.  
Arshad Ali Jaffri, Engr Geo TV; Sep 08, 2015, in Karachi  
Zafarullah Jatak, daily Intekhab; June 28, 2015, in Quetta.  
S Wahidur Rahman, Journalist; April 29, 2015, in Karachi  
Shehzad Iqbal, Sama TV; April 23, 2014, in Mianwali.  
Waqas Aziz Khan, Express TV; January 17, 2014, in Karachi.  
Mohammad Khalid, Express TV; January 17, 2014, in Karachi.  
Ashraf Arain, Express TV; January 17, 2014, in Karachi.  
Shan Dahar, Abb Takk Television; January 01, 2014, in Larkana.  
Ayub Khattak, Karak Times; October 11, 2013, in Karak District.  
Sardar Shafiq, daily Ittehad; October 10, 2013, in Abbotabad.  
Aslam Durrani, Daily Pakistan; April 16, 2013, in Peshawar.  
Mirza Iqbal Hussain, NNI; January 10, 2013, in Quetta.  
Saif ur Rehman, Samaa TV; January 10, 2013, in Quetta.  
Imran Shaikh, Samaa TV; January 10, 2013, in Quetta.  
Haji Razzaq, Daily Tawar; March 24, 2013, in Lyari – Karachi.  
Mehmood Jan Afridi, Daily Intekhab; March 01, 2013 Kalat.  
Malik Mumtaz, APP and AFP; February 27, 2013, in FATA  
Saqib Khan, Ummat; November 22, 2012, in Karachi.  
Rehmatullah Abid, Dunya News TV; Nov 18, 2012, in Panjgur.  
Mushtaq Khand, Dharti TV Network; October 7, 2012, in Khairpur.  
Mohammad Amir , ARY TV; September 21, 2012, in Peshawar.  
Abdul Haq Baloch, ARY TV; September 29, 2012, in Khuzdar.  
Abdul Qadir Hajizai, WASH TV; May 28, 2012, in Quetta.  
Razzaq Gul, Express News TV; May 19, 2012, in Turbat.  
Aurangzeb Tunio, Kawaish TV; May 10, 2012, in Lalu Ranwak.  
Mukarram Khan Aatif, Freelance; January 17, 2012, in Shabqadar.  
Javed Naseer Rind, Daily Tawar; November 2011, in Khuzdar.  
Faisal Qureshi, The London Post; October 7, 2011, in Lahore.  
Muneer Shakir, Sabzbaat TV; August 14, 2011, in Khuzdar.

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Shafiullah Khan, The News; June 17, 2011, in Wah Cantt.  
Asfandyar Khan, Akhbar-e-Khyber; June 11, 2011, in Peshawar.  
Saleem Shahzad, Asia Times; May 30, 2011, in Mandi Bahauddin.  
Nasrullah Afridi, PTV & Mashriq; May 10, 2011, in Peshawar.  
Zaman Ibrahim, Daily Extra News; April 2, 2011, in Karachi.  
Abdost Rind, freelance; February 18, 2011, in Turbat. Wali Khan  
Babar, Geo TV; January 13, 2011, in Karachi.  
Ilyas Nizzar, Darwanth; January 3, 2011, in Pidarak.  
Mehmood Chandio, Awaz; December 6, 2010, in Mirpur Khas  
Pervez Khan, Waqt TV; December 6, 2010, in Ghalanai.  
Abdul Wahab, Express News; December 6, 2010, in Ghalanai.  
Lala Hameed Baloch, Daily Intikhab; Nov 18, 2010, in Turbat.  
Misri Khan, Ausaf & Mashriq; September 14, 2010, in Hangu.  
Ejaz Raisani, Samaa TV; September 6, 2010, in Quetta.  
Mohammad Sarwar, Aaj TV; September 3, 2010, in Quetta.  
Ejazul Haq, City-42 TV; May 28, 2010, in Lahore.  
G Rasool Birhamani, Daily Sindhu; May 10, 2010, in Wahi Pandhi.  
Azamat Ali Bangash, Samaa TV; April 17, 2010, in Orakzai.  
Malik Arif, Samaa TV; April 16, 2010, in Quetta.  
Mian Iqbal, Peshawar Press; December 22, 2009, in Peshawar.  
Janullah Hashimzada, freelance; August 24, 2009, in Jamrud.  
Siddique Bacha Khan, Aaj TV; August 14, 2009, in Mardan.  
Wasi Ahmad Qureshi, Daily Azadi; April 16, 2009, in Khuzdar.  
Raja Assad Hameed, The Nation; March 26, 2009, in Rawalpindi  
Musa Khankhel, Geo TV & The News; February 18, 2009, in Swat.  
Tahir Awan, freelance; January 4, 2009, in Dera Ismail Khan  
Mohammad Imran, Express TV; January 4, 2009, D I Khan  
Abdul Razzak Johra, Royal TV; November 3, 2008, in Punjab.  
Abdul Aziz Shaheen, Azadi; August 29, 2008, in Swat.  
Mohammed Ibrahim, Express TV; May 22, 2008, in Khar.  
Khadim Hussain Sh, Sindh TV & Khabrein; April 14, 2008, in Hub.  
Siraj Uddin, The Nation; February 29, 2008, in Mingora.  
Chishti Mujahid, Akhbar-e-Jehan; February 9, 2008, in Quetta.  
Zubair Mujahid, Jang; November 23, 2007, in Mirpur Khas.  
Muhammad Arif, ARY Television; October 19, 2007, in Karachi.  
Javed Khan, DM Digital TV; July 3, 2007, in Islamabad.  
Noor Hakim Khan, Daily Pakistan; June 2, 2007, in Bajaur.  
Mehboob Khan, freelance; April 28, 2007, in Charsadda.  
Mohammad Ismail, PPI; November 1, 2006, in Islamabad.  
Hayatullah Khan, freelance; June 16, 2006, in Miran Shah.  
Munir Ahmed Sangi, Kawish TV; May 29, 2006, in Larkana.  
Allah Noor, Khyber TV; February 7, 2005, in Wana.  
Amir Nowab, Frontier Post; February 7, 2005, in Wana  
Sajid Tanoli, Shumal; January 29, 2004, in Mansehra.

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Fazal Wahab, freelance; January 21, 2003, in Mingora.  
Shahid Soomro, Kawish; October 20, 2002, in Kandhkot.  
Daniel Pearl, The WSJ; February 02, 2002, in Karachi.  
Asadullah, Freelancer; September 1, 2001, in Karachi  
Sufi Mohammad Khan, Ummat; May 2, 2000, in Badin.  
Nawaz Zulfiqar, The Nation; December 3, 1999, in Islamabad.  
Carlos Mavroleon, Freelancer; August 27, 1998, in Peshawar.  
Z.A. Shahid, Khabrain; January 18, 1997, in Lahore.  
M Samdani Warsi, Parcham; December 6, 1994, in Karachi.  
Mohammed Salahuddin, Takbeer; December 4, 1994, in Karachi.

The above list has been tabulated from the press news sources available at hand; thus some names might be missing.

Some of these cases have been mentioned in detail in various scenarios of this volume but most names are only listed here.

**GEO's HAMID MIR ATTACKED:**

**On 19<sup>th</sup> April 2014;** four unknown assailants on two motorcycles shot at senior journalist Hamid Mir, an anchor and the host of a talk show on **Geo TV**, *Capital Talk*, leaving him severely injured. He was transported to a hospital for treatment. A guard at the scene fired back at the assailants, but they fled; Mir was shot at thrice.

Aga Khan University told that after an operation lasting 150 minutes, Mir was stable but was kept under observation overnight. He was on his way to his office from Jinnah International Airport when the incident happened on main Shahrah-e-Faisal, under a bridge near the airport.

Soon there was rumour in the city and journalist circles that Mir was attacked by agency's sponsored men. The Inter-Services Public Relations [ISPR] spokesperson held that an independent inquiry must immediately be carried out to ascertain facts. The ISPR added that allegations against ISI or its head without any basis were highly regrettable and misleading.

[In 2012](#), Mir had escaped an assassination bid when police defused a bomb planted under his car in Islamabad. Mir told GEO that:

*"It's a message to me as well as **Geo** and the journalist community in Pakistan. They want to stop us from speaking the truth but I want to tell them that we will not be deterred."*

More than a hundred bouquets were lined in the lobby of a private ward of Aga Khan Hospital. Outside, dozens of policemen with bullet-proof vests and automatic weapons looked at every visitor suspiciously as a high-profile journalist was hit in Karachi. However, it is a matter of record that the largest bouquet in the lobby was from the Karachi Police tagged as:

***"Get well Hamid Mir; we may not be able to protect you but we know where to order the best flowers."***

Mir was hit by six bullets – in the ribs, thigh, stomach and across his hand – in an assassination attempt as he came out of the airport to present a special broadcast on GEO TV news channel. Mir had warned about a possible assassination; he had also named his would-be killers. That's what his brother claimed; what his colleagues and managers at the channel said. Geo, just after the attack, broadcasted the allegation and flashed the picture of the ISI's Chief Lt Gen Zaheerul Islam.

One modest bouquet wishing Mir a full and speedy recovery was from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who had visited him in the hospital earlier but after announcing a judicial inquiry. Going by the history of judicial inquiries in Pakistan, one could translate PM Sharif's sarcastic smile as if saying:

*"Look Hamid, we want you to get well but don't really expect us to find out who tried to kill you. Who is going to go and ask a working General? Meanwhile, here are three senior judges who will help you get over the whole thing."*

[**'the guardian'** dated **23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014** is referred]

Of course, it was a deliberate effort to bring a globally reputed national institution, the ISI, into disrepute. There was no evidence or even solid indication for GEO TV's apparently irresponsible conduct.

Geo's president – a former newspaper editor named [Imran Aslam](#) – became wistful when defending his channel's coverage after the assassination attempt on Mir, while saying that:

*"There was a time that if they didn't like what you wrote they censored you. They cut out a word or a line. If they got really angry they got your editor fired. Now they just shoot you."*

**'A bullet in the head is the new form of censorship in Pakistan,'** the editor held – but these were all dialogues to achieve cheap applause through sentimental phrases because Geo's most skilful team of investiga-

tive journalists could not dig out the real story or the suspects till the last day of year 2016 at least.

While Hamid Mir was still in the hospital, the probability theories had taken flight up in the air. There was one voice that Hamid Mir was shot because of his calls to respect the human rights of Balochis, because he stood with Mama Qadeer in the VMBP's Long March.

No, it was because he didn't give enough space to the Taliban's viewpoint.

No, silly, it's because a distraction was needed from the non-stop coverage of Gen Musharraf in Karachi. Now, under the cover of this distraction, the former president would safely fly the coop – and that was right. Another intelligent guy wrote:

*'Don't be ridiculous; he staged the attack on himself for ratings / sympathy etc. I mean, just look at that single, blurred, frame I saw of the car. Where's the blood? Surely that's proof positive?'*

*I even wrote a blog about it after spending 15 minutes googling gunshot victims. Open your eyes, people. I'm an expert.'*

Then, of course, there were the 'fastest finger first' condemnation bolts - who could time the politicians racing to get to the hospital first, because nothing spelled real concern like a timely photo on tiny screens.

Then there's the 'stay safe' crowd; well-meaning, and when you really have nothing more to say - it was all about what's being said, to whom and for what reason. Because clearly, there were those – more happier when the media as a whole just finally caught another 'breaking news'.

***However, the media could not be silenced; their voice could not be muzzled - not by one bullet or a hundred.***

It was reassuring that, despite threats, attacks and murders, the media somehow continued to speak out against injustice, criminal gangs, terrorist organisations, out of control state agencies and so on.

But that's just wishful thinking; there's no point in recalling or evoking to the Gen Zia-era repression and pointing out the stalwarts who stood up to it. It was not another country; one in which your life wasn't worth a few thousand dollars at the most. The media would continue to be muzzled;

also had grown silent simply because there was no security, no justice - not just for journalists, but for anyone at all.

***On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2014;*** while the blame politics was being sported amongst the top stakeholders over Mir's health wishes, one ***Shehzad Iqbal, a reporter for SAMA TV, was shot dead in Mianwali*** – there was no BIG in that town to blame ISI like sensitive institution.

Thus, despite the high casualty rate, little was known of the dangerous conditions in which journalists used to operate in Pakistan, the risks they were taking and the often steep price they paid to be the guardians of the public interest.

### **IMPUNITY AGAINST JOURNALISTS:**

**UN Plan:** In early 2014 perhaps, Pakistan was selected as one of five pilot countries of the world for implementation of a UN Plan of Action on *Impunity Against Journalists* because the country was considered one of the most dangerous countries of the world to practice journalism. Nearly 70 journalists had been killed since PPP's government had sworn in 2008 in Pakistan at an average of one every month – the worst average for any country of the world for that period.

In a country where everyone was at risk of being killed, the deaths of journalists perhaps could not attract larger attention of successive political hierarchy. The attack on journalists was an attack not just on individuals but an attack on freedom of expression, and therefore an attack on civil society and the very state itself.

See the pattern; about 90 journalists had been killed since 2000 and over 2,000 injured, assaulted, kidnapped, arrested, tortured and intimidated in various ways. That's a high percentage when considering that in a country of 200 million people there were only 18,000 journalists.

In a multi-national, multi-linguist, multi-sectarian, multi-religious, multi-ethnic state it was important that journalists could feel safe so that all the said political pluralisms could be heard and asserted their stake-holding in the fragile state. Without a safe media and safer journalists, it's not just the media at threat but the entire society.

Since 2001's Nine Eleven war, the Pakistani journalists remained in double jeopardy – they not only operated in a violent environment in Pakistan, by the very nature of their work, they made enemies and made themselves more vulnerable than any other section of society. **Pakistani journalists lived dangerously by not having a consensus strategy to counter the risks they experienced.**

The Pakistani media itself had a contradictory stance in protecting its interests. The rambling and disorderly reactions by various media houses to the recent attacks against Hamid Mir, Imtiaz Alam and Raza Rumi had shown that journalists were easy targets and vulnerable precisely because they were not united.

There was no safety strategy developed by neither the journalists representatives such as the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, nor by associations of the media sector such as the All Pakistan Newspaper Society, Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors or Pakistan Broadcasters Association and others.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014;** the International Federation of Journalists Brussels [IFJ] termed Pakistan the most dangerous country for media, with 14 journalists killed in the country during 2014 alone. The overall number of journalists who died in targeted killings, bomb attacks or shootings around the world rose to 118 in 2014 from 105 the year before [2013].

Another 17 died in accidents or natural disasters while on assignment, according to the said organisation, which calls itself the world's largest journalists' body. Pakistan was followed by Syria, where 12 journalists were killed. Nine killings each occurred in Afghanistan and the Palestinian territories. Eight journalists each were killed in Iraq and Ukraine.

Among those killed were American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff. Both were beheaded by Islamic State militants, who had seized parts of Syria and Iraq. The IFJ held its figures were a reminder of the growing threats to journalists, and it called on respective governments to make protecting members of the media a priority while saying:

*"It is time for action in the face of unprecedented threats to journalists who are targeted not only to restrict the free flow of information, but increasingly as leverage to secure huge ransoms and political concessions through sheer violence."*

As a result, some media organisations were scared of sending reporters to war zones out of fear for their safety, even of using material gathered by

freelancers in those areas. Failure to improve media safety had adverse impacts on the coverage of war - poorer in quality for lack of independent witnesses.

A report titled, '***State of Media in Pakistan***', compiled and released **on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2015** by **Freedom Network** on Pakistan also told that the year 2014 was the worst ever in the history of the country for the media. It told that 14 people related to media including journalists, media assistants and bloggers were killed for their work and scores were injured, kidnapped and intimidated in 2014.

Freedom Network [FN], a Pakistani media rights watchdog and an independent advocacy, research and training organisation carried nine articles with in-depth look at issues of media security, impunity against journalists, worsening media ethics and crisis of credibility, outdated media laws, digital freedoms and privacy protections, social media and digitalisation of news sources, media ratings and profit motives, and mainstreaming of citizen journalism in the country. Further it said:

*"For several years now, Pakistan has consistently figured as the most dangerous country for journalists when it comes to the debate around freedom of expression internationally. A lot needs to be done to reduce the risk to human rights defenders."*

Each of the nine key media issues discussed by other experts on the subject ranging from seasoned journalists, dealing with these issues on daily basis, to activists who kept a close eye on media developments, each suggesting changes and reforms needed to promote greater media professionalism in the associated fields.

In her article on digital challenges to media in Pakistan, one Nighat Daad noted a disturbing trend that:

*"The previous regimes in Pakistan preferred a behind-the-scene approach for controlling internet freedom but the PML[N] regime in its first 18 months in office has been vocal in the Parliament and on media for using strong measures to censor social media."*

Bob Dietz, the Asia Coordinator of the Committee to Protect Journalists [CPJ] told a sympathetic audience of journalists and media practitioners:

*"For a democratic country, Pakistan ranked worryingly high when it came to the number of attacks on journalists. Though it was better*

*off than countries such as Iraq, Syria or Somalia that were torn apart by civil war and internal strife, Pakistan's numbers of violence against journalists were not comparable to those countries."*

Bob Dietz was addressing the second international conference on ***Combating Impunity and Securing Safety of Media Workers and Journalists in Pakistan***. He deplored that the authorities in Pakistan had failed to move forward in this regard.

"*Why can't we make the situation better,*" he asked, earnestly, adding that far too many journalists were getting caught in the crossfire between militants and the authorities. However, he opined that the PML[N] regime had recognised the issue while referring to PM Nawaz Sharif's March 2014 meeting with representatives of the CPJ where Information Minister Pervaiz Rasheed was also present in the conference.

But the same year of 2014, Pakistan was noted as the worst for media men in comparison with its own earlier years' record.

The CPJ body had earlier met Gen Musharraf – who was the president at that time – and expressed concerns over violence against media. But he totally denied it and his minister termed the incidents as '*accidents*'; adding that a similar response was seen when the matter was raised with President Asif Ali Zardari and the ministers of that PPP's era.

Addressing the inaugural session, the Federal Information Minister said that the whole nation was united in the fight against terrorism and the government was trying its best to find solutions. "*I would like media-persons to come forward and help identify the culprits,*" Mr Rasheed said.

The CPJ noted with sorrow that despite some assurances made by the PM Sharif and his team, the journalists were still not satisfied with the PML[N] government's measures.

When veteran journalist and former Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists president Mazhar Abbas questioned the minister about low salaries and job insecurity in media organisations, the minister invited him to a high-level meeting to guide the government on what it could do.

Senior journalist M Ziauddin said the Afghan war actually came to Pakistan after 2005, but the media was not ready to cover it; adding that:

*"At the same time, militants wanted to show their presence and pushed for space in the electronic and print media. The same method was adopted by ethnic, nationalist and sectarian parties – now the environment is dangerous and no place is safe."*

Anchor-person Hamid Mir quoted several anecdotes from his career, from 2006 onwards and narrated his own ordeal before and being attacked by unidentified gunmen in Karachi in April 2014 adding that:

*"A hit-list of journalists in Balochistan was floated by pro-establishment militants and this list was published in a report by the PFUJ; even then, five of the people on the list ended up dead."*

*"It is time the government should pass a law for the protection of the media. I do not say it will end the trouble, but it will be a first step towards a solution."*

Representatives from the Open Society Foundation [OSF], United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [Unesco], as well as other countries from the region, such as Nepal, Afghanistan and Indonesia also participated in the subsequent panel discussion.

Ujjwal Acharya, South Asia regional coordinator for the International Federation of Journalists [IFJ], said that in Nepal and Pakistan, a lot of people believed that the media was not credible. Talking about the importance of perceptions, he said that there was a need to build people's trust in the mainstream press.

OSF's Maria Teresa shared her experiences of working on journalists' safety in Colombia and Mexico.

However, when the conference was over, the journalists and anchors were simply left at the mercy of terrorists and sectarian extremists who were showing their presence all over Pakistan – *Tain Tain Phish*.

### **'REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS'**

**On 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** *'Reporters Without Borders'*, an international media group based in Washington released a report complaining that:

*"Pakistani authorities have not kept their promise to protect media personnel and are sometimes even responsible for these abuses. Pakistani journalists are being forced to flee or go into hiding to escape acts of violence and intimidation that usually go unpunished."*

The report noted that the shooting of Baloch journalist Zafarullah Jatak **on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2015** in his home was the latest in a series of "*macabre murders*" of media personnel that were not being solved. Mr Jatak worked for '*Intekhab*', an Urdu newspaper based in Quetta, and had been a journalist for the past six years.

The report pointed out that no progress had been made in the investigation into the murder of former journalist Professor Syed Wahidur Rahman, who was gunned down in his car outside Karachi University **on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015**, four days after media and human rights activist ***Sabeen Mahmud was gunned down*** in Karachi immediately after organising a discussion about the violence in Balochistan. Mahmud's murder had also gone unpunished till then.

The fact that crimes of violence against journalists were rarely solved and punished reinforced in Pakistan a climate dominated by death threats and physical attacks in whole country.

The report pointed out that there had also been a marked increase since 2014 in media freedom violations by government officials and various political factions. This disturbing trend constituted a major impediment to attempts to combat impunity and sustained a climate that did not encourage media freedom despite best planning. Contrarily the Pakistani government continued to bring indirect pressure on the media.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** the Pakistan Press Council sent a directive to the print media saying:

*".....acute care should be taken to avoid negative comments about the crisis in Yemen in order not to threaten Pakistan's friendship with the countries that are members of the Saudi-led coalition operating in Yemen."*

The Pakistani state agencies should have avoided passing on such instructions which tended to frustrate the media freedom.

**On 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** a senior Pakistani journalist was shot dead by unidentified gunmen outside his house here, a day after an employee of

**GEO TV**, a leading media house, was killed in Karachi in the latest attack on media persons in Pakistan.

**Aftab Alam** aged 42, who had been associated with different channels including Geo News and Samaa TV, was reversing his car in the city's North Sector C area after dropping his children at home when he was targeted by two gunmen on a motorbike.

Aftab who received multiple bullet wounds on his head, neck and chest, was rushed to Abbasi Shaheed hospital where doctors declared him dead. That target killing was the second incident in two days when the media persons were attacked by unidentified shooters on motorcycles.

A night earlier, news van of Pakistan's biggest media group, GEO Television Network came under fire by three unidentified gunmen in the Bahadurabad area of Karachi in which a senior technical engineer was killed while the driver was injured. The engineer, Arshad Ali Jaffri, died after being shot nine times in his upper body while driver Anis Chohan was injured and shifted to a private hospital.

The two new incidents in fact revived bitter memories of 2014's incident in the North Nazimabad area when two employees of the Express media group were gunned down while they were sitting inside their news van.

The shooting took place near Sir Syed market and within the remits of the Sir Syed police station. The Karachi Union of Journalists – Dastoor said Alam's killing was a question mark on the efficacy of the Sindh government and the security agencies. The organisation said it condemned the targeted killings of and attacks on media workers in the strongest possible terms.

Pakistan Rangers Sindh had taken serious notice of the target killings of media persons in the city and decided to kick off concerted efforts for the arrest of perpetrators of such heinous crimes. The nexus between some groups were trying to malign the operation for their ulterior motives.

Referring to daily '**the News**' dated **30<sup>th</sup> December 2015**:

*"Twenty-eight journalists were killed and 23 injured while performing their professional duties in 2015 in Pakistan. Fifty-one cases were lodged and only three killers have been held so far."*

The Journalist Protect Committee, in its annual report, said that six journalists were killed in Karachi, five in Khyber PK and FATA, four in Balochis-

tan while remaining journalists were killed in various parts of Pakistan in different incidents.

As said earlier; 40% killers, who murdered journalists, belonged to banned religious organisations, 20% to capitalists, and five percent belonged to political parties while 35% attacked media men during rendering their services. More disappointedly, the federation and provincial administrations did nothing practically to protect the media men; though the Rangers were able to capture the killers of two journalists in Karachi.

**On 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** a prominent Pakistani journalist and human rights activist, Khurram Zaki, was shot dead in Karachi.

Mr Zaki was dining in a restaurant in the city's north when suspects opened fire from motorbikes. He was an editor of the website ***Let us Build Pakistan***, which used to condemn sectarianism and was seen as promoting democratic and progressive values. The spokesman for a splinter group of the Pakistani Taliban accepted the responsibility.

The killers sent message that they killed Zaki because of his recent campaign against a cleric of the Red Mosque in Islamabad. Mr Zaki and other campaigners had filed a court case charging Maulana Abdul Aziz with incitement to hatred and violence against the Shiite minority.

The case was brought in response to the cleric's refusal to condemn attack on the Army Public School Peshawar on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 in which 152 children and teachers were brutally massacred.

Two other people were badly wounded in that Karachi attack - a friend who Mr Zaki was dining with and a bystander. Staff at the website paid tribute to their murdered colleague and vowed to continue exposing militant groups. Their statement said:

*"...his [Mr Zaki's] contribution as a citizen journalist in supporting the rights of minority groups was much bigger than [that of] all journalists combined in Pakistan.*

*His death is the grim reminder that whoever raises voice against Taliban [and other militant groups] in Pakistan will not be spared. And when they have to murder, they never fail."*

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Mr Zaki's murder was also a 'dismal reminder' of the danger activists were expected to face in Karachi but it was also the latest sign that campaigners faced severe risks for speaking out against extremism in the country.

Fellow activist and lawyer Jibran Nasir told **al-Jazeera** he was certain the murder was a result of Zaki's activism. ***"The primary reason behind Zaki being shot dead was his constant activism in a bold manner."***

Being a social activist in Pakistan and raising the voice for religious extremism & minority rights, means death warrant. Zaki's death was again an open challenge for the federal as well as Sindh government that they were unable to ensure the protection of the journalists and media men – the fourth pillar of the state - even with the cogent help of the Rangers.

## **Scenario 155**

### **WATER MAFIA IN KARACHI**

**TANKER MAFIAS OF THE CITY:**

But it was not a new phenomenon; see daily '**Dawn**' of **1<sup>st</sup> April 2008**.

A research was undertaken in March 2008 revealed that Karachi's water tanker mafia, which then used to generate an estimated Rs:49.6 billion annually, siphoned off over 41% of its water from the city's bulk distribution system every day and then used to sell the commodity at exorbitant rates to the residents and industries suffering from the water scarcity that was largely caused by the activities of the water tanker mafia itself.

**WATER NEEDED:** a report authored by one Perween Rahman of the Orangi Pilot Project [OPP] had shown that the city was supplied with 695 million gallons per day [mgd] of water - 645mgd from the River Indus and an average of 50mgd from the rain-fed Hub dam supply. Of this, 30mgd were supplied to the steel mills and Port Qasim before the water reaches the main **Dhabeji Pumping Station**, so the actual supply of water to the main city was 665mgd every day.

However, then [in 2008] the city required a maximum of 601mgd — for Karachi's 16 million residents; lower and middle income areas required about 20 gallons per person per day while the needs of the higher income groups, about 20 percent of the population, were estimated at 35 gallons per person per day; meanwhile, industries required an average of 123mgd and there was an additional requirement of 110mgd for other uses.

This indicated that sufficient water was supplied to the city every day to meet its needs – **but it was only on papers**. The on ground reality as per OPP's report was that:

*'.....bulk supply to towns was 293mgd and thus there was a shortfall of between 260 to 308mgd. This shortfall was met through tanker supplies. Karachi's bulk supply was 665mgd. With 15% wasted due to technical leakages, the available supply comes to 565.25mgd.*

*The gap between the actual supply and the availability was 272.25mgd, which was siphoned off from the bulk distribution system and [illegally] sold through tanker supplies. This operation generated an estimated Rs:49.6 billion annually (if at all sold at the average cost of Rs:0.5 per gallon).'*

**WATER SUPPLY:** Karachi city receives water from the River Indus via canals from Kinjhar, Haleji and Gharo, and through conduits to the main ***Dhabeji Pumping Station***. Thereafter, the water is distributed across the city through conduits and distribution mains of 66-inch and below diameters. There are two routes:

- ***the Northern Rout:*** *via Pipri to parts of the Malir cantonment area, the Gulshan COD reservoir, Gulshan Town and parts of Gadap, North Karachi, NEK, North Nazimabad, Gulberg, Liaquatabad and parts of Lyari; and*
- 
- ***the Southern Rout:*** *Bin Qasim Town, Landhi, Korangi, along the National Highway to Shah Faisal and Jamshed towns, Saddar town including Defence and Clifton, Lyari and Keamari.*

The Hub water supply, meanwhile, services mainly Orangi, Site and Baldia towns. Since the Hub and River Indus supplies are interconnected at the distribution mains, the supply is meant to be shared as needed.

Till 2008; the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board [KWSB]'s quota for supply to the various towns, the cantonment and DHA amounted to 417.65mgd of the available water. However, the actual supply reaching the towns was only about 293mgd. Seven towns – Orangi, Gadap, Baldia, Jamshed, Site, North Karachi and Gulshan used to get 30-57 per cent of their quota while others get about 60-100 per cent - Cantonment used to get 100% while DHA used to avail 133%.

**WATER'S OFFICIAL PRICE:** Till March 2008, there was an official system in place for water supplies via tankers. The KWSB maintained nine official hydrants which were managed by the Rangers. The officially sanctioned quantum of water was 13.75mgd, of which 3.42mgd was the quota for gratis supply to water-deficient areas while the rest was meant to be sold at official rates. This water was to be distributed through 13,750 trips made by 1,000 gallon capacity tankers of contracted tanker suppliers.

The Rangers were authorised to charge the contractor a fixed amount of Rs:44 [4.4 paisa / gallon] only per 1,000 gallons of water for residential use and Rs:73 [7.3 paisa / gallon] per 1,000 gallons of water for industrial purposes, which was then to be sold at the official rates.

In reality, however, 25mgd of water was taken from these hydrants and supplied to the city through tankers with capacities ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 gallons and some of 10,000 gallons.

**WATER SOLD ON HIGH PRICE:** the water was then sold by tanker owners at over double the official rates. The approved price of water supplied through tankers ranged between 15 and 25 paisa per gallon depending on the distance, and whether it was intended for residential or commercial use. In actual situations:

*".....the rates were more than doubled to 35-60 paisa / gallon depending on the distance, bargaining with clients and the season in which the water was supplied. These inflated rates were Rs:350 - 600 for 1,000 gallons; Rs:700 - 1,200 for 2,000 gallons; Rs:1,600 - 1,800 for 3,000 gallons and Rs:2,000 - 2,400 for 5,000 gallons.*

*Therefore, the [un-official] revenue generated per day from the sale of water was an average Rs:10 million - shared between the various sectors and up to the top most political heads.*

**UNOFFICIAL HYDRANTS:** investigations revealed that in addition to the nine official hydrants, at least 161 unofficial hydrants and filling points existed all over Karachi, most of them located near bulk distribution mains. Additionally, many more filling points were reported from all the towns.

A sample **survey of nine unofficial hydrants** told that they were being used to siphon off 19.78mgd of water from the bulk supply. When extrapolated over 161 unauthorised hydrants, this means that some 358mgd of water, more than half of the total supply, was being removed from the regular supply channels and being sold to citizens at exorbitant rates.

Clusters of these unauthorised points were reported from six main areas: Hub reservoir to Banaras Chowk along Manghopir Road; Banaras Chowk to Gutter Baghicha; Mewashah graveyard to Shershah along Lyari nadi; near Saba Cinema of Ayub Goth-North Karachi and up into Gadap town; along the National Highway - Malir, and in Lalabad Landhi.

With reference to the 272.25mgd of water that was siphoned off from the bulk distribution and sold through tanker supplies, the OPP report also identified the methods used. These included piped connections to the bulk distribution mains and perpetually unattended leakages in the bulk distribution mains which cause water seepage. At such sites, bores become filling points. Moreover:

*"In some cases, like that of the Fauji Commander's hydrant near the Hub reservoir, the ponds were formed through which water was pumped out into tankers.*

*Lately, KWSB officials informed that 73 piped connections to the bulk distribution mains were disconnected in North Karachi and Gadap and that was done over media uproar."*

**CORRUPTION IN WATER:** In Karachi, notorious for water shortages, it was often the KWSB that became the target of citizens' ire during dry days. And while the organisation certainly might have suffered from organisational and infrastructural problems, the tanker business was taking away a critical chunk of the revenue that ought by rights to go to the KWSB.

The KWSB's budget is always dependent on government subsidies and its annual budget for 2007-08 was Rs:5.3 billion. Of this, Rs:2.0-2.5 billion were recovered as water / sewerage taxes while the rest was government subsidy. Till March 2008, Rs:18.678 billion worth of dues were outstanding against the government and other state departments. However, water supply to everybody was not only possible but achievable at affordable and humane costs.

*"A comparison of the KWSB's annual budget of Rs:5.3 billion with the Rs:49.6 billion generated through the sale of the 272mgd that was siphoned off and supplied through tankers had shown the irony of the situation.*

*If the KWSB could supply this water honestly, it could earn profits as well as provide water to all at affordable, humane costs – and without fail – and in abundance."*

As per KWSB's own planning and paper work, the department could generate Rs:5.8 billion annually - more than the organisation's annual budget. For the citizens, meanwhile, the bill would amount to about Rs:200 a month per outlet, which was affordable and was incidentally the same as the average tax billed all over the city.

Whereas, in water deficit areas, poor people were spending an average of Rs:500-600 a month buying sweet and salty water. People are willing to pay the same amount to the KWSB for the provision of sweet water. In addition, some of the poorest were buying sweet water supplied through *donkey carts*, the cost of which comes to Rs:100-120 for about 25 gallons - about eight times the cost of water supplied through water tankers.

Meanwhile, the KWSB could also annually generate Rs:44.7 billion by selling the rest of the water, about 245mgd, at the current average rate charged by tankers i.e. 50 paise per gallon. This could be used to resolve organisational and infrastructural issues but the PPP's corrupt local leadership pre-

ferred to siphon out that amount for their own pockets – an open blatant corruption against huge hues & cries of the poor people.

**TRAFFIC TROUBLES:** In addition to swindling citizens and the KWSB, the dominance of the tanker mafia also contributes to traffic congestion, pollution and needless wear and tear on the city's already overburdened road network. According to the OPP study of 2008 and the Private Tankers Association's record, their members own 5,000 tankers of which 60% were of 5,000-gallon capacity, 30% of 2,000 gallon capacity and 10% of 1,000 gallon capacity. Each tanker makes 10 to 12 trips every day, which means that about 50,000 to 60,000 trips were made across the city every day to supply the water which otherwise was the citizens' right.

**During its 2<sup>nd</sup> stint of rule,** the Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP] had not opted to facilitate the *Karachiites* in respect of water supply. All political bosses continued to filter the huge bags of illegal money gifted to them by the tanker mafia.

The PPP government in power not only failed to solve the water supply issue but encouraged its political elite to make millions in collaboration with corrupt bureaucrat mafia sitting in KWSB. The media even commented that criminal gangsters' teams were deployed by the Sindh PPP to collect illegal booties and deliver the proportionate shares at the residences of concerned ministers and top stalwarts, allegedly including the Bilawal House [President Zardari's official residence in Karachi], on daily basis.

**EVEN FOREIGN PRESS ROARED:**

The issue not only went alarming in Pakistan but all over the world the civic NGOs and the press raised voices. See an essay published in '**LA Times**' dated **16<sup>th</sup> March 2010:**

- ***Karachi 'water mafia' leaves Pakistanis parched and broke.***
- 
- **Corrupt politicians allow businessmen to siphon off as much as 41% of the city's water supply and sell it at exorbitant rates to residents, generating an estimated \$43 million a year.**

*"Name a cash cow in this sprawling city ..... and it's almost certain there's an organized crime syndicate behind it.*

*The illegal operations, routinely referred to as mafias, are everywhere. There's a land mafia that commandeers prime real estate, a sugar mafia that conspires to control sugar prices, and even a railway mafia that forges train tickets and pilfers locomotive parts.*

***....., however, the underworld entity they revile the most is the water tanker mafia, a network of trucking firms that teams up with corrupt bureaucrats to turn water into liquid gold worth tens of millions of dollars each year.***

*A family that makes \$100 a month can spend as much as a quarter of that on water, which, elsewhere in Pakistan, costs pennies.*

***Water scarcity isn't the cause. Karachi has a steady water supply, and it has the network of pipes to pump ample water into every neighbourhood, rich and poor.***

*But Karachi is also a city of opportunists forever on the prowl for under-the-table wealth. As municipal officials look the other way, businessmen illegally tap water mains, and use the makeshift hydrants to supply fleets of tankers that then sell water to businesses, factories and neighbourhoods at inflated prices. As many as 272 million gallons a day are siphoned off by the trucks.*

*The siphoning takes place around the clock, the fact known to all. It's done in the dead of night, but also in broad daylight.*

*On average, a tanker fills up six times a day, siphoning as much as 41% of the city's daily water supply, an amount that generates \$43 million annually for tanker owners.*

***'With this much money involved, it's clear these are very wealthy people. They're powerful mafias colluding with corrupt people in the government. So there's really nothing ordinary Pakistanis can do to stop it.'***

*At times, illegal hydrants are shut down by city officials, only to reopen a week later."*

Referring to the **'Express Tribune' dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2013:**

*"Approximately 15 to 20 million gallons of water per day is stolen through these illegal water hydrants. The illegal hydrants are alleg-*

*edly protected by law enforcers, political parties and certain officials of the KWSB.*

*The KWSB [purposefully] failed to chalk out an effective strategy to carry out a crackdown against the illegal water hydrants operational in the city."*

The Board's MD, Qutubuddin Sheikh, admitted before the media teams that 'black sheep' of the department were involved in the business as it was a lucrative source of income. Mr Sheikh had started a crackdown against the illegal water hydrants operational in Baldia and SITE and sealed eight illegal water hydrants and a further 21 illegal connections. FIRs against the culprits were also registered so the tanker mafia would not be able to reconnect or reopen the illegal water hydrants – but even then no gain.

The illegal hydrant business continued to thrive in the city, ***aided by leaders of political parties, law enforcers and a few officials of the KWSB.*** Landhi, Korangi, Shah Faisal, Bin Qasim, Liaqatabad, SITE, and Keamari were some of the areas where these illegal hydrants were found in abundance. Surprisingly these hydrants were legitimised illegally by the incumbent KWSB officials. Some facts:

- In Banaras and the adjoining Abdullah College vicinity, an influential leader of the Awami National Party [ANP] allegedly runs his business openly and provides the water to dye factories by installing illegal connections to the main line which runs through North Nazimabad from Banaras. The ANP leader has allegedly installed his own metres at the dye factories and charges up to Rs:1.5 million per month for the water supply.
- 
- **An illegal water hydrant exists just behind the Paposh Nagar police post, where a large number of water tankers continue to fill their tanks under the cover of the Paposh Nagar Police.**

Unfortunately, the above two hydrants were only the tip of iceberg, in actual there were dozens being run with the connivance of the police and the areas' political parties who received their share from the Hydrant - owners to let their illegal businesses run smoothly. The police officials deployed in the respective areas had taken no action. The board's MD had asked the DG Rangers seeking assistance to initiate a crackdown against the perpetrators of the illegal business – but no positive response.

According to KWSB inner sources, at least 19 illegal hydrants were operational in Landhi and another six in Korangi [September 2013]. Though DHA's requirement was around 13 million gallons per day, it then used to receive no more than eight million gallons a day.

***Water Crisis Continued In 2014-15:*** The water-crisis entered year 2014 with the same pomp & show and glamour.

During summer of 2014, the city administration announced the people must brace for a major water crisis over the next few months unless there would be ample rainfall to top-up the water reserves at Hub Dam – a reservoir of water supply for Karachi. Residents of several areas came out to the streets for protest and - KWSB were found scratching their heads.

***In August 2014,*** the city was facing a shortage of 150mgd against the demand of 650mgd. The allegation of shortage was loaded over the shoulders of ***'the drought at Hub Dam'*** ignoring the fact that [***as per KWSB's own admissions***] around 30% to 35% of the water was stolen or leaked through the cracked pipelines. The KWSB forgot to mention that Karachi was getting around 550mgd water through ***Keenjhar Lake*** and only 100mgd from the Hub Dam.

During 2014, the KWSB operated 16 water hydrants across the city – used to supply an average of around 30,000 gallons per day but who was responsible for 129 illegal water hydrants which were being run by influential. The official media note of KWSB said:

*"The board has been carrying out its operation against illegal water hydrants since the last two years - we don't understand how they were still operating in the city."*

During 2014, the ***'tanker mafia'*** supplied water at a rate of Rs:3,000 per tanker – used to get their water from the illegal hydrants and supplied it to households at prime rates. Such was the demand for water that the business had become a lucrative source of income for the political tycoons. The water crisis was to subside only if the PPP government of Sindh could withdraw itself from that devastating business of patronizing the illegal tanker mafia.

**Gulshan e Hadeed** and Steel Town of Karachi had population of around 300,000 was deprived of water for over two months consecutively - a rift between the KWSB and Pakistan Steel Mill was blamed for the shortage. Due to an electricity crisis in the pumping stations of KWSB, the water

supply was not smooth to the reservoir and the residents of the said areas were facing an acute shortage of water.

**"We cannot stop water supply to the production workshops so we have to stop supply to the residential areas,"** the Steel Mill authorities held.

In a city as big as Karachi, it has been unfortunate that its residents had to suffer so much to obtain a basic necessity like water. This continued to happen even though people also made payments to the government for getting water through the main supply lines. During late January 2015, the Supreme Court gave strict directions to the local authorities to end the menace of illegal water hydrants.

Law enforcers and the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board were ordered to launch a crackdown against them but the illegal hydrants continued to function and residents of many areas were forced to buy water at exorbitant rates – salute to the PPP's political teams and corrupt bureaucracy.

In January 2015; the [Rangers came on board the drive against illegal hydrants](#) and vowed to rid the city of at least 15 large illegal hydrants operating in Karachi's District West – some were actually closed but then the Rangers retreated back because the PPP's provincial government started roaring terming it as **'undue interference by Rangers in civil administration'**; so the corruption in water supply touched its heights.

It was also on record that **'the money the water tanker mafia has been generating through illegal hydrants has been traced back to militants in other parts of the country'**. The Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah, however, never endorsed the idea – thus the people kept on crying for water on roads and the political elite continued to fill its coffers with ill-gotten money.

**Till May 2015**, almost 70 percent of Karachi was without water with Malir, Korangi, Orangi Town, SITE, Metroville, North Karachi, Landhi, Shireen Jinnah Colony, Baldia Town among the worst hit areas where even drinking water was not available.

Moreover, the continuous load shedding at pumping stations including *Dhabeji* was making the situation worse. Even the posh areas of Karachi including Defence Housing Society and Clifton were no exception as they were buying bottled water for drinking purpose and arranging water tankers for other needs. Tanker operators across the city continued fleecing the

buyers by charging exorbitant prices turning the shortage into a full blown crisis – but rocketing boom for certain rogues.

Commissioner Karachi Shoaib Siddqui took notice [*why so soon – as the problem has been creeping in Karachi since early 2008*] of the situation and directed KESC to immediately stop load shedding at pumping stations. Call it a mega corruption; citizens in various localities of Nazimabad, Liaquatabad and Old City area were without water despite paying KWSB bills for a long time.

Even till today, *Water shortage in Karachi had turned into a nightmare for the residents of Pakistan's largest metropolis with apparently no end in sight.* A city already facing energy crisis like the rest of Pakistan was countering another menace by the name of '**water crisis**' with water tanker mafia sponsored by political and bureaucratic elite emerging as main beneficiaries.

### **SUPREME COURT GOT MOVED:**

A survey report of Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) published in 2012 claimed that in Karachi city water supply schemes were providing piped water for drinking and household needs to an enumerated population of 11.716 million persons on 1,247 surveyed water schemes. The subsequent facts appeared:

- ***.....that 58 percent of the schemes were not functioning properly and, as a result, nearly 47 percent of the total population in Karachi remained NOT SERVED by the water supply schemes.***
- 
- ***The PCRWR report, however, had truthfully told the people that more than 10,000 people die every year in Karachi because of renal infection caused by contaminated water.***
- 
- ***During June 2015, the devastating heat-wave struck Sindh where it claimed 1,242 lives and 32 deaths were reported only in Karachi in one day – Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June.***

Various government-run hospitals in Karachi confirmed that at least 32 people died of heatstroke on that Saturday - 13 people died in Jinnah Post-graduate Medical Centre [JPMC], 11 in Abbasi Shaheed Hospital [ASH], two

in Qatar Hospital, three in hospitals owned by Karachi Municipal Corporation [KMC] and three in other hospitals in the city.

The crisis centred in Karachi was worsened by interrupted power supply and shortage of potable water.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** the whole media roared that nearly 1000 people were dead in a severe four-day heat wave in Karachi; no arrangements were done by the Provincial or the Federal Government for the Water & Power shortages. The state officials were just passing statements instead of doing some productive deeds, which could save the lives of the poor Karachiites.

The majority of people died in government-run hospitals in metropolis Karachi as the temperature reached 45 degrees Celsius at a weekend, when the people who were out of power, acutely suffered due to persistent power shortage. Saeed Mangnejo, a senior health official in Sindh province, confirmed the media;

*"The number of people who have died in the heat-wave has now reached 692 and the death toll may rise further.*

*Karachi's Post Graduate Medical College Hospital, has treated more than 3,000 patients, where they even could not even save the Lives of about 400 Patients.*

*Hospitals have been swamped with people suffering from heat-stroke and dehydration, while repeated power outages have left many without air conditioning or running water."*

The deaths came as the overwhelmingly Muslim community was observing the Islamic month of Ramadan, during which eating and drinking is forbidden from sunrise to sunset. The Sindh Provincial Government, taking a serious note of more than 1000 Deaths in city, announced a public holiday to encourage residents to stay inside. Most of the victims of blistering heat were elderly and poor, many of them living in the streets and slums.

Paramilitary Rangers had set up medical camps at several points in Karachi where they were providing water and anti-dehydration salts. More than 400 dead bodies were received in two mortuaries of Edhi Foundation in three days of that heat wave.

The mortuaries soon reached beyond capacity across the city, as the relatives of the deceased could find no arrangements for even the dead bodies, ***as there were no graves available in the grave yards***, which had already been officially closed since years. Chaotic scenes were reported that there were not even ambulances or coffin carriers available for the dead bodies to be shifted from the hospital, or to the grave yard.

Dozens of Dead Bodies were witnessed in the corridors of hospitals in the same blistering heat due to which they had died. High profile hospitals, which are famous among elites like Aga Khan Hospital, had closed their Emergency Departments, and refused to treat the Patients of heat stroke.

Despite the increasing number of deaths being reported in the provincial capital, neither government officials nor any NGO made any arrangements for collecting and collating the data of the death toll. The Sindh government had been criticised by all for poor management of the crisis; the blame game went on. Innocent Public had to face the evils created by the bad governance and corruption of the Pakistani politicians and bureaucrats.

**On 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** the Supreme Court [SC] of Pakistan, while hearing various human rights applications against the operation of illegal water hydrants in Karachi, ordered the Managing Director [MD] Karachi Water and Sewerage Board [KWSB] to personally appear with complete records relating to the regulation and monitoring of water hydrants and action initiated against those being operated illegally in the metropolis. A 3 member bench, headed by Justice Amir Hani Muslim, heard the said petitions. The MD avoided his presence before the apex court.

The judges ordered the officer to ensure that MD Zaidi appeared in the court within half an hour. Again the MD stayed away and sent the Deputy MD in his place but later appeared because the court was going to order his arrest to procure his appearance.

The bench members recorded their displeasure over the management of the water hydrants by the KWSB. The officer in-charge of hydrants of Karachi, Nisar Magsi, informed the court that there were 24 legal hydrants in the city, of which 21 were operational and the remaining three were dysfunctional. There was water board's policy in vogue under which these hydrants were regulated - there was a standard operating procedure [SOP] dated 25<sup>th</sup> August 2009 in that regard.

Nisar Magsi told the court that the water from these hydrants was meant to be supplied to the slums where the infrastructure did not exist, adding that the commodity was also provided for funerals and weddings.

At this point, Justice Muslim remarked that the authorities had failed to even provide *Kafan* to bury about 1,300 bodies of the heatstroke victims during the heat wave in Karachi a month earlier. Magsi could not, however, offer any plausible explanation whether the tankers which filled water from the hydrants provided water on KWSB's instructions or was it the tanker owners who controlled the supply of water in Karachi.

A copy of the contract between KWSB and the contractors was placed before the said Supreme Court bench. The judges went through the terms of the contract and remarked;

*"...prima facie the contract does not reflect that they were serving the residents of Karachi. In fact, the water board appears to have been selling the water through the contractors (tanker owners) and they do not have any scheme to serve the interests of the residents of Karachi.*

*The purpose for creating hydrants was different than the purpose for which the supply of water is being made in Karachi city."*

Under the circumstances, the SC bench directed MD Magsi to provide the documentation on the basis of which he was regulating the supply of water through tankers. He was also directed to justify the increasing number of tankers in the recent past, when there was a hue and cry for the shortage of water in different areas of the city.

Referring to ***Al-Jazeera dated 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015;***

*"For years armed gangs have been controlling part of the water supply in Pakistan's largest city of Karachi. The so-called water mafia have stolen millions of dollars worth of water and sold it on the black market.*

*On the outskirts of the city, hidden in plain view, illegal water stations operate tapping into underground pipelines owned by the state, and in some cases sewage wells.*

*All day trucks fill up with stolen water, and sell it all over Karachi at an inflated price, denying poor residents much needed water. Water traders with 30 to 40 tankers reportedly earn as much as \$16,000 a day."*

**On 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015;** the SC resumed the hearing of the said case at Karachi Registry and that time Chief Justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali himself presided the bench. The CJP expressed dissatisfaction over performance of government institutions. During the hearing, MD KWSB informed the court that the city was facing a shortage of 600 million gallons of water per day, adding that IRSA should increase the quota.

The MD also came up with new and strange excuses like:

*'...owing to non-payment of payments of dues [Rs:320 million] to contractors engaged in installation of hydrants and supply of water through tankers, it was impossible to immediately shut the illegal water hydrants.'*

The CJP observed that KWSB would not be resolving the water shortage issue in the port city. He questioned from where the tankers were getting water if there was shortfall in the metropolis. The court adjourned the hearing for 10 days.

In ending 2015; the KWSB had only enough water to meet 50 percent of its needs, and around 30 percent of the water was wasted or stolen; out of water stolen, over 70 percent was reportedly being sold to big businesses.

The Karachi's administrative authorities, tried to tackle the issue through crack downs on the practice, carrying out raids on 200 pumping stations but the leaders of **"underwater world"** not only resisted the moves but continued operating and - the cost of illegal water in Karachi was simply doubled. The illegal dealers held that:

***"...powerful and well-connected individuals are to blame for the continued illegal practice. They are holding us by the necks basically and this is all because a few big people are involved in this and who are the caretakers and who are the people making money - there are people on higher levels involved."*** [Ref: Kamran Khan's **Dunya TV** program dated 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015]

The miserable fact remains that the situation of WATER CRISIS in Karachi is still continuing with the same vigour and acuteness – even today in ending 2016.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** the KWSB demolished 11 illegal hydrants in the vicinity of Teen Hatti **on the directives of the Supreme Court**, which while hearing a human rights petition had ordered that all such hydrants be shut down and demolished.

Some of the hydrants were draining out subsoil water while others had taken illegal connections from main pipelines. The water connections of these hydrants had already been severed by KWSB staffers. Most of the hydrants were established on over 1,000 sq yard plots; were being portrayed as junkyard where the operators of the illegal hydrants parked old and dilapidated vehicles only to deceive the authorities.

Had the residents not helped the KWSB it would have been very difficult to locate the hydrants. KWSB Chief Misbahuddin Farid said that the illegal hydrants were not only stealing water and robbing the people of Karachi but also creating problems for the area residents. The roads were in dilapidated condition due to the movement of heavy duty water tankers.

### **WATER CRISIS WORSONED:**

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015;** experts at a seminar titled "**Water Governance in Pakistan**", organised by the US-Pakistan Centre for Advanced Studies in Water [US-PCASW] discussed various aspects plaguing water management in the country, especially in Karachi. The US-PCASW is a joint venture of the Mehran University of Engineering and Technology [MUET], Jamshoro and the University of Utah, USA.

Sindh's Finance Minister Murad Ali Shah [later the CM Sindh in 2016] in his keynote address spoke of the persisting issue of water wastage in the Arabian Sea because of lack of dams in Sindh that consequently affected efficient and optimal use of water. Shah, while speaking of the debate surrounding the construction of the Kalabagh Dam and the Diamer-Bhasha Dam, said:

*"Water from Mirpurkhas and Tharparkar cannot possibly be stored in a dam built in the northern parts of the country. To debate the feasibility and technicalities of the issue is meaningless in the absence of a political will and acceptability of the stakeholders."*

The seminar noted that Pakistan had, for the first time, touched the mark denoting water scarcity in 1991, and then in 2005. Indicators suggested that by 2025, the country would rank among absolute water-scarce countries. A constant increase in population, urbanisation, industrialisation and agricultural activities had led to a shortage of water by 11pc in 2004 which could further rise up to 31pc by 2025.

The water poverty index of Pakistan showed that the majority of the country's population did not have access to water even for the purpose of drink-

ing and washing basic items including clothes and utensils. As far as the quality of water was concerned, 80pc of water available was unsafe for human consumption by even the weakest standards.

Citing Karachi's water distribution, one participant Dr Mari said the city received 650mgd of water daily but its poor distribution system had rendered several areas of the metropolis waterless. An ageing infrastructure that included worn-out pumping machines, lack of maintenance, institutional incapacity and poor performance in addition to challenges such as climate change were some of the other factors.

Pakistan was among the top 10 countries in the world vulnerable to climate change; the then severe heat waves in Karachi like of 2014-15, that claimed over 1,800 lives, was a clear example of the fast-changing climatic conditions. Among a few causes affecting climate, key ones included deforestation, glacial melt, loss of biodiversity and rise in sea level.

The process of production, transmission and distribution of potable water this year [2016] was no different from the past years as demand of the utility rose to 1242 MGD, with estimated increase of 100 MGD over the year. Then the board was drawing 650 MGD water from River Indus and Hub Dam, the two available sources.

The SC had directed the two high officials of KWSB to formulate a policy to end persisting water crisis in the metropolis but no scheme appeared on surface till the ending of the year 2016.

The owners of the industries made a contract with the subsoil water hydrant operator in Sakraan, Balochistan and the water carriers started supplying water from there for industrial use. The quality of subsoil water brought from Sakraan was tested in the laboratory and declared harmful for human health.

As it was nearly impossible to meet the demand of 1242 MGD with total supply of 650 MGD, the board decided to increase the interval between supplies of water. In some areas, KWSB was supplying water every other day, then increased the interval to 2-3 days. The residents, who were getting water twice a week, got water only once a week.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** the Supreme Court directed the provincial government to file a detailed report on supply of potable water and operation of illegal hydrants in the city.

A three-judge bench headed by Justice Amir Hani Muslim also directed the Chief Law Officer to place on record the details of the cases against the operators of illegal hydrants within a week. The bench was conducting *suo*

*motu* proceedings on failure of the KWSB in ensuring smooth water supply to the city.

Justice Hani remarked that people of the entire city were left at the mercy of the KWSB 'valve men', who supplied water to the localities of their own choice. The water utility patronized the water tanker mafia; it was held.

Another bench member said that he grew up with the tap water, but then under-privileged people were also compelled to drink bottled water as the water utility had miserably failed to ensure smooth water supply. The judge asked MD KWSB about the mechanism of distribution of water in the city and why water meters were not installed at certain points.

The reply from KWSB was surprising that as many as 20 meters were installed, while 121 meters could not be installed due to non-availability of funds. Replying to a court query, the MD said that there were over 10,000 water tankers and 13 legal hydrants in the city.

The bench observed that the number of hydrants must have been much more as such a small number of hydrants could not cater to thousands of water carriers. The apex court remarked that the district judges could be assigned the task of inspecting hydrants.

The KWSB Chief confirmed that positive results were achieved by taking action against illegal hydrants.

The same bench of the SC, meanwhile, issued a show-cause notice to the federal finance and planning secretaries for not providing funds for the project of Right Bank Outfall Drain [RBOD] one and three of the **Manchhar Lake Projects**.

The bench was conducting the *suo motu* proceedings regarding contamination of the Manchhar Lake. The Chief Secretary Sindh and the General Manager of the project said that the treatment plant was being delayed due to non-availability of funds from the federal government.

The bench expressed extreme displeasure over the non-availability of funds and poor linkage between the federal and the Sindh governments – and what else those poor judges could do.

**Till summer 2016 at least;** the water problem of Karachiites was not solved; tanker owners locked horns with KWSB over reduced piece of the pie after SC closed down illegal water hydrants.

The undocumented business of supplying water to the residents of Karachi lost attraction following increasing imbalance in the number of hydrants and the water carriers.

The tanker owners were in a fix following the closure of all the subsoil or illegal water hydrants by KWSB on the directives of the Supreme Court. Owners of the water carriers were in a state of clash with the Board **"to gain illegal benefits"** amid closure of illegal water hydrants. Hundreds of tankers went parked there for days and weeks, waiting for their turn; burden on existing hydrants increased manifold.

Supplying water to the water-shortage areas had emerged as so profitable business in the city that even edible oil carriers as well as carriers of petroleum products had made a fortune in the business. An owner of a water carrier earned Rs:15,000 - 25,000 per day particularly in summer when water shortage in the city reached its peak.

In addition to the edible oil and petroleum products carriers, the tanker owners also added more water carriers in their fleet to earn more from the unsolved water crises.

Referring to one owner in the **'Pakistan Today'** dated **6<sup>th</sup> June 2016**:

*"Supplying water is our family business. I saw my grandfather supplying water on donkey-carts. My father joined my grandfather and invested money to buy a truck for supplying water. When my father handed this business to me, I had only one tanker; today I have 50,"*Irfan Dogar, a tanker owner, told the correspondent.

The Sindh government demolished tens of water hydrants during 2016 and reduced it to 11 in Karachi; the city was facing water shortage of 600 MGD then. There were 8,000 water tankers in the city and it was nearly impossible to refill all the water carriers with the available hydrants. The tanker owners used to get their carriers filled three times a day till ending 2015.

The water issue in Karachi is still in doldrums, despair and depression.

## **Scenario 156**

### **KARACHI AFFAIRS IN YEAR 2015 [I]**

#### **MQM & ANP CALLED ARMY:**

**On 5<sup>th</sup> January 2015**; the senators belonging to the *Muttahida Qaumi Movement* [MQM] and the *Awami National Party* [ANP] demanded a stern

and conclusive military operation against terrorists in Karachi – in fact a meaningful extension of **Zarb e Azb** which was already going on successfully in the whole country; Daily '**Dawn of 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015**' is referred.

Their demand was based on the facts and figures released by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP] for year 2014 related to Karachi which is highlighted below:

*[As many as 2,909 people, including women, children, suspects and law-enforcers, were killed in the city in 2014.*

*While the law enforcement agencies killed 594 suspects in the city during Jan-Dec 2014, some 142 law-enforcers were also killed in the metropolis in that one-year period.*

*134 political activists were killed during the year, while 340 bodies were found in different city areas.*

*661 people were murdered for no political reasons.*

*As many as 120 people were killed on sectarian grounds, 89 were targeted by some banned outfits, 70 people were abducted and killed and 28 people lost their lives in bomb blasts.*

*87 people were killed in the Lyari gang warfare.*

*457 and 135 suspects were killed in encounters with police and Rangers, respectively, while police torture killed two during the period Jan-Dec 2014.*

*Of the 142 law-enforcers killed during the last one year, 130 were policemen and 12 were paramilitary soldiers. Twenty-seven private security guards were also killed during the year.*

*134 people were killed owing to personal enmity, 107 were killed by robbers, seven were burnt to death and three were killed by security guards.*

*36 men were killed by stray bullets; 28 were killed on railway tracks; 61 died due to the overdose / toxic liquor while three people died in prison, etc.*

*78 children were killed during the year. Eight of them were kidnapped and murdered, 15 died in bomb blasts, 20 killed by stray bullets, 18 killed due to enmity; five were raped and killed and one child was killed on sectarian grounds.*

*Of the 154 women killed during the one year, 55 were killed by their relatives, 61 were killed by influential persons; 14 were killed by stray bullets, 11 died in bomb blasts, three were killed on the railway tracks and four women were burnt to death.*

*Six women fell victim to the **karo kari** [the killing in the name of so-called honour]. Four men were also killed in the same category.*

*The highest number of killings reached to 281 in the month of March 2014, while the lowest figure of killing was 187 in the month of December 2014.]*

The demand came when ANP's Shahi Syed drew the Senate's attention to what he called the continued targeted killing of his party's workers as well as *Pakhtuns* in Karachi. The opposition senators also staged a token walk-out with the ANP members to express solidarity with them. Chairman Nayyar Bokhari sought a report from the Sindh government on targeted killings in Karachi.

***Launching a support for ANP's call for the military action, Nasreen Jalil of the MQM said it was her party which had been demanding an army operation against terrorists in Karachi*** where Taliban were strengthening their presence. The senator had written a letter to the prime minister on the issue.

The Senate held that not only the Pakhtuns, but the Sindhis and Urdu-speaking people were also being targeted by terrorists, understanding that issues being faced by the ANP and her party were not different from each other. Senator Jalil Nasreen condemned the killing of ANP leaders and workers in Karachi and said the Taliban had also targeted the MPAs of her party which could not run the election campaign in 2013 because of terrorism. The apex house raised questions that:

- *"Why are the murderers being protected?*
- *Why is a military operation not being carried out in Karachi?*
- *Why not to launch a military operation in Karachi to clean it of filth.*
- *What will happen if the people picked up weapons."*

All members knew and discussed that billions of rupees were being collected as extortion in the city. Senator Syed regretted that ANP's third Karachi president had been killed but not a single killer was arrested. ANP's Ilyas Bilour held Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan responsible for what he called ***continued genocide of the Pakhtuns*** and asked the rulers to quit if they could not protect people.

Senators had the consensus that till then over 1,200 activists and ministers of the ANP and their children had been killed by terrorists – though most of the victims belonged to Khyber PK province.

However, **on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2015**; a local leader, Rafiq Rajput, of MQM appeared in court while accused of involvement in violence of *12<sup>th</sup> May 2007*; ***BBC of the same date is referred*** here for details.

*[On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007; over 50 people were killed and more than 100 vehicles torched during the visit of [then defunct] CJP Iftikhar M Chaudhry, to Karachi who had arrived in the city to address a lawyers' gathering.*

*The City police had registered an FIR against the Sindh government and the leaders of the MQM regarding the incidents of that day. MQM had claimed that their 14 workers were also killed.*

***In September 2007***; *MQM had asked its workers and supporters, who had witnessed the incidents of 12<sup>th</sup> May, to attend all future proceedings related to that day and furnish personal affidavits.]*

MQM denied allegations saying that Rajput was not a criminal, adding that he was a "dignified and honest man" who should not have been arrested. His detention followed by Rangers' report found that MQM was responsible for 11<sup>th</sup> September 2012 factory fire also which killed more than 250 people – known as Baldia Town Arson case.

The MQM once more rejected the allegations categorically.

BBC added that it was part of Rangers' new policy to bring factional, sectarian and ethnic killings under control in the city. Since the late 1980s, successive governments used force and appeasement to control MQM, which was understood to have a large armed wing and the ability to destabilise Karachi. Rafiq Rajput was leader of the ***Mehmoodabad*** branch of MQM.

**"It is strange that he has been arrested seven years after the 12 May incident,"** Amir Khan of MQM's leading Rabita Committee told the media.

In fact, **on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2012**, the Sindh High Court had **restored to its original position** a constitutional petition seeking a judicial inquiry into the incidents of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 filed by civil rights campaigner Syed Iqbal Kazmi, who had previously withdrawn it in November 2007.

Later; another MQM affiliate confessed to his involvement in 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 and Tahir Plaza of 2008 incidents which saw many political workers and lawyers killed in 2007 and 2008 during lawyers movement for restoration of the then CJP Iftikhar M Chaudhry; **'the News'** dated **22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016** is referred.

In a leaked video made during the course of one JIT [*consisted of officials from police, Rangers and intelligence agencies*]'s investigation, Kashif Qadir said he carried out the killings at the behest of MQM chief Altaf Hussain. **"MQM chief gathered party workers a day before May 12 and asked to stop Chief Justice's rally come what may,"** Kashif said in the video and added that:

*"Two teams were set up for this purpose; the MQM workers were positioned at the FTC Bridge where they resorted to firing. Before the burning of lawyers at the City Court in 2008, MQM chief asked party workers not to spare anybody."*

At least four people were killed when gunmen opened fire from flyovers in Baloch Colony and FTC on people passing through the *Shahra-e-Faisal* on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Six people were killed in Tahir Plaza when unknown men had set fire to the building in April 2008.

The suspect Kashif Qadir admitted to killing Advocate Sohail Anjum, Wahid Anjum and six workers of the *Sunni Tehreek*. He claimed that the *Sunni Tehreek* workers were murdered on the orders of Hammad Siddiqui. Kashif Qadir's father worked in the construction sector and joined the MQM after being intimidated for paying extortion.

Reacting to allegations made in the video, the MQM said the video was part of the media trial of the party.

**J RANA BHAGWANDAS EXPIRED:**

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2015; Former** acting chief **Justice Rana Bhagwandas** passed away in Karachi. The 73-year-old former judge was under treatment for a heart ailment at a private hospital at the time of his passing. He was the first Hindu and the second non-Muslim head of Pakistan's judiciary and had been a Supreme Court judge since February 2000.

Born in Naseerabad, Larkana District [now Qamber Shahdadkot District] in Sindh in December 1942, Justice Bhagwandas had a postgraduate degree in Islamic Studies and was considered an expert on constitutional law. He was a practising advocate for about two years before being appointed as a judge in July 1967; was made judge of the Sindh High Court in June 1994.

In 2002, the Sindh High Court had dismissed a challenge to his appointment to the higher judiciary on the grounds that he was a non-Muslim.

He was appointed acting Chief Justice for a few days in 2005 and 2006, during the absence of then Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry from the country. He was again appointed as acting chief justice of Pakistan during the judicial crisis in 2007.

Justice Bhagwandas was appointed as the Chairman Federal Public Service Commission [FPSC] on **25<sup>th</sup> November 2009** after his retirement from the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the powers enjoyed by the FPSC chief had been cut drastically, as he was no longer responsible for top appointments / promotions in the bureaucracy. This was seen as a major jolt vis-a-vis merit - based promotions in the bureaucracy.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani had already reconstituted the selection board for senior positions in the civil services. The Secretary of the Establishment Division had been made the chairman of the board, which recommended promotions against BPS-20 and BPS-21 posts.

A couple of months earlier, an ordinance was promulgated, amending the Civil Servants Act of 1973 for the removal of the Chairman of FPSC as head of the board. Under the ordinance, the prime minister could appoint anyone as chairman of the board; bureaucrats still fear that this may lead to "**political promotions**".

**On Performance of Judges:**

**On 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** the Chief Justice Sindh High Court [SHC] Syed Sajjad Ali, while addressing Thatta Bar, said that:

*"....no comparison should be made between the **performance of judges** and lower staff of courts. Under the influence of an ailment plaguing the society, everyone wants to get his work done by hook or by crook. So if somebody in connivance with court staff wants to achieve desired results, his act should not be attributed to judges.*

*By the grace of God, we have the **best of judges and corrupt judges are in tiny minority** - that 25 judges had been sacked on various charges over the past one year. We have launched reforms in judicial system and begun with ourselves [judges]."*

Meanwhile, the SHC Hyderabad bench recommended departmental proceedings against Benazir Abad's District and Sessions Judge for misconduct. The bench comprising Justice Salahuddin Panhwar and Justice Iqbal Mehar directed the Sessions Judge [SJ], Manazir Hussain Zaidi, to submit his compliance report of the high court's order dated 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The matter pertained to the administrative and financial issues of the Peoples University of Medical and Health Sciences for Women, Benazirabad District, raised by a petitioner, Mumtaz Ahmed Qureshi.

Vide the 10<sup>th</sup> October's order, the SJ Zaidi was supposed to inspect the teaching hospital affiliated with the university and to submit a detailed report of the raids carried out and action taken. Instead of going by the SHC order, the SJ held a dialogue with the petitioner and reported to SHC that the petitioner Mr Qureshi had no *locus standi* in the matter; thus the petition was filed declaring it '*not maintainable*'.

After going through the report, the bench noted that the judge was entrusted with a specific duty under the court's Oct 10 order which never authorised him to hold conversation with the petitioner - thus deciding fate of the petition on his own.

The bench observed that SJ Zaidi's act was a pure case of inefficiency. The bench, meanwhile, ordered DG Health Services to appear in person in the high court along with detailed report of all hospitals of the district, particularly the teaching hospital affiliated with the Peoples University of Medical and Health Sciences for Women, after paying surprise visit to the hospital.

In his petition Mr Qureshi had stated that after amendments to the Peoples University of Medical and Health Sciences for Women, Benazir Abad Act

2015, all administrative matters of the university were transferred to its vice chancellor. But till that date funds, medicines and rules etc were under the control of the respondent Benazir Abad's Deputy Commissioner [DC].

The budget was still lying with the DC due to political interference and certain employees were '**ghost employees**'; private clinics, ultrasound examination and x-ray businesses were being run under the supervision of the university's professors. The petitioner had prayed to the SHC to declare the DC's act of keeping the budget and medicines of university unlawful.

**MQM HQ - NINE ZERO RAIDED:**

**On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015;** a heavy contingent of Rangers raided Nine Zero, the headquarters of *Muttahida Qaumi Movement* [MQM], in Karachi's Azizabad neighbourhood in the morning. A number of party workers, including member of MQM Rabita Committee [Central Coordination Cell]'s Amir Khan, were detained during the raid.

The operation was managed and executed by members of the paramilitary force alone and there was no sign of local police in the area. The Rangers' raid at the MQM HQ appeared to have symbolic significance in the Karachi operation that had been underway since October 2013.

The MQM announced a protest by party activists and a subsequent call for a day of "peaceful mourning" across the country. The private schools in Karachi remained closed next day; the examinations and entry tests scheduled for that day were postponed.

MQM Chief Altaf Hussain, in a telephonic address from London, denounced the said raid; the summary of his address was:

- *'This was the first time that the house of a political party chief was raided.*
- 
- *....remarked that Rangers have authority but they are unable to deliver justice.*
- 
- *The establishment does not tolerate MQM's presence.*
-

- *The ammunition seized from Nine Zero by Rangers does not belong to MQM - if the weapons belonged to MQM, they would not have been stored in Nine Zero.*
- 
- *The ammunition recovered was planted by Rangers personnel themselves, who carried it inside concealed in blankets.*
- 
- *..... that "terrorism in the name of search operations" be stopped.*
- 
- *..... more than 60 people were arrested during the raid by Rangers.*
- 
- *The demise of party worker Waqas Ali Shah has deeply upset him.'*

The MQM alleged that a senior party office bearer, Waqas Ali Shah of the central information committee, was killed by Rangers during the raid – he was killed in straight fire by Rangers at 7:45am. The MQM narrated that:

*"Dozens of mobiles of Rangers appeared at Nine Zero around 6 am. Personnel proceeded to raid the 50 offices in our HQ; went to each office, went through all the files and broke telephones."*

Additional Inspector General [IGP] Sindh Police Ghulam Qadir Thebo, while speaking to the media, said that Waqas Shah was not shot by Rangers personnel, but that the bullet was fired from a hand-held gun from within the MQM people around. Rangers Director General [DG] Maj Gen Bilal Akbar also told that:

*'MQM activist Shah did not die of gunfire by Rangers personnel; the young man was shot with a TT pistol and the fact would become clear once the medical board's report is received.'*

A Rangers spokesperson briefed the media that *no one was killed during the raid but that 'unidentified men' opened fire injuring an Express News cameraman.* Rangers personnel, after breaking barricades leading to MQM HQ, had cordoned off the area and searched through departments of the party's offices. They also raided adjoining houses and arrested a number of MQM activists and leaders from around.

Speaking to media, Col Tahir called the two hour raid a **"purely information-based operation"** and divulged that the Khursheed Memorial Hall at Nine Zero was sealed and handed over to police for further investigation. During the raid, telephone lines at Nine Zero were cut-off, disabling communication with the outer world.

Contrary to the MQM Chief's speech that the recovered guns did not belong to the party [*– rather the same were brought in through concealed blankets and planted by the Rangers*], the party leader Haider Abbas Rizvi, who was in Islamabad that day, confirmed the raid to the media but narrated a different stance and **'maintained that all the weapons seized by Rangers are licensed'**.

Express News cameraman Waseem Mughal who was at Nine Zero among other media personnel was injured due to firing from the MQM's mob but his condition got stable later while taken to the hospital in time. According to Ranger's Col Tahir, ammunition stolen from NATO containers was also seized during the search operation at Nine Zero.

Speaking to media, MQM's Faisal Subzwari admitted that weapons were seized during the raid, but upheld the stance adopted by Haider Abbas Rizvi in Islamabad that day:

*'... they were all licensed and were being kept for security in view of the threats being received from the Taliban and other extremist elements. After the Army Public School attack, even schools and colleges are now being asked to keep weapons for security. We were also told to keep weapons for our security.'*

Scores of activists and party members protested the raid by chanting slogans. Aerial firing also ensued outside Nine Zero as the activists attempted to break Rangers' cordon. A large number of female activists had also protested the raid by chanting "*Go Rangers Go*". Soon after the news of the search operation broke, MQM leaders and activists started to gather outside the HQ but were not allowed to enter its premises.

MQM observed a day of peaceful protest against the search operation next morning and the transport services remained suspended throughout the day in all areas of Karachi. Petrol pumps and private schools in several areas of Karachi were shut down as activists in large numbers protested against the Rangers. Examinations in Karachi University were also postponed as citizens' feared violence. Business centres and gas stations in Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Jamshoro and Mirpur Khas were also shut down.

Might be a coincidence; the incident emerged on a day when PM Nawaz Sharif himself was due to visit the metropolitan city. In Islamabad, Senator Raja Zafarul Haq of PML[N], categorically stated that the ruling party had no contention with the MQM. He denied speculation that the raid on Nine Zero was carried out in retaliation to the MQM's support to the PPP during

the elections of the Chairman Senate which led to Raza Rabbani of the PPP to take hold of the prestigious office.

A press release was issued by Rangers after the raid on MQM's HQ. It said:

*'Pakistan Rangers Sindh has conducted a series of targeted raids at surrounding areas of Nine Zero including Khursheed Memorial Hall today. During the above mentioned action, some hard core criminals have been arrested including Faisal Mota, Farhan Shabbir aka Mullah, Amir Khan, Nadir Shah (convicted earlier and sentenced for 13 years by the competent court) and Ubaid K- 2.*

*Faisal Mota had been awarded the death sentence in absentia on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2014 by an Anti-Terrorism Court in the murder case of Wali Khan Babar, a Geo TV reporter.*

*.....And that the paramilitary force had information that Nine-Zero has become a no-go area. We also knew that the criminals were present on the premises. .... that **the raid was carried out on the orders of the Supreme Court** and under the powers granted to Rangers by the federal government.'*

According to Rangers spokesperson Col Tahir, ammunition stolen from NATO containers was also seized during the search operation at Nine Zero. Next day about 27 suspects were presented before an Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC]. The Rangers detained 26 suspects on a 90 days preventive detention while a joint interrogation team (JIT) was later announced for further investigation.

MQM Chief Altaf Hussain held a telephonic conversation with PPP's Asif Ali Zardari, during which the former president was briefed over the Rangers' raid conducted at the MQM HQ Nine Zero and residence of Altaf's sister. He also informed Zardari about the arrest of MQM activists and the killing of Waqas Ali Shah, who died of gunshot wounds during the raid. Hussain added that the nature of the raid at the MQM HQ was condemnable. The former president expressed sorrow over the incident.

In July 2015; the Rangers' JIT had pointed at the MQM in the Baldia Town factory inferno fire that claimed the lives of at least 258 factory workers, a charge the party vehemently denied. The JIT report contained several other disclosures about the involvement of MQM workers in several criminal cases as well rigging in the 2013 general elections.

Next day, at least 27 suspects were presented before an Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] - 26 were placed on a 90 days preventive detention while a joint interrogation team [JIT] was likely to be formed for further investigation. Rangers claimed that they apprehended nearly a dozen target killers – including the aforementioned six convicts.

Later that day, Rangers handed over three MQM workers, to Azizabad police after no evidence of criminal activities was found against them during initial investigations. On the third day [on Friday morning], 19 more detainees were released, including Ghulam Subhani, Pervez Alam, Khurram and Azeem who were members of MQM's information department.

**On 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** Preedy Police Station's Station House Officer [SHO] was gunned down in Akhtar Colony. SHO Aijaz Khawaja was in his car when he was severely injured after gunmen fired at him. He was rushed to Jinnah hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

### **MQM WON GABOL'S SEAT BACK:**

**On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** MQM candidate Kunwar Naveed Jamil was the winner of the by-election held in Karachi's NA-246 constituency.

Kunwar Naveed Jamil bagged 95,644 votes followed by PTI's Imran Ismail with 24,821 votes; *Jamaat e Islami* [JI]'s Rashid Naseem grabbed the third spot with 9,056 votes; a total of 131,418 votes were cast in the constituency by-poll out of which 1,129 votes were rejected - the total turnover was at 36.72pc.

By-election was held in NA-246 on that day after the seat fell vacant when MQM's Nabeel Gabol resigned from the National Assembly a few months ago. The involvement of MQM chief Altaf Hussain, PTI Chairman Imran Khan and JI chief Sirajul Haq had turned what was just a simple by-election for one seat into an electoral battlefield of national importance.

Imran Ismail accepted the outcome of that day's by-elections while saying that the prevention of election-day rigging was a great leap forward, and that in the future, pre-election rigging through presiding officers and by means of lists were also be stopped.

MQM supporters gathered at Jinnah Ground to celebrate the *win of MQM's Kanwar Naveed Jameel* of the NA-246 constituency, after being summoned by party chief Altaf Hussain.

There were reports of clash between the supporters of rival political parties at Karimabad, where PTI's central election office was located. PTI Karachi president Ali Zaidi denounced the hooliganism of MQM workers who had attacked PTI camp office there, hurled stones and set the PTI flag on fire. However, a statement issued from PTI Media Cell said:

*".....MQM welcomes PTI on one hand, while on the other hand, it sends party activists to attack the PTI office and workers. Our peacefulness shouldn't be considered as our weakness. We don't want to spoil the peace of Karachi."*

Imran Ismail told the media PTI was satisfied with the said election adding: **"We haven't yet received complaints about rigging. The party's reservations with the ECP, however, still stand."**

Speaking to media personnel, PTI chief Imran Khan said:

*".....today's by-election would not have been possible without the deployment of Rangers during the polling considering the sense of fear that has been created in the constituency."*

*I think MQM is already making excuses because they know they will not manage 140,000 votes this time. It was a positive development for Karachi that finally true elections were taking place there."*

213 polling stations were set up with 769 polling booths housed in 55 buildings, for 357,861 registered voters. Around 2,556 policemen provided security in the constituency, whereas Rangers personnel were also deployed at almost all polling stations.

Although 14 candidates were in the run, but the by-poll was largely a three-way contest between Kanwar Naveed Jameel of MQM, Imran Ismail of PTI and Rashid Naseem of JI.

The constituency is considered to be an MQM bastion because its headquarters Nine Zero is located there and the party had emerged victorious in all three previous general elections in 2002, 2008 and 2013 and in a by-election in May 2004. It comprised Federal B. Area, Federal Capital Area and parts of Liaquatabad.

### **Cantonment Board Elections:**

**On 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** in **Cantonment Board Elections** in Karachi, the polling opened at 8am and continued till 5pm without break, under the watchful gaze of soldiers deployed in and around the polling stations. The military was given magisterial powers to supervise the polling process. Voters were not allowed to carry mobile phones to the polling stations.

**[Overall in Pakistan:** *PML[N] triumphed over its rivals, winning 68 of the 199 seats up for grabs; the PTI emerged as the second biggest winner with 42 seats followed by the MQM, which clinched 19 seats. The PPP, which used to be a federal party, performed dismally, winning only seven seats; the politico-religious Jamaat e Islami clinched six seats and the ANP of Asfandiyar Wali could muster only two seats.*]

Most people reportedly stayed within the confines of their homes because of the high temperature. At some polling stations though, the turnout crossed the 60pc mark.

- In Faisal cantonment, the MQM won eight seats while the PML[N] won two seats. There were a total of ten wards in this cantonment.
- 
- In Clifton cantonment – which also had ten wards – the PTI won four seats, the PPP won three seats, while the MQM won two seats and the JI picked up one seat.
- 
- In Korangi Cantonment, the election was held only in one of its two seats, which was won by the PML[N] candidate.
- 
- In Karachi cantonment, which had five wards, the MQM won three seats while two independent candidates also succeeded in getting elected.
- 
- In Malir Cantonment, the MQM won two seats and the PML[N] managed to bag one seat.
- 
- In Manora cantonment, two independent candidates were declared winners; this cantonment had two wards.

During the LG polls in Karachi, questions were raised over the transparency of polls as the board's officials did not allow independent observers and media to enter the premises of polling stations. A lot of eligible voters did not even know that the elections were taking place in their areas, as

the political parties paid little attention to the contest. The turnout in all cantonment areas of Karachi was from 15 to 20 percent.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** while feeling ashamed of results of those cantonment polls and cursing their service and governance in Karachi, the ruling PPP's Co-Chairperson Mr Zardari announced uplift package as PPP wanted to stage show of strength in Lyari. He announced development schemes worth one billion rupees for the underprivileged Lyari and vowed to return peace to the troubled neighbourhood.

In Lyari's Kakri Ground, PPP demonstrated a show of strength in the metropolis in a bid to dispel the impression that the party had lost its vote-bank in earlier day's cantonment elections. Zardari announced making of Bilawal Bhutto Engineering College for uplift of the educational status of the area. He also vowed to resolve the issue of water scarcity in Lyari 'within three months'.

In addition to announcing flats scheme for Lyari, he also announced regularisation of contractual employees while roaring that *"PPP will fight for the rights of the masses."*

Asking PPP workers to begin preparation for the polls that were two and a half years away, the co-chairman took that day as the commencement of their campaigning and vowed to go to Punjab, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and organise rallies there with the same spirits.

Despite all the tall claims by Mr Zardari, no development was, however, seen during the CM Qaim Ali Shah's tenure at least; not a brick was moved, nor an inch for water or sewerage was laid down – all the announcements remained confined to the press clippings at the most.

**On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015;** senior analyst Najam Sethi opined in his live program on *'the GEO – Aapis ki Baat'* that the revelations of one Saulat [later hanged to death on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015] were true and had damaged MQM while benefiting the law enforcement agencies. The JIT interrogating Saulat Mirza said he had no evidence to prove his assertions against the MQM – but how he could prove the atrocities of twenty years back.

Sethi expressed his views that the federal or the Sindh government did not own the Karachi operation and Zardari developed differences with Bilawal also over the action against MQM. The PPP feared becoming the next target after the MQM because the army would take action against every criminal, whether belonging to MQM or the PPP.

In fact, the army was carrying out the operation in Karachi on the basis of intelligence information but the political parties had political objectives. That's the reason the PPP did not own the operation. Had the federal government and the PEMRA taken action on Altaf Hussain's speeches, the army would not have to react. The army was acting in national interest but the Sindh government was not assisting - even the Nawaz Sharif's response not being up to the mark.

The fact remained that Sindh Governor Ishratul Ebad had lost the confidence of both the army and the MQM. Three former army chiefs – Gen Ziaul Haq, Gen Aslam Beg and Gen Musharraf - supported MQM which always enjoyed good relations with the political Generals. However, Gen Raheel Sharif had no political ambitions.

Every now and then, MQM Chief Altaf praised the army, the objective was that they would support the military, if martial law was imposed, but the army too would have to back them. This time, however, Altaf Hussain was unhappy after the army started to cleanse Karachi without playing politics – the army wanted peace and security with no gimmicks.

### **RANGERS' ANOTHER RAID ON 90:**

Earlier, after the Rangers' raid on Nine Zero [*on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015*]; just a day after raid, the Rangers handed over three MQM workers, to Azizabad police after no evidence of criminal activities was found against them during investigations. Those workers were identified as Pervez Alam, Khurram and Azeem and were members of MQM's Information Cell.

Next day, 19 more detainees were released, including one Ghulam Subhani, Nine Zero's cook. Business activities resumed in Karachi as normal just a day after; albeit the petrol stations, markets and education institutions including Karachi University remained closed the whole day when the news about raid spread in the early morning; unidentified men had also set a bus on fire in Korangi No 5. Trade union announced to keep the trade centres open.

Till at least three months after the pre-dawn raid by the Rangers on the MQM HQ at Nine Zero, political prospects of the party continuously went bleak with the powers as its London-based chief kept on raising loud voices against the Generals.

Contrary to the common perception that the Rangers - led operation against the MQM would end, following its electoral triumph in the 23<sup>rd</sup> April by-election on NA-246, almost all local offices of the MQM remained closed for months, its workers were picked up by the law-enforcement agencies on daily basis and even its elected representatives — MNAs, MPAs and senators — were thoroughly checked and sometimes harshly questioned at the airports, no matter whether they were going abroad or travelling within the country. Some leaders were told not to leave the city being under investigation.

Weeks after, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority [PEMRA] placed ban on live telecast of speeches of MQM Chief Altaf Hussain from London because in their opinion the Chief was openly accusing the Pak-Army on Rangers activism in Karachi. Though there was no situation of 'direct conflict' with the Rangers or the Army [*the MQM knew that it was not in their interest*] but the leadership continued issuing statements to condemn 'arbitrary arrests' of MQM activists.

The MQM's local leadership had rightly evaluated that the Pak-Army and the Nawaz Sharif's kitchen cabinet did not want Mr Hussain, being a British citizen too, to lead the party while sitting in his London abode, but the establishment was not having a clear-cut plan to have him replaced.

Referring to the '**Dawn**' Karachi dated **11<sup>th</sup> June 2015**:

*'Many people believed that former Karachi Nazim Syed Mustafa Kamal, who practically left the MQM without making a formal announcement; or Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan could be the likely replacements of Mr Hussain. However, the MQM Chief had the governor discredited when the MQM Coordination Committee last month demanded that Dr Ebad should resign the office and come back to the MQM fold as a 'worker'.*

*And a campaign against Mr Kamal has been going on for months in which workers were constantly brain washed that whatever development he carried out in Karachi during his Nazimiat days was actually the collective vision of the MQM.'*

The fact remained that the Rangers' persistent action in Karachi and the on-going investigations in London forced Altaf Hussain to seriously draw workable conclusions about his own future. Publicly, he told his followers that he would never quit the party leadership but behind closed doors, he always kept a hand-picked team comprising about a dozen London and Karachi based trustees to run the party in case of any eventuality.

Though the MQM always enjoyed both open and tacit support of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP] in Sindh, however, no state institution ever planned to crush it as a political party. The MQM leadership left no stone unturned to make the people believe that:

*'Some powerful individuals are against us and labelling us as a criminal, extortionist, terrorist and anti-state group but we are not. Those individuals should tolerate MQM for the continuity of the current democratic dispensation.'*

The above contention was manifested by the MQM through their victory in the NA-246 by-election as well as in the Cantonment Boards local government elections. Several MQM leaders were not sure whether they would be allowed to freely contest the upcoming local government election in the province. MQM was not allowed to collect **Zakat & Fitrana** for their '**Khidmat e Khalq Foundation**' and certain arrests were also made in this connection on the charges of contravention.

For the MQM it was a tougher phase and the only available option with them was to wait and let the wave pass over. The workers and the leadership maintained that '*...they had faced such atrocities from 1992 till 1996 and they were confident this time, too*'.

**On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015:** MQM's Senator Barrister Mohammad Ali Saif condemned the arrests of party leaders during that day's raid at Nine Zero; it was another raid after 11<sup>th</sup> March one. MQM's press conference a couple of hours after Rangers raid told that the forces had arrested former and incumbent Coordination Committee in-charges i.e. Qamar Mansoor and Kaiful Wara respectively, amongst others. On social media, Bar Saif embarked:

- *We won't be silenced by guns – Stop victimizing MQM.*
- 
- *The state terrorism against MQM needs to stop.*
- 
- *They have even registered FIRs against our women.*
- 
- *All this taking place in an era of so-called democratic government.*
- 
- *A political movement cannot be uprooted by use of force.*
- 
- *Rangers raided Nine Zero without accompanying any warrant.*
- 
- *All arrested workers should be released forthwith.*
-

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- *The MQM's woman leaders are being incriminated in multiple cases and put on ECL - the system based on injustice cannot persist.*
- 
- *The arrests and handcuffs cannot prevent the MQM from its struggle for truth.*

Addressing the media, MQM leader Tahir Mashadi said:

- *The workers of a party that love Pakistan were arrested tonight.*
- 
- *They are victimizing the most liberal and patriotic party of Pakistan.*
- *This is not an operation against criminals; this is Ethnic Cleansing of Mohajirs.*
- 
- *We are being treated with discrimination. It is our turn today. But, it will be anyone else tomorrow.*

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Farooq Sattar expressed resolve to stand by the party Chief Altaf Hussain despite all aggression and requested all the members of civil society and human rights organizations to stand up with the MQM against atrocities. *"We are as much patriots as anybody else in the country,"* he added.

During the Ranger's 2<sup>nd</sup> raid of 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015, MQM leaders Qamar Mansoor, Sufian Yousuf, Azeem Farooqui and MQM Rabita Committee In-charge Kaiful Wara were arrested from Nine-Zero while six other workers were arrested in Korangi and Malir as well. Eight Rangers vehicles were used in the search 2<sup>nd</sup> operation at Nine Zero. The paramilitary personnel entered the Nine-Zero office and Khusheed Begum Memorial Hall after surrounding the area in Karachi's Azizabad. Azeem Farooqui and Sufian Yousuf were released after a brief interrogation.

However, Mansoor and Wara were taken to an undisclosed location for further interrogation; MQM's central leadership alleged that the raid was carried out without a search warrant.

The paramilitary personnel also launched a raid in Bagh e Korangi that day and arrested Joint Unit In-charge Shakeel Kabootar and three other party activists - Kabootar was shifted to an undisclosed location for interrogations. Two MQM workers were arrested in Malir on charges of delivering hate speeches the same day. DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar told that those detained from Nine Zero *"have been arranging and facilitating hate speeches against peace of Karachi"*.

Following those arrests, MQM's Chief Altaf Hussain criticised the security forces for raiding party HQ and urged the party workers and supporters to stay united and peaceful "*despite being targeted*". Hussain expressed a resolve that raids, arrests and suppression would not defeat their spirits. "*Movement and struggle would continue until last breath*," he added.

Moreover, Altaf Hussain alleged that:

***'PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari has done deal with the army. I supported Asif Zardari in tough times when leaders of his own PPP had ditched him. In return he [Zardari] has deceived me.'***

Rampant violence had terrorised Karachi, Pakistan's biggest city and economic heartbeat, in recent years; a recent security crackdown seemed to have brought a lull in the bloodshed but the killings remained the hallmark even though.

### **SAULAT MIRZA HANGED:**

***On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015;*** convicted murderer Saulat Mirza was hanged to death in the early hours in Balochistan's Machh Jail. Mirza's body was shifted from Machh Jail to the Edhi morgue in Quetta. His body was flown to Karachi, where it was buried later that day in the Gulshan e Maymar neighbourhood.

Mirza had been on death row for nearly 16 years. Sentenced to death in 1999, Mirza was initially scheduled to be executed on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 after Pakistan lifted its moratorium on capital punishment in the wake of the Peshawar school massacre of December 2014.

But in a dramatic turn of events, video footage of Mirza hurling grave allegations at Altaf Hussain and other MQM leaders of complicity in crime was aired on television channels just few hours before his execution that day. The president immediately stayed his hanging for three days after the convict sought more time to give information regarding target killers and their alleged patrons.

**[Saulat Mirza, in a video statement aired on Pakistan's TV channels, hurled startling allegations on MQM and its top leadership, just a few hours before his execution was scheduled to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 at 5:30AM; but then delayed for 72 hours.**

Mirza said he was an MQM worker and received direct orders from MQM leader Babar Ghauri to assassinate KESC chief Shahid Hamid. **"I was summoned at Babar Ghauri's house where I took Altaf Hussain's orders via telephone. Altaf Hussain would usually pass on instructions through Babar Ghauri,"** alleged Saulat Mirza.

However, Altaf Hussain termed the allegations a conspiracy against MQM. Babar Ghauri dismissed Mirza's statement as a "fable" and denied having given any order for a murder. *"This is a made up story, we are not allowed to call workers to our houses and deal with them there,"* Ghauri said.

Saulat Mirza maintained that *"..when he [Mirza] was in North Nazimabad, I met him then as an MPA. Then he was removed from the party and I kept no communication or relationship with him."*

Mirza, however, said workers like him were used as "tissue papers" by MQM, and were disposed off when there was no use left for the party. *"Other workers should take a lesson from my ending,"* said Mirza. *"Criminals in the party could get protection under Governor Sindh,"* he claimed.

Saulat went on to say that workers in the MQM who gained popularity among the public were eventually sidelined. **"Mustafa Kamal was humiliated and then sidelined from the party because he had grown popular and Azeem Tariq was murdered for the same reason,"** Mirza said.

Mirza was found guilty of murdering the then Managing Director [MD] of Karachi Electric Supply Corporation [KESC], Malik Shahid Hamid, his driver Ashraf Brohi, and his guard Khan Akbar outside Hamid's residence in DHA on 5<sup>th</sup> July 1997.

After his intermediate education, Saulat Mirza became active in student politics and joined the All Pakistan Mohajir Students Organisation [APMSO], the students' wing of MQM, and then an acronym for MQM.

Mirza's name first appeared on intelligence and security agencies' radar in 1994, after the killing of two US diplomats at a traffic signal on Karachi's *Shahrah e Faisal* and murder of four workers of an American oil company, Union Texas (an American oil company),

near PIDC Bridge. He was arrested from Karachi airport after his arrival back from Bangkok; **on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1998.**

During a press conference on the same day, in the presence of the then Karachi DIG, Ameen Qureshi, Saulat Mirza made revelations about his involvement in the murder of scores of innocent people, including several high-profile personalities.

Mirza was initially detained by FIA immigration officials for traveling on a fake identity but subsequently was handed over to the local police of Gulbahar police station.]

A few days later, Mirza's hanging was put off again as authorities wished to interrogate him for crucial details in relation to his confession.

A 10-member joint-investigation team later questioned Mirza over his confession and eventually concluded that his disclosures did not constitute any 'actionable intelligence or cogent evidence' that could help the judicial process. On 2<sup>nd</sup> May, the trial court issued Mirza's black warrant for a third time, scheduling his hanging for 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

**"It is just a formality";** Mirza, the convict in a triple-murder case reacted as a judge of a Karachi anti-terrorism court [ATC] read out his death sentence on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1999.

Almost 16 years later, the same court — ATC 5 — then presided over by Judge M Javed Alam — ordered on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 the manifestation of its 1999 order, issuing Mirza's death warrant, scheduling his execution by hanging in Balochistan's Machh Jail on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Civil and military intelligence agencies in several reports during the mid and late 1990s described Saulat as a man who had been operating from South Africa, organising subversive activities in Karachi — from where he fled following army's operations in 1992.

According to the then DIG Karachi, Ameen Qureshi, Saulat had confessed to the murders of Maj (rtd) Shahnawaz Toor, who was in charge of the American Drug Enforcement Agency in Pakistan; two US diplomats; four Union Texas workers; KESC MD Shahid Hamid, his guard and driver; sub-Divisional Magistrate Nawaz Khushk, a Rangers personnel who was a Lance Naik of the Pakistan Army, and five relatives of Superintendent of Police Khawar Nisar.

Although the First Information Report [FIR] of Shahid Hamid's murder was initially registered by DHA SHO Farhan Zaman against unknown assailants, following Saulat's arrest the investigation of the case was assigned to Choudhry Aslam— who had been tasked by former Sindh IG Rana Maqbool to investigate all cases against Saulat Mirza.

***Saulat Mirza was identified as Shahid Hamid's murderer – 582 days after the criminal act – by the wife of the deceased, Shahnaz.*** The motive behind the murder, cited by police, was a departmental inquiry into some officers of the KESC.

The officers had been under the protection of MQM, and the party wanted the KESC MD to halt the inquiry and prevent the forwarding of the cases to the National Accountability Bureau – then called the Ehtesab Bureau.

**On 21<sup>st</sup> January 2000;** the Sindh High Court rejected Saulat's appeal against his conviction, while the Supreme Court [SC] dismissed his appeal **on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2001**, upholding his sentence. His review petition was also dismissed by the SC **on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004**.

As a last-ditch effort, after the rejection of his mercy petition by the presidency, Mirza filed a second review through Advocate Sardar Latif Khosa, pinpointing a contradiction in Shahnaz's statement. But **on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015**, the SC registrar's office returned the second review petition, saying that another review petition could not be filed under the law.

Latif Khosa then filed an application against the return of the second review petition, which was also dismissed by Chief Justice Nasirul Mulk after a hearing in his chamber on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015, leaving no remedy for Mirza.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015;** one Nighat Mirza, the wife of condemned prisoner Saulat Mirza claimed during a media conference that her husband was in constant touch with party Chief Altaf Hussain and the senior leadership prior to his arrest in December 1998. She, however, admitted that senior MQM leader Farooq Sattar had informed her during her last visit to the party's Nine Zero HQ in February 2015 that the party's role in connection with Mirza's case was over.

She termed the MQM's severing of what she called their once strong ties ***"a brutal joke"*** and added that *"since then we were not even allowed to move beyond Mukka Chowk [— decorated with the coal-black sculpture of a clenched fist that rests atop an inverted funnel on the roundabout, lies about half a kilometre from MQM HQ Nine Zero]."*

Mirza's wife said her husband would not have made any revelations had the MQM not disowned him. She said her husband was shocked by the party's move and regretted his association with MQM because Saulat's family had misbehaved with senior party members.

*[The fact remains that Saulat's sister had once slapped a member of the MQM Rabita Committee when the mercy appeal of the condemned prisoner was rejected in January 2015.]*

Nighat Mirza said Saulat's statement, which had not been given under any pressure, needed to be probed and investigated - given only to warn others from treading the same path as he did. She said there were four people involved in this case but others were not being apprehended, elaborating:

*"Why aren't they being brought before the court? Why is it that the individual from whom the order (for assassination of the MD KESC) came is not being taken to task?*

*Why is the case being wrapped up with punishment for my husband only? My husband had no quarrel with the former KESC MD, why have those people who had exchanged harsh words with Shahid Hamid not been charged.*

*After the rejection of Saulat's mercy appeal, a meeting was also held with Governor Sindh Ishratul Ebad Khan at Governor House. During the meeting it was decided that the party would bear the expenses of Advocate Sardar Latif Khosa, who is Mirza's counsel.*

*..... that the records of the mobile phone provided to the former MQM activist in jail could be obtained and it would help prove who had remained in contact with the convict.*

*.... that a meeting was also arranged between her and Chief of the PML[Q] Ch Shujaat Hussain during the latter's visit to Nine Zero."*

Saulat Mirza's wife was able to show **photographs of MQM leaders including Sindh Governor Ishratul Ebad Khan, Babar Ghauri, Haider Abbas Rizvi, Dr Sagheer Ahmed and Abdul Rashid Godil etc inside the Karachi Central Jail premises.**

Speaking about photos of Mirza in which he was accompanying other prisoners on the occasions of MQM's founding day and birthday of party Chief

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Altaf Hussain, the senior MQM Farooq Sattar commented: ***"There is nothing extraordinary about these photos."***

The key question remains:

*.....if there is any good tradition of fearlessness and impartiality while going through due process of investigation and judicial decisions in Pakistan.*

## **Scenario 157**

### **SECTARIAN KILLINGS CONTINUED....**

A surge in sectarian killings continued in the whole country and new fears about Pakistan's stability were widely felt and discussed, as violence against Shiites and other minorities were spreading in most major cities including

Karachi. Masked gunmen had been targeting Shiite doctors, lawyers and college professors.

*[There were 687 sectarian killings in Pakistan during year 2013 - a 22pc increase over 2012's toll; according to the **Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies**. Although the sectarian deaths represented just a small portion of violence in Pakistan — which claimed 4,725 lives during 2013 — such unrest was spreading throughout the country and becoming routine in heavily populated areas like Karachi.*

*Later, it was felt that sectarian tensions triggered not only by terrorism incidents, but average clashes within the sectarian communities.]*

**'Washington Post' dated 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 is referred.**

Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, was rattled in January 2014 when six men were found executed near a Sufi shrine. All of the victims' throats had been slashed, and at least two of the men had been beheaded. The details of the event have been given on other pages of this volume.

Meanwhile, Shiite professionals had increasingly been targets of assassination attempts; among the victims were a prominent poet in Karachi too. Extremists were apparently trying to intimidate educated Shiites into leaving the country — a brain drain by force was seen around. There was a very real sense that the state was not able to protect the Shia community.

Pakistani officials held sectarian violence intensified in the aftermath of the Nine Eleven 2001, when the Taliban regime was ousted in Afghanistan and its fighters crossed into Pakistan. As the border became less stable, hundreds of thousands of people sought refuge in Karachi, Lahore and other Pakistani cities. The influx had meant that hard-line Shiites and Sunnis brazenly competed for space in heavily populated areas.

In the first week of January 2014, a video released by Pakistani Taliban commander blamed Shiites for the unrest in Rawalpindi and called on Sunnis to **"rise and kill the Shias, kill their officers and target their businesses."**

The call made certain factions out of control; what needed was just basic law enforcement, arresting people who killed others and incited violence, and that was not happening in any consistent way – definitely a show of

poor performance by the PPP's Sindh administration and Federal government of the PML[N].

**TWO SCHOLARS SHOT DEAD:**

During the course of Rangers' operation, political and ethnic killings showed a significant decline in Karachi whereas the graph of sectarian killings had not fallen to that extent. The murder of policemen in the city continued at the same pace as before, with 171 taking place last year and 96 in the period from January to July 2014. Ahmed Chinoy, the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee [CPLC]'s Chief, told:

*"Sectarian murders are being carried out as a point-scoring strategy by extremists on both sides. This is not for money. Also, many militants have their strongholds in illegal settlements on the outskirts of the city; these are huge areas where we can't keep a check on flow of weapons or influx of militants from other parts of the country,"* daily '**Dawn**' dated **20<sup>th</sup> August 2014** is referred.

Moreover, according to DIG South Abdul Khaliq Shaikh, the '**hands-off policy**' regarding certain hard-line *madrassahs* undermined the efforts to control religious militancy. **"There's no search of such madrassahs and militants now; they can take shelter and keep weapons there without fear."**

Enhanced, coordinated intelligence across provincial borders was crucial to curbing religious extremism in Karachi. Jameel Yusuf, a former CPLC chief said:

*"Terrorism, including sectarianism, cannot be effectively tackled without the activation of the National Counter Terrorism Authority and its provincial counterparts. Sectarian organisations like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi [LeJ] are based in Punjab while their activists operate in Karachi. We need to track their movements and monitor them."*

Still, there was some drop registered in sectarian killings; attributed to arrest of members of extremist groups — both Sunni and Shia — during the operation by the LEAs. Several police officers maintained that:

*"...this is also on account of the large number of political activists that have been taken off the streets. Some of them also engaged in sectarian killings, either because of ideological leanings or for political ends. It serves [certain political forces] to demonstrate that without involving them there can be no peace in the city."*

In several instances, digital forensics analysis had determined that the **same weapon was used to murder both Sunnis and Shias** on ostensibly sectarian lines. It clearly indicated that certain mercenaries were available on hire or rent for killing and perhaps the payments were being made per casualty; thus any group could avail their services. An intelligence officer held:

*"There are wheels within wheels where the violence in Karachi is concerned. The latest spate could also be linked to the protest marches in Islamabad, in order to put more pressure on the central government."*

The unrelenting pace of killings of policemen — which actually touched 25 in January that year alone — speaks to the viciousness of the conflict that was raging in Karachi between militants of all stripes and law enforcement personnel. DIG Police East was upset while saying:

*"Demoralising the police force is part and parcel of terrorism. It's a tragedy that hardly any of these cases are being pursued. The value of a cop is now Rs:2 million in compensation dues but it's a huge loss to the state in terms of training and manpower; if at all you ignore the humanity factor."*

The limitations of the Karachi police were a significant factor in the continued existence of militants' safe havens in parts of the city despite numerous Rangers and police joint raids. A security expert held:

*"The Rangers enter 'no-go' areas in convoys of 20 vehicles with mobile jammers etc. The local police on the other hand have one mobile, with only seven litres of fuel allowance per day."*

*All said and done, to make a far-reaching, sustainable improvement in Karachi's crime graph, there is no substitute for a well-equipped and depoliticised police force."*

**On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014;** religious cleric **Dr Maulana Masood Baig** associated with Jamia Binoria was gunned down in North Nazimabad area

of Karachi. Dr Masood, son-in-law of prominent religious scholar Mufti Naeem was chief administrator in girls' education wing of Jamia Binoria and was also discharging his duties as a lecturer at University of Karachi.

While those high profile killings were blamed on the fresh wave of sectarian killings, the IG Sindh police and religious circles suspected that a 'third force' was behind them. Dr Masood Baig was targeted while he was driving his car to pick up his children from a private school in North Nazimabad's Hyderi Market.

As Dr Baig slowed down the vehicle near the KDA Chowrangji, gunmen on a motorcycle opened fire on him and fled. He sustained multiple bullet wounds and was taken to a private hospital, where doctors declared him dead. Later the body was taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for a post-mortem examination. Investigators found six spent bullets of a 0.9mm pistol at the crime scene.

Dr baig dropped his children at Falcon Grammar School in North Nazimabad in the morning and went to KU. Later he visited his parents' home in Azizabad from where he was supposed to pick up his children before coming to the seminary on whose premises he lived. Taking notice of the killing of the teacher, the authorities removed the Central SSP and demoted the SHO concerned.

In the second attack, a 30-year-old man was shot dead in Sharifabad at noon. Qasim aka Danish Raza was sitting at his shop in FC Area when gunmen riding a motorcycle and wearing helmets attacked him. He sustained three bullet wounds and was taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, where he was pronounced dead. A spokesman for the *Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat* [ASWJ] said the victim was a worker of the party. The victim, father of three, was a resident of Orangi Town.

In the third such killing, Imran Ali 35, was gunned down in Surjani Town locality. The victim was sitting at his TV repair shop in *Khuda Ki Basti* when gunmen riding a motorcycle targeted him. The victim was the MQM's worker and a Shiite also. MWM told that Imran Ali was an organiser of processions while he was the party's circle in-charge.

On the face of it, Dr Masood Baig's murder was seen as a tit-for-tat response to two recent killings.

A week earlier, **Allama Ali Akbar Kumaili**, son of Jafria Alliance Pakistan Chief, Allama Abbas Kumaili, was shot dead. Before that, **in July 2014**, a senior lawyer and son-in-law of prominent Shia scholar Allama Talib Jauhari

was killed while on his way home from court. The IGP told the media that an alleged killer of the son-in-law of Allama Talib Jauhari was arrested recently while another suspect was killed in an 'encounter'.

**[On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2014; Allama Ali Akbar Kumaili, son of Shia scholar Allama Abbas Kumaili was gunned down by unidentified assailants in the Sindh capital; the incident took place in Azizabad neighbourhood.**

*Allama Kumaili was accompanied by his two guards when he was targeted while going home from his ice factory.*

*Akbar Kumaili was shot three times and was taken to a local hospital in critical condition where he later succumbed to his wounds. Majlis Wahdatul Muslimeen [MWM] and Tahaffuz Azadari Council [TAC] strongly condemned the incident and announced to observe a three-day mourning, which was later endorsed by Muttahida Qaumi Movement.]*

In August 2014; a Shia man and his daughter were killed; his wife and daughter injured in a sectarian attack. While one could scarcely hope for a 'code of honour' among those who used to commit murder in the name of religion, it seemed that the benchmark of savagery had risen further. Even the much-vaunted Karachi Operation was unable to stop sectarian killers running amok.

The trick had worked well, as lawyers, doctors, clerics, shopkeepers, students - all Shia, and all targeted by bullets intended for them - had fallen; the government had barely noticed.

According to a press conference held by the *Majlis e Wahdatul Muslimeen* [MWM] in Karachi's Soldier Bazaar Area in mid September, 160 Shia had been killed in the city till that day of the year, despite a military and police combined operation to crack down on the extremist groups that have made this their agenda. It included five lawyers, five doctors, five engineers, three professors and 21 traders.

The series of sectarian deaths come in spurts; that most recent series began with Shia cleric Allama Kumaili's assassination. From the shower of bullets directed his way, two found their way to his chest and one to his abdomen. He died at the scene.

Five days later, Dr Maulana Masood Baig, the famous Sunni cleric was shot dead. He met with a barrage of bullets and died at the scene, too. A PhD scholar, his dissertation had been entitled "***Islam's Philosophy of Brotherhood and Tolerance***". While Karachi deeply ensconced in hatred, it seemed, the propagators of such learning were destined for death.

In the midst of these two more high profile killings, and before and after, others more ordinary met their deaths. That particular strain of local killings in Karachi, lining up bodies in its morgues, connected then to a global blood lust as the IS was propagating, whose seeds were sown; germinating and growing in Pakistan's largest city, without anyone at all to stop them.

#### **SAFOORA GOTH MASSACRE:**

The holy month of Muharram could be a dangerous time in Pakistan. It marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar but is also a period of mourning more for Shiite Muslims though the other sects also respect the day equally. Each year, huge processions are seen in streets to observe Ashura. Over the past few years, with astonishing punctuality, Shiite processions and mosques have been brutally attacked allegedly by some Sunni militants bent on starting a sectarian war in Karachi.

In 2009, two bombs exploded along the Ashura '*jaloos*' route, splattering the concrete street with human entrails and shredded clothing, and killing 30 at the spot.

**[On 28<sup>th</sup> December 2009;** *the Ashura procession was on its settled rout, the attacker had been walking amidst them with tens of thousands of people – then there was a sudden explosion. Police later found the severed head of the suicide bomber. After the explosion, marchers turned their anger on ambulance workers, security forces and journalists.*

*The mourners torched dozens of shops and vehicles, while members of the security forces who had been guarding the procession were pelted with stones. Karachi Mayor Mustafa Kamal appealed for calm urging that it was what terrorists aimed at; the city was once again on fire.]*

On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2012; in Orangi Town neighbourhood, two bomb blasts killed five people, as the city's undaunted Shiites were continuing with their mourning processions.

Understandably, Karachi's streets were tense on the ninth night of Muharram in 2012, as final preparations were being made for the Ashura festivities. Nervous government officials had cut cell phone service across the city for 11 hours that day, hoping to prevent attacks. Some 10,000 police officers had been dispatched to the main parade route, though in a city with about 20 million people, even that show of force was only a drop in the bucket.

**Shiite vs. Sunnis** row always remained a matter of concern for the respective city admin and Sindh governments in Karachi.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** 45 people were killed and 13 injured in a gun attack on a bus carrying **Ismaili Shia** Muslims, carrying men, women and children, in Karachi. Six gunmen on motorcycles had stopped the bus and fired indiscriminately at passenger; 9 mm pistols were also used in that heinous criminal act. Pakistani Taliban [TTP]'s splinter group **Jundullah**, through their spokesman Ahmed Marwat; and Islamic State [IS] in Khorasan [ISIS' affiliate in Afghanistan], both claimed they had carried out the attack.

The attack was the second deadliest in Pakistan that year after 62 Shia Muslims were killed in a suicide bombing in January.

This was the first such attack on the *Ismaili* community in Pakistan, and it was shocking even by the standards of Karachi. The sheer numbers of casualties and the manner in which they were killed provide an uneasy contrast with the peaceful image of this *Shia* sect in Pakistan.

*Ismailis* consider the Aga Khan their hereditary spiritual guide. They mostly inhabit the Himalayan region of northern Pakistan, but also have a significant presence in Karachi where they run businesses and charities, and tend to use community - built accommodation and transport. Both the PM Nawaz Sharif and the Army Chief Raheel Sharif had set aside other engagements to head for Karachi immediately because the attack was likely to cause diplomatic tensions for Islamabad as the Aga Khan IV has been a major source of development funds.

Pakistan's Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif had cancelled a trip to Sri Lanka and while leading the investigation, ordered its Rangers to handle the case at priority. Those days Karachi was being cleansed by the Rangers through drastic operations against the illicit arms dealers and target killers. With

about 20% Shia population, Karachi had got a reputation for persistent sectarian violence and marked killings since a decade.

About 60 people were on the bus when it was stopped in the Safoora Chowk area on its way to the *Ayesha Manzil Ismaili Centre*. "As the gunmen, dressed as policemen uniforms, climbed on to the bus, one of them shouted, 'kill them all,'" a survivor told the media. "Then they started indiscriminately firing." The bus driver was killed and an injured passenger drove the bus to Memon Hospital Institute. The bus was making one of five daily scheduled trips between a gated community housing mainly *Ismailis* on the north - eastern outskirts and the main city.

**[*Ismaili Shias*, in common with other Shia Muslims, revere Hazrat Ali RAU, the 4<sup>th</sup> Caliph, but they also revere the Imam Ismail who died in 765 AD. They read and believe the Koran and other Islamic rituals like all other Muslims by all means in acts and appearances. There are about 15 million Ismailis in more than 25 countries, including half a million in Pakistan.**

*Spiritual leader Prince Karim Aga Khan is a philanthropist and business magnate. He gives his name to bodies including a university, a foundation, and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has encouraged Ismailis settled in the industrialised world to contribute to those communities.]*

Ismaili spiritual leader Prince Karim Aga Khan issued a statement the "attack represented a senseless act of violence against a peaceful community". In fact the said attack marked a new low in a campaign of sectarian violence that left Pakistan's religious minorities fearing for their lives. The killings event was a deplorable attempt to spread chaos while the extremists in the country were operating with impunity. *Jundullah* group had carried out the attack because it considered the victims to be infidels; threats of more attacks against Ismailis, Shias and Christians were feared.

[Most Pakistanis do not remember that in the year 1906, the imam of the same Ismaili Muslim community had led the process of forming a political platform for South Asian Muslims at a meeting of the All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference in Dhaka. *Sir Sultan Muhammed Shah Aga Khan III* suggested the name of the party – **All India Muslim League** – and was elected its first president.

Seven years later, a young Mumbai based lawyer, also belonging to the Ismaili community, left the Indian National Congress and joined

the party founded by his spiritual leader. That charismatic lawyer turned the party into the voice of Indian Muslims and changed the course of history by founding a new state 34 years later, **named Pakistan**, when he was a terminally ill old man – he was ***Muhammad Ali Jinnah later known as Quad e Azam***.

Starting its journey as an Islamic state, Pakistan by now had become a sectarian state where Ismailis, along with Shias and non-Muslim minorities, were misfits. Some clerics used to call Jinnah as the Great Infidel and Allama Iqbal was also labelled so. Interestingly, in the case of His Highness Aga Khan, it was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who raised the question of him not being perfect Muslim while Allama Iqbal had defended his teachings through an article.

Unlike the Middle East where empires with rival sectarian allegiances had created much bad blood, in South Asia there was enough space for Lal Shahbaz Qalandar to turn himself into an eagle and fly unhindered and for Shah Waliullah to carry out his scholarly work. Referring to **'the News'** dated **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015**;

*"What changed things in Pakistan for Ismailis – and for everyone else – was the attitude of the state. Over time, the Pakistani state has assumed a sectarian character and its religious institutions have become blatantly sectarian; International Islamic University in Islamabad is an example with the president of Pakistan as its chancellor.*

*The attack on Ismailis in Karachi was preceded by a fatwa against the whole denomination from one of the country's most influential madrassahs. Violent extremism is only a fruit of the tree the state itself had planted."*]

Coming back to the Safoora Goth event; the gunmen appeared to have been well-prepared for the attack. Most of the victims were shot in the head, SSP East Karachi told later. The attack was *"disturbing in terms of the fact that definition of who is a proper Muslim is shrinking as far as the extremist groups are concerned,"* the general populace worried. 26 males and 17 females were killed; the youngest person died was 16 years old.

The multiple claims of responsibility from the Islamic State in Khorasan, and the TTP's Jundullah only reinforced the fractured, opportunistic and at times competitive nature of Pakistan's militant landscape. The relationship between Jundullah and ISIS mostly remained unclear in Pakistan. Jundul-

lah had joined the ISIS fold during November 2014 though the ISIS had not publicly acknowledged the pledge.

Apparently, it was unlikely for TTP to collaborate openly and directly with ISIS in launching an attack because of their publicly known loyalty to Mullah Omar rather than ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. However, the possibility could not be ruled out because several Pakistani Taliban leaders had defected to ISIS during 2014 after losing out in a power struggle. If the ISIS was there, it was the group's first significant attack in Pakistan - a move likely designed to boost its profile and stir sectarian tensions.

In December 2015, the Ministry of Interior approved the transfer and trial of 18 cases, including the Safoora Goth massacre and the murder of Sabeen Mahmud, to the military courts.

**On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif signed the death warrants of five *"hard core terrorists"*, said a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations [ISPR]. It said the culprits were convicted for *"perpetrating Safoora bus attack and were also involved in improvised explosive device (IED) blast near Saleh Masjid Karachi, killing of social worker Sabeen Mahmud and attacks on law enforcement agencies."* The convicts were:

- Saad Aziz alias Tin Tin - tried on nine charges
- 
- Tahir Hussain Minhas alias Sain - tried on ten charges
- 
- Asad-ur-Rehman alias Malik - tried on four charges
- 
- Hafiz Nasir alias Yasir - tried on four charges
- 
- Mohammad Azhar Ishrat alias Majid - tried on five charges

The convicts admitted their offences before the trial court, added the statement from ISPR.

**Saad Aziz** - a student from one of Pakistan's finest and most prestigious business schools could become a **"trained militant who provided funds for terror activities"** in the city was difficult to understand for many. He was a BBA graduate from the reputable Institute of Business Administration [IBA] - had also confessed to masterminding the murder of human rights activist Sabeen Mahmud.

Five eye-witnesses had identified suspects Saad Aziz and Tahir Hussain for their involvement in the Safoora Goth carnage; eye-witnesses included two women and were those who were injured in the attack. The witnesses had rightly picked up the accused during the identification parade held in the court of a judicial magistrate in Malir.

Previously an eye-witness had identified Saad Aziz, the main accused in the **attempted murder of American educationist Debra Lobo**, as the man who shot at the US national.

Ms Lobo, a US national and vice principal of Karachi's Jinnah Medical and Dental College, was shot at and wounded in the month of April 2015 when four suspected terrorists on two motorcycles attacked her on *Shaheed e Millat* Road.

### **AFTERMATH OF SAFOORA EPISODE:**

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan [HRCP] said that 2,909 people including some 142 law enforcement personnel from police and paramilitary rangers were killed in the year 2014. The law enforcement agencies [LEAs] also killed 594 suspected criminals and militants during January-December that year as violence continued to plague Pakistan's biggest city – Karachi; the **'dna India'** dated **7<sup>th</sup> January 2015** is referred.

The HRCP report also cited that around 134 political activists of different political parties were killed in the city in different incidents of targeted killings; also 340 bodies were found in different areas of the city.

Targeted killings, sectarian violence and terrorist attacks continued throughout the year in Karachi, Pakistan's financial hub and biggest revenue generating region which had been blighted by political and ethnic unrest for years.

The HRCP report says that as many as **120 people were killed in sectarian violence and 89 were targeted by banned outfits while another 28 lost their lives in bomb blasts**. Those who were killed included 154 women and 78 children in different incidents of murders, targeted killings, kidnappings, bomb blasts or on sectarian grounds. Six women were also victims of honour killings in the city as the highest number of people killed occurred in March 2014 when 281 persons lost their lives.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015;** a senior Shiite lawyer, who was also a counsel for several activists of the MQM was shot dead in Karachi's Korangi area. Two motorcycle riding gunmen intercepted Advocate Ali Hasnain Bukhari's vehicle as he left his residence for work. The assailants shot the lawyer three times and managed to escape from the site after the attack. The victims succumbed to his wounds while being shifted to a hospital.

The senior lawyer was also a member of the MQM's legal aid committee and was representing several party workers in cases related to enforced disappearances and arrests during the ongoing operation in Karachi. The killing was the fourth incident of its kind during the past week. The Sindh Bar Council, an apex lawyers' body at the provincial level, gave the call for boycott of courts across the province in protest against the targeted killing.

**On 16<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** the vice-principal of the Jinnah Medical and Dental College's student affairs wing was shot and seriously injured on Shaheed-e-Millat Road Karachi. Police told the media that a flyer was recovered from the crime scene which appeared to be from a militant group, saying the shooting was revenge for the killings of militants in the Kemari encounter that week. The leaflet found did not carry a logo of any militant organisation but claimed that they were '*lions of Islamic State*' and '*falcons of the caliph*'.

55-year-old Dr Sibte Zafar had left the college at 3pm for her home when four gunmen shot her twice in the cheek and shoulder; she was an associate professor of community medicine. She was an American national too.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** Dr Syed Wahidur Rahman, also known as Yasir Rizvi, was shot dead; he was an assistant professor of the University of Karachi [KU] and an instructor at University's Mass Communication department. It was just because the slain professor belonged to the Shia community, he was killed when four unidentified attackers riding two motorcycles opened fire on his car; he received five bullet wounds on his face, neck and chest.

Dr Wahid was an active member of the faculty and his colleagues termed it as "*great loss for the department*" and that he was a kind and polite per-

son. He had also been working as a journalist for the past 15 years and was relatively a new staffer at the varsity but *"he was a very dedicated and honest teacher and it's possible that his killing might be related to the recent killings of teachers at KU and NED."*

Earlier in September 2014, Prof Dr Muhammad Shakeel Auj, dean of the faculty of Islamic Studies at KU was shot dead on University Road in Gulshan-i-Iqbal.

**Sabeen Mahmud's Murder:** In April 2015, prominent rights activist and co-founder and Director of The Second Floor [T2F], Sabeen Mahmud was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Karachi.

Sabeen, accompanied by her mother, left T2F after 9pm and was on her way home when she was shot by unidentified gunmen in Defence Phase-II. She died on her way to the hospital. Doctors said they retrieved five bullets from her body. Her mother also sustained bullet wounds, but survived the wounds.

The interrogation report of the Safoora Goth incident, interalia, told that Saad Aziz was the main suspect in the murder of rights activist Sabeen Mahmud. Before killing her, he had attended two seminars at her social forum, Titled as ***The Second Floor***, a picture was available in police file in which he was seen sitting there. The file carried the material that:

*"Saad Aziz hatched a plan to kill Sabeen Mahmud as he did not like her views about Lal Masjid cleric, Valentine's Day and Burqa [veil]."*

*On the day of her killing, Saad Aziz, Ali Rehman, Haif Umer, Mehmood (code name) and Tayab (code name) were present at the crime scene, the police investigator report contained.*

*As Ms Mahmud left her office along with her mother and driver in a car, Saad Aziz and Mehmood chased them on their motorcycle and targeted her at the Defence traffic signal before fleeing."*

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015;** Raja Umer Khattab, an official of the Counter-Terrorism Department [CTD] of Karachi police released a report and made it open before the media that the militants involved in the killing of 47 Shia Ismailis near Safoora Goth were inspired by the self-styled Islamic State. Raja Umer also addressed a press conference and said:

*"The militants established their own group in the year 2014 but they did not give it a name. This group is inspired by terror activities of Islamic State [IS] or Daish and wanted to establish their link with it.*

*They were previously associated with Al-Qaeda but last year Tahir alias Minhas alias Sain, the key suspect in the Safoora bus attack case, developed some differences with another militant, Jalal, over provision of funds and other organizational matters. Later, Tahir established his own group while Jalal remained associated with Al-Qaeda.*

*Possibly Jalal-led Al-Qaeda militants were involved in the recent killing of two deputy superintendents of police, one superintendent of police and other police officers.*

*The interrogation by a Joint Investigation Team [JIT] of the five detained suspects had been completed. Besides Tahir, the other four suspects were Saad Aziz, Hafiz Nasir Ahmed, Mohammed Azhar Ishrat and Asad Rehman."*

The polygraph test of the suspects corroborated their confession about their involvement in over two dozen terror attacks. No one could rule out the possibility of links of Jalal-led militants with Indian 'RAW' or other anti-Pakistan agency.

The Police record later revealed that the militants had planned to target Ismaili community members two months ago. They had made track record of the bus five times and prepared a map in which six points were shown. At least 10 militants actually took part in the terror act while their two accomplices were present in their cars at nearby places.

On that black day at least six attackers got into the bus. Some of them were wearing police uniform, others were clad in *shalwar-qameez* and trousers and shirts. Four of the attackers fired at the passengers, another drove the bus while one stood on the door so that no one could escape. The attackers used foreign weapons and that they executed the plan within 10 to 12 minutes.

The Counter Terrorism files of Karachi Police kept enough material to prove that Tahir Minhas had been associated with the Al-Qaeda group which was active in Karachi and Hyderabad, while their local leader was Jalal who along with *Haji Sahib* [elder brother of Ramzi Yusuf] used to provide funds to terrorists. Jalal was associated with Al-Qaeda's Arab network while *Haji*

*Sahib* (code name) was active in Karachi and Wadh area of Balochistan where mainly the Baloch youths were involved in kidnapping for ransom, terrorism and attacks on NATO containers.

The files also contained photos of the Al-Qaeda members, identified as Hasan Masood, Mohammed Amir Khan, Irshadullah and Kamran Aslam, who were allegedly involved in the recent killing of policemen.

**On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015;** Inspector General Police [IGP] Sindh Ghulam Hyder Jamali, while briefing the Standing Committee on Interior, claimed that '*100 per cent of all high-profile murder cases – including those of Parveen Rehman and Abbas Kumaili's son – have been solved*' - there was a 98pc decline in cases of kidnapping for ransom and theft due to National Action Plan strategy.

The Sindh IGP also told the Standing Committee that Daesh or the self-styled Islamic State [IS] and the banned sectarian militant group *Lashkar e Jhangvi* [LJ] were linked to each other. Referring to the Safoora attack suspects, he told they had been involved with *Daesh* for at least a year and had been receiving instructions from one Abdul Aziz located in Syria.

Six laptops containing sensitive information were recovered from the suspects and decrypted. A 'hit-list' of to-be-targeted officials was also recovered from the Safoora suspects which included known Fashion Designers, politicians and professors.

IGP Jamali said that during that year, 166 Al Qaeda affiliated terrorists, 644 other terrorists and 186 members of Lyari gangs were arrested in Karachi. Action had also been taken against the facilitators and doctors who had treated injured Afghan nationals in the city. Senior police official Chaudhry Aslam Khan, who was killed in January 2014, had been targeted by Al Qaeda affiliates in Karachi.

### **CRACKDOWN URGED ONCE MORE:**

Referring to **the 'Express Tribune'** dated **9<sup>th</sup> September 2015:**

In a meeting held at the CM House to review the implementation of NAP in the province, Sindh Home Secretary Mukhtar Soomro presented the same three months old figures:

*"As many as 3,662 madrassas in Sindh [2,122 in Karachi, 1,548 in Hyderabad] have so far been geo-tagged as part of the National Action Plan [NAP] to see exact location of these seminaries; out of 9,590 madrassas found in the province, 6,503 were registered."*

IG Sindh Ghulam Hyder Jamali disclosed that they had sealed 167 *madrassas* in the province owing to different reasons. Also that while searching 21 suspected seminaries in Karachi, Hyderabad and Badin, they had recovered hate material from some of them.

**On 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** in a high-level meeting to review progress of the implementation of the National Action Plan [NAP], the country's top civil-army leadership approved **countrywide crackdown against sectarianism**. Interior Minister Ch Nisar told:

*"It was unanimously decided during today's meeting of the country's top civil-military leadership that elements challenging the writ of the state would be eliminated. It has been decided that there will be zero tolerance for hate speech and hate literature from any side.*

*There will be no tolerance for calling each other infidel or liable to be killed; there is a very thin line between sectarianism and terrorism. They both go hand-in-hand."*

The meeting had discussed introducing fresh legislation, seeking to completely ban sectarianism and its financiers – but no implementation seen even after a year.

About seminaries, it was resolved that the process of their scrutiny would continue with consultation of their leadership; *ulemas* should portray the narrative of Islam and Pakistan rather of those who kill the innocent. The federal government would keep an eye on international NGOs, and regulate them while at the same time, the provincial governments were also required to regulate the local NGOs. A regulatory policy for the NGOs was being sent to the concerned.

Over 0.5 million weapons were confiscated by law enforcers during crackdown against those holding illegal weapons – but no systematic process of the next actions were available with the government. It was evident that those weapons would one day be declared 'stolen' from police stations and would again be sold to the same owners by some rogue police *moharrars*.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** the Counter Terrorism Department claimed to have arrested a highly educated private university executive for facilitating the militants involved in Safoora Goth tragedy. At a press conference, Raja Umar Khattab told that suspect Adil Masood Butt had been taken into custody during a raid at his residence in Defence Housing Authority. Butt was BSc in Management from Indiana University, Bloomington and MBA from Fordham University and said to be a member of the board of governors at the Karachi-based educational institute College of Accounting and Management Sciences [CAMS].

The accused Adil Butt was in the CTD preventive custody for 90 days. He was also the business partner of Saad Aziz, one of the key - suspects of Safoora Goth carnage. Scores of other suspects had already been arrested and all such terrorists were highly educated professionals.

Several attacks on the Army and Rangers personnel during the last two months of the year 2015 indicated the existence of sophisticated terrorists in the city. As per sources, about 28 surveillance cameras were installed around the CM House but only 15 out of them were functioning while the remaining 13 including vehicles checking cameras were out of order; what the common Karachiites could think about level of security for themselves.

Referring to the '**Dawn**' dated **8<sup>th</sup> April 2016:**

In its latest security report, the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies [PIPS] reported a 53pc increase in sectarian violence for 2013. More than 85pc of such attacks and 68pc of the people killed were concentrated in Karachi, Quetta, Gilgit and Kurram Agency.

In year 2015, as many as 212 were killed in 132 sectarian-related attacks in Karachi. However, a cycle of tit-for-tat sectarian killings on city's streets since 2011 sparked ethno-political violence with various sectarian outfits contributing to the growing body count.

The banned sectarian group *Lashkar e Jhangvi* [LeJ], sharing operational and ideological ties with *Tehreek e Taliban* Pakistan [TTP], demonstrated how militancy elsewhere in the country affected the city through a lethal nexus; SSP Ch Aslam, the head of the Sindh police's CID, was assassinated in Karachi in January 2014, confirmed that hard binding. The leader of LeJ's Balochistan wing, Usman Saifullah Kurd, was also connected with city's sectarian militants.

SSP Aslam had said in his 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014 interview that:

"...after the crackdown against LeJ in Karachi and Punjab, their cadres have found sanctuaries in the tribal areas. In the raid of last November [2013], we had killed LeJ's Karachi chief Gul Hasan, involved in suicide attacks on the Haideri mosque and Imam-bargah Ali Raza [in 2004] and an attack on the Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court, Justice Maqbool Baqar in August 2013."

Ideological and turf wars between the *Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat* / *Sipah e Sahaba Pakistan*, following the Sunni Deobandi school and the Barelvi Sunnis, represented mainly by the *Sunni Tehreek*, added to this volatile situations however, they could not be differentiated as terrorist groups and sectarian outfits separately.

Nobody exactly knew what had been the background factor of the sectarian violence; whether it was expected Islamisation of laws, specific religious education, parallel judicial systems, politicisation of the administration, failure of the state and the military, the marginalisation of secular forces or what else.

Links of various sects with different countries and huge funding from them could be part of the explanation [consider proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran]. Leaders of supposedly banned groups such as the SSP operated with virtual immunity, using new avenues like social media to propagate their militant ideas and enter electoral politics aligned to mainstream political parties – also remained cogent factors.

Shiite political party *Majlis e Wahdatul Muslimeen* [MWM] claimed '**they do not indulge in violent killing**'; cogent reports were awaited to confirm the claims.

The cost of militancy always included damage to the economy, national security, citizen morale and political stability. Shrinking space for an alternative liberal discourse was evident as political patronage for the religious right went unchecked with banned extremist organisations and *madressahs* raising their public profile, providing endless recruits and sectarian-oriented curricula and publications to further fuel intolerance and bigotry.

As Karachi's sectarian militants conduct 'businesses' on home turf with their political utility intact, the consequences mainly remained uncertain.

**On 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016;** three people were shot dead in the city's North Karachi area; the victims, all of whom belonged to the Shiite community, had just offered Friday prayers at the Najaf Imam-bargah. The victims were riding a

motorbike and were attacked near *Shafiq Mor*; one was a gold medallist in applied physics while the other two were father and son.

This was the first major incident of sectarian violence in Karachi in 2016. Incidents of sectarian violence had decreased since early 2015, but professionals continued to be targeted on the basis of their faith.

As per HRCP report, during the year 2015, as many as 58 incidents of sectarian violence were reported — nearly half as many as those in 2014. Several thousand citizens belonging to religious minority communities had left the country over the past few years ***"on account of faith-based violence, discrimination and persecution"***.

Police sources said that three elements — a political party, banned sectarian outfits and hired assassins — were responsible for the killings of the law-enforcers in the metropolis over the past few years.

**On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2016;** the anti-terrorism police claimed busting a group of hit men and capturing five suspects who had been carrying out sectarian killings in the city for the past several years; the arrests were made during raids conducted in District East neighbourhood.

The target killers were identified as Syed Amir Hussain Rizvi alias Babar alias Irfan, Zainul Abideen alias Sunny, Faizyaab Ali alias Isphan alias Sheraz, Syed Mohsin Hussain alias Talha alias Pagal and Syed Mohammad Abbas alias Ashir alias Hamza.

The police found lethal weapons including 9mm pistols on the suspects, who were taken to the CTD HQ for questioning. The seized weapons and bullets were sent to the Sindh Police's Forensic Division, which confirmed that the same guns had been used in several sectarian killings in Karachi. The arrests were made in the murder case of a known religious scholar, who was targeted in Gulistan-e-Jauhar a few weeks ago.

The accused admitted to murdering Hafiz Mohammad Sajid in Shah Faisal Colony, Habibur Rehman in Gulistan-e-Jauhar, Dr Fazalur Rehman in Landhi and Mufti Ghulam Akbar and Mufti Kamran Hussain in Gulshan-e-Iqbal this year. The sectarian activists had been active in the city since 2014, and last year they targeted Iftekhar Ahmed in Jamshed Quarters, Naseem Khan and Asif in the airport police remit, besides attacking Maulana Yasir and injuring Ahmed in Gulistan-e-Jauhar.

In 2013-14, the suspects had gunned down Qari Ghulam Sarwar in Samanabad, Essa in Boat Basin, Mohammad Imran in New Karachi and Mohammad Tanveer and Mohammad Tauseef in Khokharapar; efforts were being done to extract information about those who were working with them as facilitators.

### **JUNDALLAH IN KARACHI:**

**Jundallah** [Soldiers of God] is a terrorist militant group associated with the Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan [TTP] and its initial recruited strength was 10,000 to 12,000. From the first day it remained associated with the TTP, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan [IMU] and kept its links with Khorasan, an outfit based in Afghanistan NOT the Province of Uzbekistan.

***The Pakistani Jundallah should not to be confused with Jundallah of Iran or Lebanon.***

The later reports confirmed that the said Pakistani **Jundallah** had emerged in 2003 after the 9/11 attacks. But the fact remained that it used to be one of the anti-Shia franchises of the TTP, which operated under different names in different parts of Pakistan. **Mainly based in the port city of Karachi**, the group had reorganised itself four times since its inception in 2003 and following the deaths and arrests of its leaders and members by the LEAs.

The Jundallah group was commanded by a known TTP's Chief Hakimullah Mehsud until his death **on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013**.

*[The name **Jundallah** also remained linked to a similar organization based in Balochistan supposedly led by one Abdul Malek Riggi, a Sunni Iranian Baloch who was fighting against Iran for their alleged mistreatment of Sunnis.*

*Later, Riggi was caught and hanged in Iran in 2010. His brother Ali Riggi took over the leadership of Jundallah, which turned against Pakistan for unknown reasons and was helping various sectarian groups, mainly the TTP and the LeJ, in targeting Shias and security forces in Balochistan.]*

However, referring to '**The Friday Times**' of **14<sup>th</sup> November 2014**; Karachi - based Jundallah was a separate group; its creation was in fact a prime example of Al Qaeda's changing face in Pakistan. This Karachi based

group was founded by one Attaur Rehman, a Karachi University student of Statistics and a leader of *Jamaat e Islami* [JI]'s student wing *Islami Jamiat e Talba* [IJT].

Rehman's journey towards terrorism started in 1991, when he went to Afghanistan to receive military training at a *jihadi* camp set up by *Harkatul Mujahideen*, close to the Afghan border.

Rehman told his interrogators that he formed ***Jundallah*** after the arrest of top Al Qaeda operatives in March 2003, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, the alleged mastermind of the 9/11 terrorist attacks who was caught from the residence of serving deputy mayor Rawalpindi and was a JI leader. He was Ahmed Abdul Qudoos, whose wife, Farzana Qudoos, was also an office - bearer of the Rawalpindi chapter of the JI.

Karachi Police had come to know about ***Jundallah*** much late when it launched a terrorist attack on Muharram procession in the city that killed more than 45 people. Attaur Rehman was arrested in June 2004 on charges of masterminding a series of terrorist attacks targeting security forces and government installations. The eldest son of a local businessman, he grew up in a middle-class neighbourhood and worked actively for JI.

Ataur Rehman was then patronised by the South Waziristan-based Taliban commander, Nek Mohammad. Barely six days after the botched attack on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2004 on Gen Aslam Hayat, then Corps Commander Karachi, Nek Mohammad was killed in the first-ever US drone strike on the Pakistani soil, ***on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2004.***

Ataur Rehman remained imprisoned in the Karachi Central Jail, but was lucky enough to have dodged the gallows even after lapse of ten years, as the Sindh High Court had not decided his appeal against the death sentence handed down by the Karachi ATC.

**[On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2002;** *two militants from the group, including its Chief, perpetrated a bomb attack on the US consulate in Karachi; twelve people were killed and 51 injured.*

*A group called **al-Qanoon** claimed responsibility for the attack. The said group was believed to be connected with al-Qaeda and Harkat ul Mujahideen, then a large insurgent organisation. In November 2004, the alleged mastermind of the attack, named Naveedul Hassan, was arrested.*

*The attack was similar to the bombing of the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad in 1996 which was later claimed by Al Qaeda leader and Osama Bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri.*

*It is believed that the **Jundallah** was in making then and it was why **Al-Qanoon** was coined and named.]*

Jundallah group's most famous attack till then was of **10<sup>th</sup> June 2004** in which they had tried to blow up the convoy of Gen Ahsan Saleem Hyat, the then Karachi Corps Commander near Clifton Bridge Karachi. Eleven people were killed and another 12 injured in the attack. The corps commander, however, escaped unhurt in the ambush.

*[Then Jundallah was a well-knit cell comprising of some 20 militants, most of them working-class professionals in their twenties and thirties.]*

Death penalty was awarded to 11 activists of this group including its leader named Qasim Toori, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 but they had approached Sindh High Court in appeal against verdict awarded by the Anti-Terrorism Court Karachi.

Among those arrested for their association with Jundallah were Akmal Waheed, a cardiologist, and his brother Arshad Waheed, an orthopaedic surgeon. Caught in 2004, the two men were active members of *Jamaat e Islami* [JI] and were associated with their medical wing, the **Pakistan Islamic Medical Association**.

Both member doctors were accused of providing medical help and shelter to top Al Qaeda fugitives, including Abu Massab, Gul Hasan and Qassam-al-Sani, who were injured during attack on Gen Hayat, and Attaur Rehman's deputy Shahzad Bajwa alias Abdullah, after he sustained injuries during an attack on a Pakistan Rangers vehicle in Karachi.

Police found their contact information in Attaur Rehman's cell-phone, and they had used a car rented by Rehman, who had admitted close links with the two men.

The doctor brothers were sentenced to seven years of rigorous imprisonment **on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2006**, only to be acquitted three months later for lack of evidence - on 11<sup>th</sup> July – after they challenged the verdict. But the doctor brothers' Jundallah and al-Qaeda connections were firmly estab-

lished when Dr Arshad Waheed was killed in a US drone attack in South Waziristan in March 2008.

**[On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2008;** *an American drone attack was launched on a house in South Waziristan in which 16 people were killed at the spot; later four injured persons also died making the toll as 20.*

*Dr Arshad Waheed was amongst the killed ones; he was running his dedicated free clinic for the **Jehadis** in that house.]*

*Jamaat e Islami [JI]* was highly critical of those arrest, but was embarrassed when Al Qaeda's media wing **Al Sahab** Media Foundation soon released the third part of a series of videos entitled '**The Protectors of the Sanctuary**'. The 40-minute video, their first ever Urdu production, commemorated Dr Arshad Waheed as a martyr.

*[The said video was given shape by Al-Qaeda's then chief operational commander, **Mustafa Abu Yazid, who had earlier claimed responsibility for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2007,** to announce an open tribute to Dr Arshad Waheed through that video message.]*

However, the *Jamaat e Islami* had denied any link with those who were involved in terrorism saying that '**past association of someone with the JI cannot be proof of its link with someone's present activities**'.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012;** 18 Shia Muslims travelling from Rawalpindi to Gilgit on a bus were stopped in Kohistan and massacred based on their religious affiliation by individuals dressed in Military uniforms. After the incident, Ahmad Marwat claiming to be the commander of the banned terrorist group **Jundallah** claimed responsibility for it by contacting the media.

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013;** **Jundallah** claimed responsibility for the killing of 12 tourists and their Pakistani guide in Gilgit-Baltistan. The tourists were mountain-climbers who were moving ahead hoping to climb Nanga Parbat. The dead included five Ukrainians, three Chinese, other nationalities and their guide.

**On 22 September 2013;** a twin suicide bomb attack took place at All Saints Church in Peshawar, Pakistan in which 127 people were killed and over 250 injured. It was the deadliest attack on the Christian minority in the history of Pakistan.

**On 23 October 2014;** a suicide bomber targeted Maulana Fazlur Rahman of JUI-F in Quetta, who was unhurt while three deaths occurred on spot and dozens were injured. The Maulana had a narrow escape because of the bullet-proof land cruiser he was travelling in.

**On 2 November 2014;** a suicide bomber attempting to enter the parade arena after flag lowering ceremony detonated explosives, killing at least 60 people, including two Rangers, and injuring more than 110 others. Victims included 10 women and 7 children. **Jundallah** claimed responsibility for the attack, positing it as retaliation for Operation **Zarb e Azb**.

**On 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014;** **Jundallah** spokesman announced allegiance of his group to the ISIS after holding a meeting with a three-member Daish delegation which had travelled from Syria under the leadership of Al Zubair Al Kuwaiti for the moot. **"They [ISIS] are our brothers, whatever plan they have we will support them,"** said Fahad Marwat, the spokesman of Jundallah in Pakistan, after the meeting.

**On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015;** Jundallah carried out a powerful suicide attack on Shiite Muslims in Imam-bargah of Shikarpur when they were offering Friday Prayer. At least 49 were massacred at the spot in the mosque. While many succumbed to death as there were no ambulances in immediate movements while Pakistani Authorities were not serious concerning such group activities.

Two men suspected of facilitating that Shikarpur Imam-bargah attack were arrested after being identified by the already arrested suspects during interrogation; they had allegedly played the role of facilitator for the suicide bombers. The age of the suicide bomber was estimated to be between 18 and 20 years and before carrying out the attack on Imam-bargah, Ilyas stayed for a week with Ghulam Rasool and Khalil. Later reports told that at least 64 people were killed.

Before carrying out the Shikrapur bombing, **Jundallah** had claimed responsibility for the **26<sup>th</sup> November 2014** killing of four polio workers in Karachi, including three women.

Referring to **'the News'** dated **2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015;**

*"An intriguing common aspect in the profiles of most of the **Jundallah** members is their past association with the Jamaat-e-Islami [JI] and the IJT. Jundallah, which was established by Aatur Rehman, was assisted in recruiting youngsters to wage 'jehad' by*

*Karachi's Dr Arshad Waheed, an orthopaedic surgeon, his brother Dr Akmal Waheed, also a neurosurgeon and Engineer Ahsan Aziz.*

*They were not only active members of the JI's Medical Wing but also had close links with Syed Salahuddin - led **Hizbul Mujahideen.***"

**On 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015; Jundallah** claimed responsibility for the **Safoora Goth attack** on a bus in Karachi killing 47 Aga Khan Shia Ismaili Muslims at the spot – full details have already been given in the preceding paragraphs.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016;** the law enforcement agencies [LEAs] killed the commander of banned **Jundallah** during an action in Hub area of Balochistan late night. Police told that Arif alias Saqib, the commander of Jundallah Pakistan, was killed in Rangers raid on a house, adding that a large cache of arms and ammunition was also recovered.

## **KARACHI AFFAIRS IN YEAR 2015-II**

### **UZAIR BALOCH IN HOT WATERS:**

Uzair Baloch had been the most powerful gangster in Karachi but later was seen heading towards active politics in Lyari. During meetings, Uzair Baloch described himself as the '**product of violence**'. At any given time, he could gather thousands in Lyari, and along with his close gang members and political patronage, he ran the most sophisticated Mafioso organization in Karachi earning billions with extortion, smuggling, kidnapping for ransom and trade of narcotics.

Uzair Baloch started as a young companion of Rehman Dakait – an infamous gangster of Lyari closely affiliated with the PPP who was allegedly killed by SP Chaudhry Aslam under mysterious circumstances in August 2009. Uzair Baloch's father Faizo Mama was an Iranian Baloch and a transporter. He was brutally killed by the rival Haji Lalu gang. When Uzair was in power, Uzair Baloch took revenge by chopping off the heads of Haji Lalu's two sons, Arshad Pappu and Yasar Arafat, and playing football with them.

In Lyari – Uzair Baloch handed over all the anti-Pakistan Baloch nationalists to intelligence agencies, in exchange for them ignoring his crimes, it is said. The People's *Amn* Committee [PAC], was designed and made to take on the MQM; PPP hawks wanted to end MQM's 'fear factor'. It was OK but amidst political reconciliation with the MQM, the PPP tried to distance itself from its Lyari group and Uzair's associates, however, it backfired.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> December 2014;** Uzair was arrested in Dubai by Interpol when he was crossing into the United Arab Emirates from Muscat by road; ***he had left Pakistan in September 2013 and had gone to Oman and perhaps to UK also.*** The Interpol move was confirmed by the Pakistani authorities and within a week they sent a Karachi police team to the UAE to get Uzair's custody but to no avail.

Later, the same FIA & Police team visited the Gulf state several times, met security officials there and also held meetings with Interpol but did not succeed. However, rumours were around that the UAE authorities secretly handed over Uzair to Pakistani sleuths but the fact remained that Uzair remained in UAE for many months thereafter.

Once known for his loyalty to the PPP and close contacts with its top leaders, including former home minister Dr Zulfikar Mirza, Uzair portrayed his

PAC as a community group. It had been accused of widespread killings, extortion and running a drugs business both by police and PPP's rival parties. The Sindh government had banned the PAC and in October 2011.

The Sindh government later announced a Rs:2 million bounty on Uzair Baloch. However, it was withdrawn before the May 2013 general elections in a bid to appease the PAC, which had an iron grip over Lyari, since long considered a PPP stronghold.

Uzair fled the country after a Rangers-led operation was launched in Karachi in September 2013. In June 2014, on a request by the Sindh government, Islamabad approached Interpol for the issuance of a red warrant against him as he was booked in over 40 criminal cases till then.

The military operation of 2014-15 led by Pakistan Rangers – broke the back of militant wings of major stake-holder political parties including MQM, PPP and ANP. Having turned against the PPP, Uzair Baloch fled to Oman with a fake Iranian identity. His gang in Lyari was wiped out both by the Rangers and his former ally Baba Ladla but in separate moves.

In Dubai, a team of FIA and Sindh Police was working with Interpol to fight a half-hearted battle to bring Uzair Baloch back to Pakistan. They knew that during court appearances, they had [*purposefully*] not provided evidence that Uzair Baloch was a criminal in Pakistan. Karachi's police officer in Dubai held that:

*"There is pressure on us. No one wants Uzair Baloch back in Pakistan, except the PML[N] government."*

Whereas, referring to '**The Friday Times**' dated **13<sup>th</sup> March 2015**; Uzair Baloch pleaded:

*"I am not criminal and I am living peacefully here in Dubai. All charges against me are baseless and politically motivated. Why didn't they arrest me when I conducted all those political functions for the PPP?"*

*I am prepared to come to Pakistan but I fear that I will be killed like Rehman Baloch [dakait] because I know too much.*

***I know things that could send major political leaders to jail, because they used me to do their dirty work."***

In Karachi, Dr Zulfiqar Mirza – a friend of Uzair Baloch by words – was very angry while urging that:

*"My parting ways with the PPP has nothing to do with Uzair Baloch and everything to do with the policies of the current leadership of the party."*

PPP's senior leadership disagreed and contended that:

*"Dr Mirza's biggest resentment with the PPP is about Uzair Baloch but we have no tolerance for criminalization of politics."*

Lyari was relatively peaceful since the new developments though the PPP practically lost an important constituency. The residents of the neighbourhood, who had worked for the PPP since Z A Bhutto times, felt gravely deprived, destitute and depressed saying that **"the PPP have not done justice with their decades old loyal voters."**

After former MQM worker Saulat Mirza's shocking revelations in a video broadcast just hours before his execution in May 2015, reports surfaced that Uzair Baloch had also spilled the beans about his criminal association with the PPP.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015;** *Express TV's* anchorperson Gharida Farooqi, while hosting her '**G for Gharida**' programme, revealed that:

*"Uzair Baloch had told UAE authorities that he had committed murders allegedly on the orders of PPP leadership, including its co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari, among others."*

*Baloch, currently detained in UAE, claimed that he was in direct contact with the PPP leadership and that he had carried out target killings in the city on the orders of PPP leaders."*

*Some of these orders came from the PPP co-chairman, former Sindh home minister Zulfiqar Mirza, incumbent Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon and even PPP leader Owais Muzaffar."*

Anchor Gharida Farooqi further claimed that PPP was trying its utmost to prevent Baloch from being extradited to Pakistan.

Refuting the Baloch's claim, Sharjeel Memon said that the PPP never ordered him to carry out any criminal activity. Instead, it was under the last PPP government that the biggest operation against criminal elements was carried out in gang-infested Lyari. Memon added:

*"We have always said that action should be taken against criminals irrespective of their political affiliation."*

The PPP's Chief in the National Assembly Syed Khurshid Shah said that *"....the Lyari gangster was taking his revenge on PPP for the action against him and his fellow Lyariites."*

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015;** speaking to media reporters, Mr Shah avoided talking about death row convict Saulat Mirza's allegation against the MQM leadership while saying that:

*"I cannot talk about Saulat Mirza, but the case of Uzair Baloch is different. Uzair is levelling allegations against the PPP leadership in order to take his revenge."*

*Lyari was a PPP stronghold, where the party had launched an operation to restore peace and order. Uzair Baloch escaped abroad since the noose was tightening around his neck to the targeted operation."*

Syed Khurshid then claimed that the law and order situation in Karachi and Sindh was better than in Punjab. In his view, positive results of the Karachi operation were apparent and that the action against criminal elements were approved to be continued; a criminal was just a criminal irrespective of his party affiliation.

The fact remained that all political parties had mutually agreed to an operation against terrorists throughout Sindh, including Karachi. However, it was the MQM and ANP which had demanded an army operation in Karachi.

**On 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** Uzair Baloch confessed killing of two most important witnesses concerning Benazir Bhutto's assassination.

Uzair Baloch was painted as a target killer by some PPP local leadership because his role was over. Just those days, he was extradited from Dubai and kept in Peshawar allegedly in the custody of Intelligence agencies. From there, he released his video message confessing that he killed Benazir Bhutto's two important witnesses; he also exposed massive money laundering on behalf of PPP's top personalities.

One of the most significant witnesses was ***Khalid Shahnsha who was in Benazir Bhutto's jeep*** when she was killed in Rawalpindi. After his statement against army, Asif Ali Zardari landed in more trouble as his right

hand man and target killer Uzair Baloch confessed many target killings in Karachi on the directions of Zardari. Allegedly, the Government did not disclose Baloch's presence in Pakistan; his probe was still going on.

More often, confessions in Pakistan are recorded under duress. Uzair Baloch had reportedly divulged some shocking things, as per media reports, even if fifty percent true, the PPP could have been in trouble. Baloch's frequent contact with the top PPP leadership was established by the statement of his daughter. Prima facie he had let loose a reign of terror by masterminding the notorious Lyari gang of Karachi.

Sheikh Rashid of Awami Muslim League [AML] rightly predicted hard days for the PPP. The PML[N] government tried to hinder or stop the action of the Rangers against the top PPP leadership in the light of confessions of Uzair Baloch due to pre-determined political expediency but the Army's top brass didn't like it. The government was asked to let the courts decide about the veracity of Uzair's confessions.

The likes of Uzair Baloch were nursed and nourished by the PPP, a majority political party in Sindh; just compare it with vandalism of one Gullu Butt during mid 2014 who belonged to the PML[N] Lahore. Politics in Pakistan, unfortunately, is marred by coercion and political blackmail and many political parties do this dirty work through their Uzair Balochs and Gulu Butts!

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2015;** three gangsters affiliated with Uzair Baloch group were killed and another was injured when rivals suspected to be affiliated with the rival Baba Ladla group attacked them with automatic weapons in Gutter Baghicha, within the remit of Pak Colony police station Karachi. The gangsters affiliated with Baloch group and Aga Nasir Pathan group were sitting in Khawaja Mohalla, Maula Dad Village, when four armed assailants riding two motorcycles approached them and showered with bullets.

Three gangsters of Uzair Baloch group and Agha Nasir Pathan gang who were identified as 28-year-old Bilal, 35-year-old Abdul Ghafoor and 30-year-old Abdul Ghani were killed. Another suspected gangster, who was identified as 36-year-old Attaullah was injured and shifted to Civil Hospital; 9mm pistols and SMGs were used and no arrests could be made. The area where the armed clash took place was still a No-Go area for the police even.

**MQM's RESIGNATIONS POLITICS:**

**On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** Sindh Rangers asked MQM to hand over 187 alleged target killers among its ranks who were wanted for killing of police personnel that participated in 90s Karachi operation against criminals. Sindh Rangers sent a letter to the MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar providing a list of 187 alleged target killers.

The rangers' said letter said that 119 accused on the listed were those who had killed at least one cop while 47 were involved in the killing two policemen. One, namely Faisal, was wanted to the police in the case of five killings. The accused included Qamar aka Tadi, Amir aka Papa, Asif aka Chitta, Majeed aka Manjla and others.

The letter was originally sent to the MQM HQ at Nine-Zero but copies of it were endorsed to Sindh chief minister, home secretary, Inspector General of Police [IGP] and Karachi additional IG - and Sindh Rangers Lt Col Hassan Akhtar signed it.

MQM's Farooq Sattar told the media that he or his party had not received any letter from the Rangers like that. He also claimed that MQM chief Altaf Hussain had neither asked NATO or India for help nor urged them to interfere in country's internal affairs.

Referring to the daily '**Nation**' dated **5<sup>th</sup> August 2015;**

*"The said 187 individuals of militant wing of MQM were nominated in various murder FIRs of those police officials who had participated in those operations.*

*Since the beginning of ongoing Karachi targeted operation, which commenced **on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013**, the MQM has been asking for the list of accused party workers involved in any sort of illegal or criminal activity."*

MQM claimed that at least 40 of their workers were killed extra judicially during the said operation; over 200 were killed in various incidents of target killing, 350 were yet to be produced before the courts while the total number of their activists arrested by police and Rangers was 3,500.

Karachi City has been the victim to politico ethnic violence since decades. During the period of early 90s, operation of law enforcement agencies were undertaken to apprehend the criminals involved in violence.

**On 9<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** the Muttahida Qaumi Movement [MQM] called for a "shutter down" strike to be observed across Sindh next day over the alleged extra-judicial killing of its young worker named Hashim.

Hashim — a member of the MQM media cell and Unit 164 Liaquatabad — was going to his residence from Nine Zero on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> May, when he was picked up and taken to an unknown location. Hashim's family filed a petition in the Sindh High Court [SHC] for his recovery, upon which an FIR was registered on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

After three months of his disappearance, Hashim's body was found from the Jamshoro area on that day of 9<sup>th</sup> August. His body had already been buried by Edhi, the MQM claimed.

***MQM further suggested that since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015, its 20 workers disappeared while 35 were killed through extra-judicial activity.***

MQM Rabita Committee member Wasay Jalil took to Twitter to announce a peaceful strike and urged businessmen and transporters to show solidarity with the party's call for a strike in Karachi. There after the party withdrew its strike call for 10<sup>th</sup> August, the MQM decided to use the Sindh Assembly as platform instead.

Next day, the MQM lawmakers entered the House wearing black arm-bands as a sign of protest against the killing of their worker, Hashim. The tension worsened soon after when MQM's Kh Izharul Hassan, the opposition leader, sought time to brief the House about Hashim's death.

Speaker Agha Siraj Durrani pointed out that the MQM lawmakers had already spent a lot of time speaking on the issue. The CM also condemned it and assured a probe into the matter. Durrani requested the MQM members to return to their seats, but they refused; he adjourned the session.

Following the Sindh Assembly session on that day, the MQM demanded the FIR of Hashim's murder to be lodged against the chief minister Sindh. Speaking to the media, MQM's Azeem Farooqui said:

*"The chief minister, who is the captain of this ongoing operation, is responsible for it. Not only Hashim but 130 of our workers are missing and 700 have been jailed."*

Farooqui was thankful to the Rangers DG for assuring them of their help in arresting the killers. In response, Sindh's Information Minister Nisar

Khuhro held MQM responsible for creating 'disorder' in the session. "Today, they have broken all past records of violating the rules," he said.

Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah said later that he was ready to brief the House about the murder but the MQM members had already decided to create disorder. He said that:

*"The family of Muhammad Hashim have lodged an FIR against unidentified person and **the autopsy report also has confirmed that there was no torture marks on the body of the deceased.**"*

**On 10<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** MQM Chief Altaf Hussain lashed out at Karachi based MQM's leadership for their cowardice and betrayal. Unclear on how to calm down their party leader, the elected members offered to resign and to the shock and surprise of some of them, Altaf Hussain had agreed before banging the phone on them.

*[Sources confirmed that Mr Hussain was fuming because he felt that his parliamentarians had failed to defend him in the National Assembly. In a speech of the same day, the **10<sup>th</sup> August 2015**, Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan had described Altaf Hussain as the root cause of the problem.]*

During his address on phone that night Altaf Hussain especially criticised Senator Dr Farooq Nasim, Rauf Siddiqui and Faisal Sabzwari for '**deceiving him**'; he named them individually. He repeatedly told the legislators that they were of no use if they could not raise their voice against the "oppression and atrocities being carried out against the MQM".

At this point a participant of the meeting, who was not an elected representative, said that the MQM lawmakers should resign from NA, the Senate and the Sindh Assembly. **Dr Farooq Sattar seconded the view.**

Altaf Hussain who was in extreme rage by then said that the parliamentarians could do whatever they wanted. The MQM parliamentarians were left with no choice but to draft their resignation letters, while members of the Coordination Committee in Karachi, London and the US called an emergency session to review their options in case the resignations were accepted.

**On 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** the MQM, for the first time in their political history, opted to seriously resign from the Senate, National Assembly and the Sindh Assembly. The MQM's 23 members of the National Assembly out of 24,

eight Senators and 51 MPAs submitted resignation simultaneously after killing of its worker [Hashim] in Karachi.

Though the MQM maintained that they had earlier resigned from the National Assembly as well as the Sindh Assembly in 1992 as a mark of protest against the military operation in Karachi – but they had continued to work as such. Even in 1992, two MQM senators — Ishtiaq Azhar and Master Ali Haider — were not asked by the leadership to resign.

But in August 2015, the MQM leadership was of the view that the human rights issue was bigger than any other consideration and that the party should quit the whole system as a mark of protest. Moreover, there was no use of sitting in the assemblies where every political party was silent over human rights violations in Karachi, the MQM held.

The MQM, founded in 1984 by Altaf Hussain, was the second largest party in the Sindh Assembly and the fourth largest in the National Assembly after the PML[N], PPP and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf [PTI].

The MQM had been a part of the ruling coalition at the centre and in Sindh for a larger period of time from 1988 to 2014 and it had the credit of sitting in governments with all major political parties — PPP, PML[N] and PML[Q].

During the previous PPP-led government, the MQM on a number of occasions threatened to quit the ruling coalition and on one occasion it even came out of the government, but rejoined it after getting assurances from the then president Asif Zardari. Besides resignations, the party also kept matchless track record of boycotting elections.

The MQM had proved its existence for the first time by winning a significant number of seats in the local government elections in Sindh three years after its creation in 1987. The party had contested the 1990 elections under the banner of Haq Parast. After the 1990 elections, the MQM became part of the ruling coalition in Sindh again — this time with the PML.

However, the MQM members came out of the National Assembly and the provincial legislature in 1992 because of the military operation against it allegedly discriminately. Altaf Hussain had already left the country for London months before the operation.

The party later boycotted the 1993 general elections for the National Assembly, but participated in the provincial assembly elections in Sindh and won 27 seats.

The MQM also boycotted the local government elections held under Gen Musharraf in 2001, but took part in the general elections in October 2002. This time the MQM has resigned on a day when the Election Commission of Pakistan informed the Supreme Court that it wanted to conduct the local government elections in Sindh and Punjab in November and December.

The resignations by the MQM parliamentarians did not just take Islamabad by surprise because it was not planned by those who turned up in the speaker's office a day earlier i.e. on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2015. In fact, none of the National or Sindh assembly members had even discussed the option in private. Till that late night the MsNA & MsPA of MQM gathered for a meeting along with members of the *Rabita* [coordination] Committee and some participants from the US. In their various locations, they were addressed by the MQM Chief from London.

However, a ***severe dressing down*** followed.

Several MQM leaders believed that quitting the parliament was not a right decision at that moment, especially because Altaf Hussain had himself conceded that he should have not boycotted the 1993 general elections.

Even Farooq Sattar's statement on that day was seen as reflecting this reluctance – after GEO News channel reported that the MQM resignations had been accepted, he was quoted saying that the government had different policy to deal with PTI resignations compared to how it handled the MQM's.

*[The news broke out in the Capital because when Ch Nisar Ali Khan, the Interior Minister, heard that the MQM had submitted their resignations to the Speaker in his chamber, and the Speaker Ayaz Sadiq had taken the resignations and had ordered 'pl process' on the file being sent to the Secretary NA – he [Mr Nisar] rushed to the Speaker's chamber and advised him to immediately accept the resignations.*

*In fact, the Speaker had not written any order on the file but had verbally instructed his Secretary to start typing notifications of acceptance of resignations and for onward forwarding to the Election Commission of Pakistan.*

*PM Nawaz Sharif was on the foreign tour then.]*

However, it is important to note that this was a one-sided interpretation because publicly, Farooq Sattar as well as others stood by the resigna-

tions. He told that as Altaf Hussain, their leader took the decision thus everyone would own it; a senior MQM lawmaker who had attended the meeting on that night divulged later.

It was also decided that as there was frequent talks of '**minus - Altaf formula**' so the MQM would not be contesting the coming local government elections in Karachi and Hyderabad.

Even otherwise, there was likelihood of delay in the local bodies' elections if the MQM resignations were accepted and by-elections held. "**For Altaf Bhai this is a win-win situation...he told them [the establishment] that he is still in control,**" commented another MQM leader.

Meanwhile, Altaf Hussain paid rich tributes to the MQM parliamentarians for submitting their resignations and making the whole nation proud. Following the resignation of MQM lawmakers from both houses of parliament, the MQM Rabita (Coordination) Committee had to decide the further course of action – the politics in Karachi was taking turn.

PTI's Chairman Imran Khan tweeted on country's current political situation saying: '**A tale of 2 resignations: One to investigate an election where all parties claimed election was rigged; & the other to save target killers.**' Whereas MQM's Farooq Sattar repeatedly alleged that his party was being targeted in the Karachi operation to create political space for PTI and the MQM-Haqiqi.

Sindh Assembly Speaker Agha Siraj of the PPP told the media that he would not accept the MQM resignations in haste. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that '*if MQM takes back their resignations, the government would work towards resolving their grievances.*' JUI[F] Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that he did not consider the move as a good omen - it would create a crisis situation in the country.

*Jamaat e Islami* [JI] Chief Senator Sirajul Haq said that the MQM's sudden and unexpected decision to quit from the assemblies was both surprising and sentimental. He added that in Pakistan, political parties were weak but the leaders were stronger, and politics revolved around the interests of personalities instead of principles.

Next day, PM Nawaz Sharif in a meeting with parliamentary leaders of various political parties decided not to accept MQM lawmakers' resignations from the assemblies. He treated MQM resignations issue the same way it treated PTI's resignations. The PM also decided to form a committee comprising multi-party representation to negotiate the issue with the

MQM. On PM's instructions, National Assembly [NA] Speaker Ayaz Sadiq kept the issue in adjournment until resolved through negotiations.

The most important factor remained that during the meeting, it was also decided that the Karachi operation would continue targeting terrorists in the city; however, the government would hold talks with the MQM to bring the party back to parliamentary politics.

Till then, the government had already tasked its key aides to negotiate with the MQM leadership. Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and JUI's Maulana Fazlur Rehman were assigned to resolve the controversy and convince the MQM legislators to take back their resignations. The PM, who returned from his 3-day official visit to Belarus the same day, had discussed the issue with Ch Nisar at Islamabad Airport.

MQM's Farooq Sattar wanted the Rangers operation in the city but that it shouldn't be specific to the MQM saying that **"if their reservations are addressed, the MQM may return to Parliament."** Meanwhile, Maulana Fazl called Farooq Sattar urging the party to return to Parliament and play their constitutional role. The MQM leader demanded to constitute a judicial commission and a committee to probe the impartiality of the surgical operation in Karachi.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** with the meeting between PM Nawaz Sharif and JUI[F] Chief Maulana Fazl, the stage was set for the return of the MQM members to their respective elected parliamentary houses; the reappearance was indicated for only a formal meeting of the MQM delegation with the PM which was conveniently arranged after two days.

The JUI[F] Chief, who had once been playing the role of a trouble shooter, submitted a report about his meeting with the MQM leaders at Nine Zero. Federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Pervaiz Rashid and Ahsan Iqbal were also present on the occasion. The parliamentary group leaders had assigned the Maulana to negotiate with the MQM for withdrawal of its resignations.

MQM served 19-point memorandum called as 'charge-sheet' to the government expressing reservations about the mode of ongoing operation against terrorists and criminals in Karachi. Maulana Fazl held that it would not be fair if a group [PTI] was allowed to make comeback while the other sent out. His mission remained inconclusive in the wake of an attempt on the life of the MQM MNA Abdul Rashid Godil.

As per MQM's 19-point memo, the party's reservations were related to Karachi operation; 14 out of 19 points were concerned with Ranger's opera-

tion. The MQM was not against operation, but the issue was about targeting just one political party; the prime minister agreed to resolve the issue.

Reasonable demands of the MQM were to be met and apparently there was no legal hindrance in the MQM's demand of forming a monitoring committee to oversee the Karachi operation for alleged excesses from the Rangers and other LEAs. However, formation of monitoring committee for overseeing the operation was not an easy proposition since it could have an adverse impact on the spirit of Karachi operation.

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015;** due to 'non-serious attitude' of the government, MQM withdrew itself from the ongoing process of negotiation, demanding acceptance of resignations of the party's lawmakers without loss of further time. MQM's six-member team had held a third round of talks with the government's negotiation team a night earlier.

At an emergency press conference at Islamabad Federal Lodges that day, the MQM's negotiations team headed by Dr. Farooq Sattar put forth three basic demands:

- Undeclared ban on MQM's welfare activities be lifted;
- 
- MQM's political offices be allowed to function and;
- 
- Altaf Hussain's recorded statements be allowed to go on air on electronic media.

Dr Farooq Sattar said MQM lawmakers had already tendered their resignations from assemblies and the Senate on 12<sup>th</sup> August and even after a lapse of almost 20 days no grievance-redress committee was formed by the government. Dr Sattar reiterated that MQM was being pushed against the wall in the guise of Karachi operation.

*"MQM faces an undeclared and unconstitutional ban on its political and welfare activities,"* Dr Sattar declared. All the political offices of MQM were shut and its welfare wing *Khidmat e Khalq Foundation* [KKF] was not being allowed to carry out its activities. Party's chief Altaf Hussain's statements – both live and recorded – were banned from going on air, terming it an unconstitutional act.

During **ending September 2015;** the MQM claimed that the authorities seized 10,000 sacrificial hides collected by its volunteers in Karachi during Eidul Azha festival days. Senior MQM leader Farooq Sattar said in a press conference that 35 vehicles including 10 trucks loaded with 10,000 sacrifi-

cial hides were diverted to another location instead of allowing them to reach the central camp set up by *Khidmat e Khalq Foundation* [KKF].

KKF had set up 26 collection points across the city; but despite following legal ways for transportation of sacrificial hides MQM's trucks were stopped and volunteers arrested. All that happened despite the fact that KKF had administration's permission to collect hides. Dr Sattar held:

*"We have got details of all the vehicles and are ready to share with administration. Anybody including KKF workers should be arrested if found involved in forcefully collecting hides,"*

The Sindh Rangers and other law enforcement agencies had arrested about 11 people involved in snatching of hides of sacrificial animals on the occasion of Eidul Azha in Karachi. Acting upon complaints registered by residents of New Karachi, Landhi, Liaquatabad, Federal B Area, PIB Colony, Jamshed Quarters and Jacob Lane, the troops arrested those people and recovered 150 animal hides from their possession.

In fact, the Sindh government had announced a strict code of conduct for collection of animal hides according to which only registered organisations were allowed to collect the hides on *Eidul Azha*.

### **MQM's RASHID GODIL ATTACKED:**

**On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** MQM leader and Member National Assembly [MNA] Rashid Godil was critically injured as his car came under attack in Bahadurabad area of Karachi. At 10.30AM, four unknown assailants on motorcycles opened fire on Godil's car when he was on his way to MQM HQ, Nine-Zero, for a meeting with JUI[F] chief Fazlur Rahman. He suffered six bullets to his head, jaw and chest.

Fazlur Rehman was tasked by the PM Nawaz Sharif to convince the return of MQM lawmakers to Parliament.

Godil's driver, Abdul Mateen, succumbed to his injuries while the MQM leader was critically injured and immediately operated; he was targeted after being identified. 9mm pistols were used in the attack and eight bullet shells were recovered from the crime scene. The attackers came from behind the car and opened fire at MNA Mr Godil.

Rashid Godil was in critical condition; doctors termed the first 48 hours important for Godil as his lungs were severely affected by the bullet he received. A team of expert doctors was looking after the MQM leader who had been put on a ventilator in the ICU.

The incident was not only condemnable but also raised serious concerns about the efficacy of the on-going Karachi operation; a thought provoking moment for those who claimed that peace was restored in Karachi. However, SSP East told MNA Godil was provided security but he preferred private security guards.

Meanwhile, MQM chief Altaf Hussain condemned the attack and expressed grief over the demise of Godil's driver. In a statement issued from his London's office, Altaf appealed to the nation to pray for MNA's recovery.

An investigation team headed by AIG Mushtaq Meher along with SSP SIU Farooq Awan, SSP East Javed Jaskani was immediately raised; the CIA and Counter Terrorism Department were to assist the JIT whereas Rangers were investigating the incident separately.

A week earlier, members of the MQM had offered their resignations from their seats in the Parliament over what they described as a campaign of victimisation against them. The resignations were not yet formally accepted when the episode occurred.

MNA Rashid [Godil](#) served as MQM's parliamentary leader in the National Assembly but was recently replaced by Farooq Sattar. He had joined the party in 2000 and became the town *Nazim* of Bahadurabad after contesting local bodies' elections. A businessman from the Memon community, he was elected as an MNA during 2008 general elections for the first time.

Meanwhile, MQM committee showed their concern over the arrests of its workers; five of its office bearers and activists were detained in Orangi Town, Qasba Colony, Jackson and Korangi.

Another MQM activist was also shot dead in the Orangi Town that day. Rahim, son of Moin, was fired upon by unidentified armed men and died on the spot. The MQM's Coordination Committee lamented that:

*"On one hand MQM leaders are being attacked, while on the other hand law enforcement agencies are apprehending our workers instead of arresting terrorists of banned organizations."*

MQM's Farooq Sattar, while speaking to media said:

*".....the incident is being considered as an attempt to sabotage the peace of Karachi and hoped that those behind the attack would be arrested soon and made to face justice."*

**On 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015;** the Counter-Terrorism Department [CTD] of Sindh Police claimed to have arrested two accused for their alleged involvement in an armed attack on MQM legislator, Rashid Godil. The CTD carried out raids in several areas of Karachi and Hyderabad, to arrest the two suspects but could not be successful.

**On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** however, the CTD police arrested the brother of main culprit in case of firing on Rashid Godil; he was Sohail Bakik, the brother of Shahid Bakik; **Dunya TV News** dated 8<sup>th</sup> December is referred.

SSP CTD Naveed Khawaja told that Shahid Bakik was behind the attack on MQM leader Rashid Godil in which his driver died, leaving Rashid Godil severely injured with many bullets in his face, neck and chest. A case FIR No 254/2015 was registered on complaint of Godial's brother-in-law under Section 7-ATA (Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997), Section 302 of Pakistan Penal Code and other sections against unknown suspects.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015; an Anti-Terrorism Court issued non-bailable warrants (NBW) of arrest against an alleged Lyari gangwar criminal Shahid Bikik involved in the Rashid Godial attack case and three other cases registered at the Gulberg police station. This was for the second time that the court issued NBW against Shahid Bikik in this case and ordered to arrest Bikik and ensure his production in the court on 21<sup>st</sup> December.

The police, 10 days after the said attack on MNA Godil, had claimed to arrest a man namely Waseem as a 'main character' in the crime; he was arrested with the help of CCTV footage and he confessed before police that he attacked on Rashid Godial. It also surfaced that Waseem had made the plan with his friends in his house and then they attacked on him.

Shahid's brother Sohail told the police that Razi opened fire on Rashid Godil while another terrorist named Shariq was driving the motorbike. He also told that Shahid Bakik provided shelter to banned outfits' terrorists. Two motorbikes were used in the attack. The other motorbike was used by Asad and Haider.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2016;** Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] ordered arrest of investigation officer as he failed to arrest the key accused in the said case. The court also ordered to block disbursement of the investigation officer Hussain Mehdi's salary as ***Shahid Bikik - a Lyari gangster and a key accused in attack at Rashid Godil*** - could not be arrested. The order directed the police to arrest both - the accused and the investigation officer – and produce them before the court.

Shahid Bikik, having shelter of Peoples Amn Committee Lyari, was previously arrested in September 2013 by Karachi Police on his involvement in numerous cases of extortion and loot and kill cases but freed by the ATC on bail. Later he failed to appear before the court after taking bail in those three cases. Police report said that the accused was on the run after he was nominated in the Rashid Godil attack case.

Then there was news; the culprits are at large and the case is dumped in the ATC's court room.

## **Scenario 159**

### **DR ASIM AFFAIRS [2015-16]**

#### **PPP's DR ASIM HUSSAIN ARRESTED:**

**On 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015,** former federal minister and Chairman of the provincial Higher Education Commission [HEC] Dr Asim Hussain was picked up and detained by about 15 plain-clothed men, which arrived at the HEC of-

office in four vehicles around noon that day; the personnel belonged to an intelligence agency or some other LEA. Before the team arrived at the HEC office, the building was surrounded by Rangers to ward off any potential resistance by Dr Asim's armed guards. The NAB had denied having anything to do with Dr Asim's detention.

Dr Asim Hussain was chairing a meeting of the search committee for vice chancellors which was also attended by other high-ranking officials of the HEC. The meeting's objective was to select a new vice chancellor of the Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) when the raid took place.

Personnel of the raiding team asked the attendees of the meeting to switch off their mobile phones following which the Sindh HEC Chairman was whisked away to an undisclosed location. Later, the NAB sources verified that Dr Asim was in the custody of the anti-corruption watchdog and that he might be shifted to Islamabad with the Federal Investigation Agency [FIA] team. The NAB officials also conducted a raid on Karachi's Civic Centre to seize records of the properties owned by Dr Asim Hussain.

Dr Asim was booked to fly back to Dubai next day; he was arrested from Sindh's HEC office which he was heading after higher education was made a provincial subject following the 18th Amendment. He was taken to an undisclosed location for interrogation; he was being investigated for alleged involvement in money-laundering, '**china-cutting**', and illegally issuing licenses for unlawful CNG stations across Sindh during his ministerial tenure with the PPP government during 2008-13.

An intelligence official claimed Dr Asim was also **"aiding MQM workers, gave money to party leader Muhammad Anwar and party Chief Altaf Hussain, and made billions of rupees in illegal contracts"**. It followed the interrogation of two officials of Sui Southern Gas Company – Chief Finance Officer Amin Rajput and Deputy MD Shoaib Warsi. A security official added:

*"Recently, we brought back a target killer from Dubai who confessed killing workers of an American oil company in Karachi – the man belonged to the MQM. There are two MQMs – a criminal one and a political one; the political one must stay."*

Statistics taken from the Sindh Home Department [police and Rangers] proved that **19% of the suspects arrested during the Karachi operation were linked to the MQM; about 8% belonged to the ANP, 4% to the Sunni Tehrik, and 1% from the PPP**. The numbers could not be verified independently and the political parties usually distance themselves

from suspected criminals. About **47% of the arrested suspects belonged to TTP** and associated groups.

Law Enforcement Agencies [LEAs] had just stepped up an operation against what they called MQM's militant wing before party leader Rashid Godil's attempted assassination.

*"Party leaders [MQM] went into hiding as if they were criminals. There is a lot of resentment against the party leadership as well as law enforcement agencies equally."*

Pakistan Rangers conducted 5,785 operations since the beginning of the law-enforcement drive in Karachi since September 2013, in which 10,353 suspects had been arrested. At least 826 were classified as "terrorists", 335 as "target killers", and 296 were accused of "extortion".

A senior anchor person Dr Shahid Masood had told in ARY's live TV show that Dr Asim was having a mega party scene at his home, a day before he was detained. Dr Asim was also playing as a bridge between the PPP and MQM; he had been accused of being MQM facilitator. His name had also surfaced in many cases of MQM and this was the prime reason of his arrest. Dr Asim, couple of days before his arrest, was present at former President Gen Musharraf's residence, too. He also bragged about him being 'untouchable' because of his connections at the 'right places'.

Leader of Opposition in National Assembly Syed Khurshid Shah condemned the reported detention of Dr Asim Hussain and threatened that such measures could result in a disastrous outcome. PPP Vice President Sherry Rehman also addressed a press conference along with PPP Information Secretary Qamar Zaman Kaira and raised certain questions to how laws could be formulated against national politicians. *"We have given sacrifices in war against terrorism, how can anyone blame PPP for supporting terrorists?"* she said.

Syed Khurshid Shah, on the same day but separately, talked to the media and, amongst floating threats, roared: '..... *General Sahib* [addressing Gen Raheel Sharif], ***main kehna hoon nizam ko chalney dein....[I say the system should be allowed to continue....]***.'

A very loud voice appeared from the media audience...and every one went silent including Syed Khurshid. The voice was:

**'.....which nizam Shah sahib.... Loot khasoot ka, china cutting ka, nokarian bechney ka, qabza mafia ka, bhatta khori ka, jahalat ka, gunda gardi ka, ghost teachers ki tank-hawhein Khaney ka, postings ki neelami ka, assemblion aur senate ki ticketein bechaney ka, commission khatay rahney ka, dollar Dubai bhijwate rahney ka.....'**

[...which system Mr Shah....system of state level robberies, system of distributing state lands amongst relatives for free, system of selling employment letters, system of snatching open pieces of lands & properties on gun point, system of extortion huge money from businessmen, system of keeping people away from education, system of state sponsored terrorism, system of eating state budget through ghost teachers, system of selling attractive slots in state departments, system of selling election tickets for seats in Parliament and Senate [it is done in the name of party funds – but never audited], system of taking commission for state contracts, system of corruption and keep on sending dollars to Dubai.....]

***Syed Khurshid's address of 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015 in the Parliament building is referred.***

And the speaker was virtually dragged out of the conference room. After that truthful voice, Syed Khurshid could not concentrate on his address nor had he answered to any of the allegation pointing towards PPP's bad governance in Pakistan during 2008-13 and in Sindh during 2008-15 – all done in the name of democracy.

Pointing out to Asif Ali Zardari, CM Sindh Qaim Ali Shah stated:

**"Let us know if you want to declare the PPP a terrorist party and if that happens then there will be a war. We will defend the sanctity of Pakistan and will bear all sorts of allegations but not the allegation of terrorism.**

***If the Rangers had any reservations about any of my cabinet members, they should have informed me first. We will talk to the federal government about such ad hoc raids."***

Dr Asim was regarded as a close aide of former president Asif Ali Zardari. He was appointed federal petroleum minister during the Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP] government in 2008 and later made as head of the HEC's Sindh chapter since the PML[N]'s take over in Islamabad in May 2013.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** Dr Asim was presented in ATC-III by the Rangers who informed the court that Dr Asim had been placed under a 90-day preventive detention under the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997. The Rangers contended that they had credible information regarding Dr Asim's involvement in terrorism related activities as well as embezzlement of state funds to the tune of billions.

Three days after Dr Asim's arrest, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah expressed concern over the arrest of Dr Asim and lamented over the fact that he was not taken into confidence over the arrest. While talking to the media he said that:

*".....this is not fair and it is unwarranted; it is not appropriate to arrest any individual at will, we do not practice the law of the jungle in Sindh."*

The Chief Minister Shah had spoken to the Corps Commander and the DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar, who told him there were serious complaints against the former petroleum minister. However, the CM held:

*"But when they sent me the details of the complaints against Dr Asim I found them to be in general without solid substance. Sufficient evidence against Dr Asim does not exist; I should be made aware of arrests before they happen."*

*His party is not content with the action taken against Dr Asim - they (PPP) hold me responsible because they elevated me to the position of chief minister."*

The CM Shah was of the view that he was in command of the security operation in Karachi, and hence should have been kept in the loop regarding all developments. *"....emphasising that being an elected chief minister and head of the provincial apex committee I must be consulted."*

While lodging a protest with the federal government, he termed Dr's arrest as **".....invasion by FIA and NAB on Sindh. Why is Sindh alone being targeted in the current anti-corruption drive?"**

In the court record, the Rangers had contended that they kept credible information regarding Dr Asim's involvement in terrorism related activities as well as embezzlement of funds. Perhaps, Dr Asim was being grilled for his alleged involvement in illegal occupation of government land in North Nazimabad and Clifton for the extension of his Dr Ziauddin Hospital.

Dr Asim's arrest came in what was described as the first major action against the PPP leadership during 2015's Karachi operation. He was a close aide to former president Asif Ali Zardari. In 2009, he was elected Senator from Sindh on a PPP ticket. He served as the minister of petroleum and natural resources and then the prime minister's adviser with the same portfolio until 2012. After the 2013 general elections, the PPP government in Sindh made him Chairman of the provincial HEC.

He was also believed to be close to MQM's Chief Altaf Hussain.

The Chief Minister then discussed the issue with Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali and then with PM Nawaz Sharif twice. The CM told the media:

*"The prime minister told me he was not aware of their actions and had assured our grievances will be redressed but despite that raids on Civic Centre are continuing."*

Dr Asim has been involved, according to the allegations, in corruption amounting to more than four hundred billion rupees. In his statements to Rangers he made confessions of his involvement in multiple high-profile corruption scams and revealed secrets about the murder of Benazir Bhutto and Lyari gang-war in Karachi.

Just on the very next day, one Dr Yusuf Sattar, the Deputy MD of Dr Asim's Ziauddin Hospital was picked up by another contingent of FIA officials and taken to unknown place for interrogation; of course without informing the CM Qaim Ali Shah.

A petition was filed in the Sindh High Court on 27<sup>th</sup> August challenging the arrest of Dr Asim Hussain. The petition was filed by Dr Asim's mother Aijaz Fatima and Advocate Maulvi Iqbal Haider who contended that the former federal minister was an esteemed politician and his detention was unlawful as he didn't have a criminal record. The major point she emphasized that:

***'.....her son is not involved in any criminal activity and also that her son will cooperate with the authorities in any case during interrogation and investigation etc.'***

The petitioners asked for the court order for Dr Asim to be released. The federal and Sindh governments, the National Accountability Bureau [NAB] and the FIA were made party in the petition. The Sindh High Court adjourned hearing of petition against Dr Asim Hussain's arrest till September.

Meanwhile, Dr Zareen, Dr Asim's wife, wrote a letter to Inspector General of Police [IGP] Sindh that her husband had been suffering from diabetes and high blood pressure. She asked for permission to be allowed to meet Dr Asim in order to monitor his condition. After knowledge of his ill health, the Rangers authorities performed a complete medical check on Dr Asim stating him as medically fit then. They informed that his sugar levels were checked and there was no need to shift him to a hospital as he was completely fit as per Specialist Doctor's reports.

**CHARGES ADMITTED BY DR ASIM:**

Referring to 'the London Post' dated **31<sup>st</sup> August 2015:**

*".... Finally the heat reached at the door of one of the real 'mafia gangsters' of Pakistan. The arrest of Dr Asim Hussain has drawn unprecedented applause from a huge cross section of the people of Pakistan.....the people of Pakistan recognized corruption and terrorism equably damaging and destructive for the country.*

*This nexus between the two is at two levels i.e. either masses of dirty money gathered through plunder is directly invested in proping up terrorism to destabilize Pakistan, or massive corruption leads directly to injustice, bad governance, chaos, social breakdown, and insecurity. And this in turn creates recruits which feed the ranks of the terrorists."*

And this applause was directed specifically towards the Army, Gen Raheel Sharif, and other Army Generals, not towards the government. The great hope was that the said arrest would mark the start of an operation against the A team of bandits whose vanguard was comprised of politicians, bureaucracy, the police, and the judiciary. Once more, the people of Pakistan were seen standing so firmly behind their army.

PPP's Senator Saeed Ghani said that; *'the evidences of terror funding by Dr Asim should be made known after which we will have no basis to protest'*. He pointed out that politics of reconciliation did not mean just a policy of mutual understanding (*muk muka*). We also ensured that no harm was done to the democratic system during the '*dharna*'.

Senator Saeed Ghani urged it was unbelievable that Dr Asim Hussain would ask any ambulance driver to transfer weapons in the vehicle. The PML[N]'s

Federal Minister Gen (rtd) Abdul Qadir Baloch asserted that the Operation in Karachi would continue.

In its first official and detailed report on the high-profile interrogation of Dr Asim since his arrest on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015, the Sindh Rangers had come up with astonishing figures of corruption with hundreds of billions pocketed by him and his bosses and associates; political and bureaucrats respectively.

The 12-page report, officially sent to the National Accountability Bureau [NAB] for further investigation and action, listed details of how the PPP leader took kickbacks from whom and in what amounts. NAB had already formed a Joint Investigation Team [JIT] with Rangers to further probe these specific charges and the NAB Chairman Ch Qamar Zaman had already received briefings from high ups and made out plans to proceed further.

A copy of the Rangers' confidential report, available with ***The News***, confirmed almost all the charges of astronomical loot and plunder that was so far heard only on the media. The covering letter of the Rangers report, sent to the NAB on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015, described Dr Asim's ***"mighty illegal benefits which magnified his financial stature and social standing equating him to be indispensable."***

Five other officials of the Sui Gas companies and Petroleum Ministry, who were also arrested and interrogated, gave explicit details of how Dr Asim had collected billions upon billions in kickbacks from companies, even those which were known friends of Asif Ali Zardari. They included Zuhair Siddiqui (ex-Managing Director SSGC), Shoaib Warsi (Deputy MD SSGC), Amin Rajput (Chief Financial Officer SSGC), Fayyaz Merchant (Sr GM SSGC) and Kamran Ehsan Nagi (GM SSGC).

Referring to **Shaheen Sehbai's** description appeared in **'the News'** dated **24<sup>th</sup> September 2015**, the report stated:

*"Dr Asim has been found involved in various acts of corruption, corrupt practices and misuse of authority as public office holder... He is responsible for inflicting losses to the tune of billions of rupees on the national exchequer..."*

*Huge amounts so embezzled were provided to his political masters [including Mr Zardari], which were subsequently used in terror financing and funding target killers.*

*The following are the specific cases:*

- *Dr Asim gave favours and illegal gas connections to KESC, which was owned by Abraaj Group with links to Asif Zardari and Faryal Talpur to the tune of Rs:100 billion.*
- - *Zuhair Siddiqui admitted that he had paid Rs:6-7 billion to Dr Asim collected after illegal gas connections were given to companies including KESC which was allowed to keep Rs:62 billion in unpaid gas receivables.*
- - *He revealed [as per Page-10, para 3 of the Rangers report], that Dr Asim directed him as MD SSGC to grant liberty to Omni Group of Anwar Majeed, a friend of Asif Zardari, to allow enhanced loads of gas to captive power plants and sugar mills of Asif Zardari through Omni Group, thereby causing loss of billions to the national exchequer.*
- - *Dr Asim allowed uninterrupted gas supply to selected textile mills of APTMA and captive power plants and collected Rs:150 to 200 million per day as kickbacks.*
- - *Zuhair Siddiqui revealed that a Turkish global company paid US\$40-50 million to Dr Asim for prequalification as an exporter of LNG gas; Siddiqui himself got \$0.25 million as kickback.*
  - *Para 8 on Page 10 of the report reveals that Dr Asim received daily kickback of Rs:2 billion from PSO, through Shah, a Deputy MD PSO, and Jaffery, a GM, whose brother is a close friend of Asif Zardari.*
- - *Dr Asim received Rs:1 billion as kickback from Abbas and Khalid Steel Mills for supplying them gas on special terms.”*

Dozens of similar details of what amounts were taken in land deals with Manzur Kaka, the building authority official who later escaped from Pakistan, PMDC issues and oil kickbacks, were also revealed in the report. These specific charges were investigated in detail by the JIT of Rangers and NAB and references were sent to the respective court. All involved were placed on the ECL; thus they could not leave the country.

There was no mention in the report how these huge amounts were transferred overseas or whether this money was still in the Pakistani banks.

**On 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015;** the Supreme Court rejected an appeal by Dr Asim Hussain seeking his transfer to a hospital from the detention centre where he was being kept in Rangers custody for his alleged involvement in corruption cases. A two-member bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Sarmad Jalal Usmani, was hearing a petition filed by the family members of Dr Asim against his discharge and transfer from the government hospital.

At the last hearing on 9<sup>th</sup> October, the apex court had ordered the constitution of an impartial medical board for the check-up of the former petroleum minister and submission of its report within two weeks. Hearing the case today, Justice Saqib Nisar remarked that there was no need to keep Dr Asim in the hospital after a satisfactory report by the medical board.

The court rejected the complainant's appeal, and ruled in favour of the earlier order by the Sindh High Court.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015;** the Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] remanded Dr Asim Hussain, in police custody for four days in a case relating to providing treatment and shelter to terrorists.

Following the end of his 90-day preventive detention, Rangers had handed Dr Asim over to police after lodging a case against him for allegedly treating and harbouring terrorists at North Nazimabad and Clifton branches of his hospital at the behest of leaders of the MQM and PPP.

Prosecutor General of Sindh Shahadat Awan sought four days' custody of the accused for questioning, collection of evidence and recording statements of witnesses before a magistrate. Usually, a regular prosecutor appointed for the administrative court if police pleads for remand.

Special Public Prosecutor of Rangers Habib Ahmed raised objections over the appearance of the provincial prosecuting officer in the case and said that in fact he had been authorised to plead the case because the paramilitary force was a complainant in the case.

Mr Habib informed the court that he was seeking 14-day police remand of the suspect and it was also mentioned in the remand paper, but the investigating officer had altered 14 days with four before submitting it to the court. It was a clear manifestation that the Sindh police was 'properly briefed' by its PPP masters that every favour be extended to Dr Asim.

Referring to Section 21-E of ATA, Mr Habib said the minimum duration for first police remand was about two weeks. After hearing the arguments,

ATC's administrative judge Justice Naimatullah Phulpoto handed over the suspect to police on a four-day physical remand.

The new FIR lodged on the complaint of Rangers, Superintendent Inayatullah Durrani stated that Dr Asim confessed before the JIT that he had provided treatment to terrorists backed by political parties and militant organisations at Ziauddin Hospital after they suffered injuries during shootouts with Rangers and police. He also sheltered them on the pretext of treatment. The PPP and MQM leaders were also named in the FIR for allegedly asking Dr Asim to treat and shelter the terrorists.

The said FIR also accused the former petroleum minister of making appointments in Pakistan State Oil and Sui Southern Gas Company and awarding contracts by accepting graft.

The case against him was registered at the North Nazimabad police station under sections 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence or giving false information to screen offender), 202 (intentional omission to give information of offence by person bound to inform), 216 (harbouring offender who has escaped from custody whose apprehension has been ordered), 216-A (penalty for harbouring robbers or dacoits), 409 (criminal breach of trust by public servant or banker, merchant or agent) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code, read with sections 21I (aid and abetment), 21J (harbouring any person who committed an offence under this act) and 7 (punishment for act of terrorism) of Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997.

In the said FIR, MQM leaders Waseem Akhtar, Rauf Siddiqui, Anis Qaimkhani, Saleem Shahzad and Qadir Patel of the PPP were also named in the FIR as they allegedly asked Dr Asim to provide treatment and shelter to alleged terrorists.

An ATC granted interim pre-arrest bail to MQM leader Rauf Siddiqui in the present case till 19<sup>th</sup> December. After getting protective bail from the high court, Mr Siddiqui turned up before the trial court and moved a pre-arrest bail application. The ATC-I judge, Bashir Ahmed Khoso, granted Siddiqui an interim bail against a surety bond of Rs:200,000 and issued notices to the IO and the prosecutor for the next date.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** however, denying all allegations against him, Dr Asim Hussain told the administrative judge of the ATC that he was being tortured to make a bogus confession.

Dr Asim was produced before Justice Naimatullah Phulpoto of the Sindh High Court [SHC] after the period of his second police remand completed.

He was in police custody since 28<sup>th</sup> November and before that he spent three months in Rangers custody.

The new investigation officer [IO] of the case, DSP Altaf Hussain, sought another extension in his remand for further questioning and collection of evidence in a case relating to providing treatment and shelter to terrorists. The IO said that he took over the investigations only three days earlier.

When the judge asked Dr Asim whether he was subjected to maltreatment in custody?. Dr Asim, who did not speak in his previous two appearances, broke his silence and denied all the allegations against him and said: *"I am being tortured and pressurised to make a false confession."*

Referring to the statement of the Chief Operating Officer of his own Dr Ziauddin Hospital — recorded before a judicial magistrate, the former petroleum minister said that he was being framed merely on the statement of a Medical Superintendent.

Dr Asim alleged that his life was at stake and he was suffering from brain tumour and heart ailments, but he was not being allowed a proper treatment. He said that he was being victimised for some reasons that he could not describe.

Dr Asim's daughter, Dr Nida, also submitted a statement along with an affidavit in court stating that the life of her father was in danger. Defence counsel Amir Raza Naqvi opposed the remand request stating that his client had already spent over 100 days in custody and it would be a sheer violation of Article 10 of the Constitution.

The counsel submitted that the NAB had shown the suspect arrested and sought his custody on the last hearing without authority. However, NAB counsel Amjad Ali Shah argued that NAB had only shown the suspect arrested, but did not get his custody. Mr Shah maintained that NAB was authorised by the competent authority to arrest Dr Asim.

After hearing all sides, Justice Phulpoto extended the police remand of the suspect till 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015.

**FULL DETAILS OF JIT REPORT:**

**On 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016;** PML[N]'s Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that:

***'...no proof of corruption had been found against Dr Asim Hussain in the Ministry's files and that the Ministry had not even been consulted before his arrest'.***

However, the NAB had filed an inquiry report with that Accountability Court **on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016** against Dr Asim, charging him of causing losses of above said amount to the national exchequer through corruption, money laundering, and illegal allotment of land and grabbing of commission.

Talking to a private TV channel, PML[N] Minister Khaqan Abbasi advised not to level any allegations against Dr Asim without evidence or proof. The federal minister was perhaps instructed from the PM Nawaz Sharif to go with the said stance because of '**re-conciliation and friendly opposition policy**' settled between Mr Zardari and Nawaz Sharif.

However, Abbasi admitted that the Rangers made contact with Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited [SNGPL] and Sui Southern Gas Pipelines Limited [SSGPL] prior to the arrest of Dr Asim and it was the responsibility of the two to provide evidence to the organisations involved in the investigation.

**The Richest Man of The World [?];** as per column of ***GEO's Mazhar Abbas*** appeared in media **on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016;**

*"A Joint Interrogation Team [JIT] declared Dr Asim Hussain **'the richest man in the world'** in its report, a charge which seems far-fetched even if he allegedly has an \$88 billion market cap. Is he really richer than Bill Gates?"*

*During Dr Asim's 90-day ordeal of intense interrogation, he was also asked about his alleged meeting with former RAW chief in India; where and when – not detailed."*

PPP leader Aitzaz Ahsan once refused to defend Dr Asim over corruption allegations but condemned his trial under Anti-Terrorism Act. However, despite instructions from Mr Zardari, that at least two PPP leaders must ensure their presence in the court whenever Asim would be produced, hardly any prominent leader except Senator Saeed Ghani visited him.

Dr Asim's reply was in "no" when asked about the Sindh government cooperation and support; he was pushed in that condition because of some of the top notch "friends" from the PPP, Mr Zardari not excluded.

Surprisingly, he was allowed to transfer his assets to his son's name, who was settled in Canada then, in the last week of February 2016 while a high profile case of corruption was underway. No one knew how much assets were transferred on the files he had signed for his son.

The JIT Report revealed Dr Asim owned properties, business, and kept over 36 companies abroad including UAE, Kuwait, the US, the UK, Oman, Qatar, besides allegedly taking kick-backs and commission. He was also accused of terror financing, money-laundering, and facilitating terrorists of the MQM and Lyari gangs.

Dr Asim disclosed about 207 **Cash Transactions Report** [CTRs] and one **Suspicious Transaction Report** [STR], raised by different banks and reported to **Financial Monitoring Unit** [FMU], according to the JIT.

Dr Asim has been accused of involvement in huge illegal lands allotment, which he ***was supposed to use for a charity trust and a cancer hospital: a plot of 2.8 acres in Clifton, one in KDA, and 1,347 sq yards in North Nazimabad.***

Although there was no mention of Asim's alleged link with Indian RAW, but the former adviser of the Sindh government disclosed before GEO's columnist that the first three questions, which the JIT asked Dr Asim were:

1. *Do you know the RAW chief and did you meet him in Delhi? I said no and never.*
2. *Do you also own a hospital in Bhopal? I said why should I have hospital in Bhopal?*
3. *Have you met the US ambassador to India during your visit to Delhi? I said no,"*

However, Dr Asim categorically denied he has ever been **"physically tortured"** and added that:

- *"No, I was not physically hurt and during the 90-days remand I was only interrogated for 17 days, from five minutes to six hours.*
-

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- *I was treated well and given a comfortable air-conditioned room, but faced tough questions during video recordings.*
- 
- *Most of the questions related to corruption, property, but they did ask about giving treatment to MQM and Lyari gang-war terrorists also.*
- 
- *They were four to five people during interrogation. JIT comprising representatives of ISI, MI, IB, Special Branch and two from Rangers."*

The fact remained that all the JIT members had unanimously declared him as ***'Jet Black' - meaning most dangerous category.***

As per JIT's findings, the accused disclosed positive indications about:

- .....involvement in harbouring / facilitating the target killers of the MQM and other banned organisations through providing medical facilities in his Ziauddin Hospital,
- 
- .....involvement in money laundering,
- 
- .....involvement in illegal appointments, promotions, recruitment, implementation of arbitrary decisions, illegal contracts in SSGC / PSO and others after receiving huge kickbacks,
- 
- .....involvement in illegal registration of medical college and misuse of funds in PMDC,
- 
- .....involvement in embezzlement of State Lands obtained in the name of CHARITY and getting the same in personal name.

Dr Asim was only once asked about his relation with Asif Ali Zardari:

*"I was once advised by a senior interrogator to name Asif and I will get the relief. I declined his offer on the pretext that there is nothing between us except close friendship."*

But, the JIT revealed in their write-up that:

*"....he [Dr Asim] has never actively participated in political activities but remained his supporter since his [Zardari's] school days. He was appointed federal minister in 2011-13, which provided him the*

*opportunity to expand his political influence as petroleum minister to undertake massive collaborative corruption for personal goals.*

*Yes, Asif is my old friend but he was not my classmate at Petaro. I was not there when he led the protest against the then principal. Dr Zulfiqar Mirza and Abbas Rizvi were closer to him. Asif quit Petaro in class VIII, but he [Dr Asim] joined later. After school I met Asif, after a very long time, in Karachi."*

The JIT revealed that on the instructions of Asif Zardari, Dr Zulfiqar Mirza, Qadir Patel and Muzzafar Tappi looked after issues of Lyari gangs and weapons supply. Accused Dr Asim also had good relations with top MQM leaders including Altaf Hussain, Dr Farooq Sattar, Nadeem Nusrat, Haider Abbas Rizvi, Waseem Akhtar and Mustafa Azizabadi.

Mazhar Abbas correctly opined that Dr Asim would defend his own cases from money laundering to facilitating terrorists, but the NAB and Rangers' prosecution got a huge task ahead to prove one of the biggest cases of corruption. ***How could a man from a middle class family become the 'richest man in the world'? How they would prove it?***

**On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** an Accountability Court [AC] indicted former federal minister Dr Asim Hussain, ex-Petroleum Secretary Ejaz Chaudhry and others in an over Rs:460 billion corruption reference.

Dr Asim, along with his accomplices, were charged for misusing his authority for getting plots allotted fraudulently and encroaching upon state land for expansion of Dr Ziauddin Hospital / Trust, money laundering, illegal gains, kickbacks, commission through fertiliser cartel for illegal curtailment of gas for exploitative price hike and defrauding people in the name of charity hospital.

The Court read out the charges against Dr Asim, Ejaz Chaudhry, former Chief Executive Officer [CEO] of the Karachi Dock Labour Board [KDLB] Safdar Hussain and former Director of the Karachi Development Authority [KDA] Syed Athar Hussain. However, they all pleaded not guilty and opted to contest the charges.

A terrorism case had already been lodged in North Nazimabad Police Station against Dr Asim in November 2015. Judge Saad Qureshi directed prosecution witnesses to record their evidence on 14<sup>th</sup> May onwards.

Abdul Hameed, group finance adviser and now administrator of Ziauddin Medical Centre, Dubai, and Masood Haider Jaffri, a former KDA director, were absconding. They had been accused of facilitating Dr Asim.

The National Accountability Bureau [NAB] had filed the reference against Dr Asim in February, alleging that the former petroleum minister had deprived the state of Rs:462.5bn between 2010 and 2013 — Rs:450bn through the fertiliser scam, Rs:9.5bn through land-grabbing fraud and Rs:3bn through money laundering.

According to the reference, Dr Asim approved summaries for unjustifiable and arbitrary gas curtailment in the name of load management. Ejaz Chaudhry allegedly facilitated the former minister by moving the summaries without considering rational approach.

The former Secretary Ch Ejaz, it was alleged, had also failed to implement a June 2011 decision of the Economic Coordination Committee [ECC] of the cabinet for providing 80 percent gas supply to fertiliser companies.

The NAB alleged that Safdar Hussain was involved in illegal extension and award of KDLB contract in violation of Public Procurement Regulatory Authority rules and facilitated Dr Asim to take over the KDLB hospital and misuse it for private practices and referral facility.

Safdar Hussain also allowed the former petroleum minister to use KDLB premises for nursing accommodation and after retirement he joined Ziauddin Hospital as General Manager human resources, it maintained.

NAB also alleged that the two former directors of the KDA had granted illegal lease of two acres KDA land in North Nazimabad and 2.8 acres in Clifton in favour of Dr Asim. The former minister had also illegally and fraudulently got more plots allotted for cancer hospital, medical university and other educational purposes.

The reference said Dr Asim got Dr Ziauddin Hospital Trust registered in 1981 and although the stated objective was charity, he never adhered to it and instead used it for commercial purposes in violation of the Trust Act, 1982. Dr Asim used the charity hospital as a vehicle of manipulation, money laundering, accumulation of wealth and assets, fraudulently got the land allotted for trust hospital and received grants from government / public functionaries.

The registration of the trust was also illegal as it was required to be enlisted with the Income Tax department [FBR] under section 42 of ITO 2002, it alleged.

**GAS FIELDS:** The NAB also filed another reference of over Rs:17bn against Dr Asim, Sui Southern Gas Company's MD Khalid Rehman and some former senior officials of the utility and the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited for allegedly misusing their authority and fraudulently awarding contracts of five gas fields to Jamshoro Joint Venture Limited.

Dr Asim Hussain, and other alleged corrupt officials, pleaded not guilty to the accusations. Secretary Petroleum Ch Ijaz was also present at the hearing. While responding to court's question, Dr Asim alleged that:

*'National Accountability Bureau [NAB] was submitting fake documents in the case against him. Islamabad High Court [IHC] has already concluded the case.'*

While talking to the media before the hearing, Dr Asim said that he was given 13 books by the NAB while 12 of those were about metre reading. He mocked the alleged fake case against him saying that the bureau would also make him face a bogus case for stealing someone's cattle.

The prosecution held that Dr Asim had misused his authority as a federal minister, in collusion of other accused; illegally curtailed gas to the agriculture sector to benefit a particular group linked with the fertilizer industry.

In February 2016, the Accountability Court, while hearing a corruption case against Dr Asim, had sent him to prison to seek the complete investigation report to reach a just conclusion.

**On 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016;** a video clip of Dr Asim emerged in which he had levelled serious allegations against PPP's Owais Muzaffar Tappi, accusing him of being involved in "**every kind of corruption**". It was probably filmed during the course of his interrogation. Dr Asim claimed that Owais Muzaffar was raised by PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari's mother. He added that:

*"Owais Muzaffar was involved everywhere where there was corruption. He was the Chief Minister of Sindh even when he wasn't.*

*..... that Owais Muzaffar was involved in corruption pertaining to lands and the purchase of medicines. A doctor told me a vaccine*

*cost Rs:600 and was purchased at Rs:1000; when I investigated the matter, it turned out that the doctor was right.”*

*....that he had brought the matter into the notice of President Zardari. When Owais Muzaffar came to know about this, he threatened me. He told me he would **'give me an injection'** that I would remember for a long time.”*

But Dr Asim could not get any relief and remained in NAB's custody being allegedly involved in corruption cases of Rs:462 billion amidst other charges.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016;** Sindh High Court [SHC] issued notice to prosecutor NAB over the plea regarding immediate hearing of Dr Asim corruption case. During the hearing of Dr Asim case pertaining to Rs:17 billion corruption, the defence lawyer said that his client was seriously ill therefore; his bail should be granted.

The court remarked that *'the bail cannot be approved without hearing the stance of NAB'*. The judge while accepting the plea to conduct immediate hearing of Dr Asim's case adjourned the proceedings.

## **Scenario 160**

### **KARACHI AFFAIRS IN 2015 - III**

#### **MQM CHIEF BANNED ON MEDIA:**

After 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 raid on MQM HQ in Karachi, its party Chief Altaf Hussain delivered a fiery speech against the Pakistan Rangers for their heavy handed operation. The Chief also extended threats to the Army Chief for dire consequences.

**On 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015**, Director General Inter-Services Public Relations [ISPR] Maj Gen Asim Bajwa told the media that earlier statements made by the MQM Chief regarding the Pakistan Army would be legally pursued.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015**; during his speech, Altaf Hussain called upon the army chief to take notice of the alleged violation of the army's code of conduct by DG Sindh Rangers and other officials and urged him to do justice in the matter. The MQM Chief had also accused Sindh Rangers of torturing and murdering party workers. While addressing a convention of party workers from London, he said:

*"Are Rangers a security force or a political party? Does the code of conduct of the armed forces allow the army, its paramilitary forces like Rangers, etc, to issue a charge-sheet against a political party?"*

*"We are not against the army; we are against the rotten eggs in the institution... Chief of the Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif should save Pakistan and throw out the rotten eggs who have embezzled billions of rupees like civilians."*

MQM Chief's speech was an apparent response to media reports quoting Rangers as saying that the paramilitary force was going to release a fact sheet about the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015 raid on MQM's Nine Zero HQ in Azizabad.

Mr Hussain roped in Rangers DG Maj Gen Bilal Akbar and his subordinates for **"committing atrocities against Mohajirs, and illegal arrests, torture and extrajudicial killings of MQM workers"**. Extending that no wanted person was arrested from the Nine Zero. Rangers had alleged that weapons stolen from NATO containers were recovered during the raid, but this was not mentioned in the FIRs registered against 26 MQM workers.

MQM Chief claimed that the weapons seized belonged to MQM's parliamentarians and were licensed and said that even Rangers had admitted that **"90 per cent of the weapons recovered from Nine Zero were legal"** but the paramilitary force had not returned the licensed weapons to the MQM parliamentarians.

MQM Chief Altaf Hussain also alleged that MQM worker Waqas Shah had been killed by Rangers but then placed it on shoulders of another MQM worker. Hussain added that:

*"The Rangers presented before media the picture of Nooruddin Subhani, a cook of the Khurshid Begum Secretariat, as a wanted terrorist and target killer arrested from Nine Zero on 11<sup>th</sup> March, but they silently released him without offering any apology when they came to know about him.*

*Various incidents of extrajudicial killings of MQM workers are here. It is because of his teachings that people are still demonstrating patience. **The city will turn into Somalia if I am no more.**"*

Altaf Hussain appealed to the army chief to take action against those who were committing injustices to innocent citizens. He accused Interior Minister Ch Nisar of **"supporting injustices against the people of Karachi"**.

Mr Hussain asked the K-Electric management to end the menace of load-shedding and improve the power distribution system in a day or two otherwise **"....shift your office from Karachi."**

Senior London based MQM leader Mohammad Anwar was also removed on that day from the party's coordination committee slot because of **"his deteriorating health"**. As per MQM press release, Mr Anwar was not taking interest in the party's affairs for quite some time as he had to visit doctors for his treatment frequently.

However, Federal Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan immediately lashed out at Altaf Hussain for his **"derogatory speech inciting hate and provoking violence"**, saying that no country could allow an expatriate to pass provocative remarks against its security forces and integrity; also labelled his remarks as **"unacceptable and intolerable"**. In response to Ch Nisar's remarks, the MQM held a protest outside the Karachi Press Club.

**On 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** tens of First Information Reports [FIRs] in the police stations at various places of the country, the Sindh province registered the most, against Altaf Hussain for remarks made by him against the Chief of Rangers in Sindh and the paramilitary force in his speeches.

Altaf Hussain was also accused of involvement in cases of criminal conspiracy, waging or attempting or abetting the waging of war against Pakistan

and committing acts of terrorism. The government had regarded the same as ***inflammatory remarks against the military.***

At some places in interior Sindh, there were gatherings of local people shouting against the MQM Chief expressing that he had not only hurt the sentiments of patriotic Pakistanis but spoke against the armed forces of Pakistan, too. Some stated that through his speeches from London, Hussain was spreading hatred against the military and wanted to destabilise the country under a conspiracy. Badin Police told that the people demanded a complete ban on MQM for its alleged anti-state activities and the party chief's immediate arrest.

One FIR [218/2015] was registered in Badin, two more FIRs 167/2015 and 168/2015 were registered in Dadu, at least three FIRs were registered in Jacobabad, one FIR in Faiz Gunj Khairpur [137/2015], one FIR [197/2015] at Mirwah, in Larkana FIR no: 64/2015; one FIR registered at Golra PS in Islamabad also contained name of Farooq Sattar whereas most were only against Altaf Hussain. Some FIRs were registered in Kohat and Hangu areas of Khyber PK, too.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** the London based MQM supremo Altaf Hussain addressing an annual convention of the party:

***".....demanded separate province for Mohajirs.***

***.....asked the party workers to stage protest demonstrations before the UN, White House and NATO Headquarters and asked them to send NATO troops to Karachi.***

***.....characterised India as a coward country saying had it some honour it would not have let further bloodshed of Mohajirs on Pakistani soil.***

***.....made disparaging remarks about the Army and security institutions."***

Earlier, the MQM Secretariat in London also sent a letter to the UN Secretary General alleging that its workers were being maltreated during the security operation being conducted in Karachi and law enforcement agencies were unlawfully detaining their workers.

It particularly mentioned the raid on MQM HQ on the night of **17<sup>th</sup> June 2015** and the arrest of a member of the *Rabita Committee* at Karachi. But

this was not the first time that Altaf Hussain had indulged in demeaning the state institutions, security establishment and the Rangers. He had been committing such indiscretions in the past and raising accusing fingers at them whenever criminals, target killers and extortionists having connection with the MQM were arrested or raids conducted to apprehend them.

The intensity, however, become more distinct and more frequent since the initiation of the targeted operation in Karachi, especially after the JIT report on Baldia Town fire incident, the revelations made by the criminals arrested from and around Nine Zero by the Rangers, recovery of unlicensed weapons from the Nine Zero and the confessions made by Saulat Mirza.

Though Altaf Hussain has been showing reaction in the same manner after each raid by the Rangers in Karachi, but this time, however, he had not restricted himself to castigating the institution of Army and the Rangers but had also sought military intervention by NATO forces in Karachi and taunted India for not protecting the Mohajirs in Pakistan.

Whichever way one could go through the contents of his speech, the unmistakable inference drawn from it was that it had exposed the sinister designs of Altaf Hussain for the creation of a separate province for Mohajirs, a permeating perception among the people and security establishment of Pakistan since the inception of the MQM, strengthened and reinforced by the culture of the militancy promoted by the party.

Legal minds in Pakistan had the opinion that Altaf Hussain's invitation for intervention by foreign forces in Pakistan and expecting India to protect *Mohajirs* was a clear manifestation to treason against the country.

The federal Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali had remarked ***that it was a declaration of war against the country*** and that Altaf had crossed all the limits. Almost all the political forces in the country severely condemned Altaf's outburst against the state institutions and his act of treason and demanded appropriate action against him under the law of the land.

MQM as a political entity always kept its political right to participate in the mainstream national politics; always remained an irrefutable reality and no person in his right mind could think of depriving it. The interior minister had also said that the party was a patriotic political outfit and loyalty of the supporters of the MQM to Pakistan was beyond any reproach. However, the MQM Chief and his London Secretariat was known for their anti-Pakistan stance and their immortal love for India.

The political analysts mostly believed that even the members of the *Rabita Committee* in Pakistan were not aware of the real agenda and motives of Altaf Hussain's associates at London. It was definitely a conspiracy to harm Pakistan, allegedly hatched by Altaf Hussain himself who has been using the ethnic card effectively and used the Urdu speaking community in furthering his anti-Pakistan designs – becoming allegedly a saleable commodity in the hands of RAW, MI6 and CIA.

Altaf Hussain had created a vortex of storms around him and his party, for which none else but only Altaf Hussain himself was responsible. Through that outburst, he indeed pushed the MQM into a blind alley from where it would find very difficult to emerge unscathed.

Altaf Hussain had probably left no avenue open for retracting from his indiscretions like in the past. It forced the MQM sympathisers to revisit the contours of party's political creed; to come out of the denial mode regarding its patronage of militants and criminals involved in target killings, extortion and acts of terrorism.

Even the Supreme Court in its decisions had held MQM as well as PPP and the ANP responsible for heinous crimes, due to a turf war between them. The party cadres instead of blindly following the confrontational politics and anti-Pakistan stance of Altaf Hussain started giving a serious thought to getting rid of the leaders who harboured sinister designs against Pakistan – astonishingly having its vote-bank in Karachi.

The targeted operation in Karachi was being carried out indiscriminately by the Rangers only against the criminals irrespective of their political affiliations and not against a particular party as Altaf Hussain and his companions were desperately trying to portray.

The Rangers were taking action against the criminals belonging to PPP, ANP, *Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat* and others as well. It is pertinent to point out here that Rangers were called to undertake the targeted operation against criminal elements with the concurrence of all the political parties, including MQM in September 2013 – named as National Action Plan.

The PPP had also expressed resentment over Rangers raids on Civic Centre and the Karachi Building Authority which prompted Zardari to vent his frustration through an outburst against the Pak-Army and its chief.

However, sanity soon returned and Zardari had no other option than to retract. Soon the tension between the Rangers and Sindh government was

defused and Rangers were given tacit approval for go ahead. The above and more events like that forced the government to take action.

**MPA JAVED NAGORI ATTACKED:**

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015;** Member Sindh Assembly and Minister for *Kutchi Abadis* Javed Nagori escaped late night assassination attempt in Karachi's Lyari neighbourhood. Nagori was travelling through his native Lyari when his convoy came under a grenade and gun attack by unidentified assailants.

Nagori's brother, Akbar Nagori, who had been injured in the attack, succumbed to his injuries in hospital. Two police officers who were assigned to the minister's security detail along with four others were injured in the attack. PPP's minister had successfully escaped the attack in which multiple shots were fired at his car. Initially unhurt, the minister got injured when his car suffered an accident following the attack.

*"The minister [Javed Nagori] was meeting people at his office at that time. Suddenly, two men on a motorcycle hurled a hand grenade at the office and sped off."*

The facts behind the incident were that Javed Nagori, Sania Naz and Shahjahan Baloch were given their parliamentarian tickets by Uzair Baloch, the Chief of the banned PAC. After the Rangers plus police operation, Shahjahan and Naz continued to support Uzair, but Nagori, being a diehard worker of the PPP, openly started opposing him. DSP Murtaza Mirani while speaking to the media told:

*"Minister Nagori was asked by the Uzair Baloch group not to participate in the October 18th PPP rally. He, however, played a vital role in the organisation of the latest PPP rally held in Kakri Ground."*

*The Baba Ladla group could also be behind the incident as Nagori was a rival of Nabil Gabol, the former PPP MNA from Lyari."*

*Javed Nagori and another PPP MPA, Sania Naz, have been on the hit list of criminal groups. Naz has also escaped several attempts on her life, orchestrated by the Baba Ladla group."*

**LOCAL GOVT ELECTIONS 2015:**

**On 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** the Election Commission of Pakistan [ECP] further delayed the Local Bodies Elections in Sindh and Punjab on the pre-text of **'law and order situation – no good'**. Thus it once more refuted orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The Supreme Court [SC] had ordered the ECP to hold LB polls in Punjab and Sindh by 26<sup>th</sup> September 2015; the two provinces citing security concerns and the upcoming month of Muharram sounded to be not ready to hold the polls even in November. The ECP had failed to issue the schedule for LB polls in Punjab till 28<sup>th</sup> July that year as per scheme they had promised before the apex court.

The Commission under Chief Election Commissioner [CEC] Justice (rtd) Sardar Raza Khan held a meeting with Chief Secretaries Punjab and Sindh to get their opinion in order to satisfy the apex court. Both Punjab and Sindh had earlier argued that the polls would not be held till 26<sup>th</sup> September due to the engagement of civil administration in relief and rehabilitation of flood victims.

In the ECP's meeting, Chief Secretary Sindh and Secretary Local Government Punjab came up with a new excuse to further delay the polls citing gruesome law and order situation in general and particularly in Muharram. The ECP was informed that the Hajj season was another reason for delaying the polls coupled with engagement of staff in relief activities. During the meeting, it was also pointed out that almost all official buildings including schools and hospitals were occupied by the flood affected people and could not be used as polling stations.

The Commission was also informed that more than 100 appeals had been filed in Punjab and Sindh High Courts regarding delimitations of constituencies which needed to be disposed of before the issuance of election schedule in both the provinces. The provinces also highlighted the risks in case the polls schedule was hurriedly announced arguing corrections, insertions and deletion in the Electoral Rolls could not be made immediately.

A brief statement issued by ECP, quoting the administration of Punjab and Sindh, said that training of a huge number of staff and printing of electoral rolls would need a plenty of time for which further time would be required.

The Supreme Court had already rejected the revised schedule for LB polls in Punjab and Sindh giving stern directions to ECP to hold the exercise at the earliest but the ECP passed the buck to provinces complaining before

the court that it could not hold the polls in the absence of prescribed rules that were to be formulated by Punjab and Sindh.

All such gimmicks were being played in the Sindh and Punjab provinces only because the ECP was comprised of their own stooge, irresponsible and corrupt retired judges who could see that the two provinces had not held the LB polls earlier through the whole PPP's tenure during 2008-13 and PML[N]'s 2013-15. The two provincial governments, of Shahbaz Sharif in Punjab and of Qaim Ali Shah in Sindh were ruling their provinces like 'emperors' through the corrupt bureaucrat officers raised on their teams.

The fact remained that if the roots of Karachi's woes were political, so were the keys to its success; sustainable peace in Karachi required political reform, capacity building of law enforcement agencies, and good governance.

An elected, legitimate, and ***empowered municipal government*** was an essential part of the political resolution to Karachi's systemic challenges. The Sindh provincial government led by the PPP had pushed continuous delay in municipal polls. Without a government of its own, the city of Karachi remained a political orphan—a mega-city ultimately spoiled by an incompetent chief minister, Mr Shah.

Local government elections could provide incentive for the MQM's non-militant leaders to step up and pull the party away from violence but the PPP's own interests prevailed. Karachi was no easy terrain to operate in. Hundreds of Karachi's police officers were killed in the line of duty in those years; many of them were individually targeted by the MQM, out of retribution for previous operations.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2015;** the first phase of local government elections in Sindh and Punjab was the much awaited and essential next step in the process of the democratisation of Pakistan. That election took a long time coming, with the provincial governments in Karachi and Lahore did everything within their power to delay that basic grass-roots exercise - their reluctance was an admission of their shaking confidence in democracy; their parties were the show pieces only.

The change must come and this was precisely why the LG election in the two biggest provinces of the country was something to be celebrated. There had been violence and there were well founded allegations that the provincial governments were trying to drastically influence the polls.

Eyebrows were also raised because of the participation of some people who didn't have immaculate reputations. Clannish tendencies were seen and

money remained a huge factor; many of the less resourceful souls were seen complaining about how their campaign was overwhelmed by the sheer weight and glare of [ill-gotten] money.

There were issues where minorities and other marginalised groups such as women were denied due space to promote their aspirations and candidacy and prevented from playing an active role in running and improving the system of governance at the basic level. There were reports indicating that some work was needed to make the voting lists more comprehensive and error-free. There were challenges, complaints, accusations, systematic weaknesses, social fetishes and more.

Yet there was also an air of expectancy about these polls. The fact was that the LG exercise brought out popular ambition and that, with all its drawbacks, local politics engaged the common man in a visible spectrum. The local grass-roots ambition needed to be nurtured to boost the effort to install real, transparent, basic-level people's rule – it was a tough battle any way. The people aspired that it should be an irreversible process.

At last elections held. The Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz PML[N] and the Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP] emerged as the leading political groups in Punjab and Sindh respectively after results for elections to local bodies were compiled. The PML[N] had taken as many as 532 seats out of a total of 2,696 in Punjab; the Tehreek e Insaf [PTI] was a distant second with about 180 seats.

In Sindh, the PPP bagged 564 seats out of a total of 1,072 while the Muslim League-Functional [PML-F] got 50 seats. Voters tried to make the most of a much awaited opportunity to elect their representatives at the grassroots.

Although polling in most areas was by and large peaceful, Khairpur of Sindh saw deadly violence when supporters of PPP and PML[F] fought a gun battle which claimed 11 lives.

Talking about the process; the 18th Amendment was the greatest devolution of power from the centre to the provinces in the country's history. So many ministries devolved, such quantum of resources transferred, it was epic - big ministries devolved to the provinces were Health, Education, Labour, population welfare, women development, youth affairs and special initiatives. Most people probably only realised about the provincial Higher Education Commission [HEC] when Dr Asim Hussain was arrested.

Local Govt elections; were the biggest ever electoral exercise in Punjab and Sindh in October 2015; Balochistan had them a year ago and the Khyber KP

in May 2015. The best case scenario, more democracy was on the way; might be a new class of politicians would rise to challenge the status quo. But the fact remains that systems respond to the incentives that helped create them — and that unintended consequences were rare.

One could recall that the guiding spirit behind 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment was three-fold and inter - connected: centralising power in the provinces; reversing or at least stopping the centre's expansion; and making military coups improbable. ***The 18th Amendment was not aimed at good governance*** — so it produced little impacts on the governance side. With the Charter of Democracy [still] in place between PPP and the PML[N], the real goal was to clean up the Constitution; making it un-usable by the military.

Ostensibly, by transferring mega resources to the provinces, stripping away sundry ministries from the centre and creating five nearly equal power centres; the four provinces and the capital; future army dictators were left to think twice before moving 111 Brigade towards Islamabad. ***The politicians had not done so being sincere with the nation*** — they did so because they knew tricks of leveraging power at the provincial levels best; thus they got it concentrated there.

That was why some media anchors raised voices that the said local polls would no more work for good governance because the politicians had already achieved what they thought it could.

The 18th Amendment exposed the big politicians of PPP & PML[N & Q] even more. Look at Sindh, for instance, where the PPP has been ruling for eight years, enormous problems cropped up due to bad governance, but they could not blame Islamabad - the PPP could not even argue that it struggled to deliver because practically they had carved a cut out.

In Punjab, the desperation by CM Shahbaz Sharif to control electricity could point out the havoc they collectively played through that amendment.

Referring to Cyril Almeida in the '***Dawn***' of **31<sup>st</sup> October 2015**:

*"Now, all of us will have local governments — **the reason is not governance**. Worse, we will have local governments because of the courts, not the public. Post-18th, the continuing decline of service delivery had created the possibility of public pressure on the political class.*

*....something never seen before: the gradual build-up of pressure at the grass roots to improve things - exactly the benefit of democratic continuity. Keep the system going, people start asking uncomfortable things, politicians will have to learn to adapt."*

Political parties themselves opted for a squeeze: they aggregated everything to themselves in the provinces, but then weren't able to turn around the provinces, making for an eventually restless public. Funds had already been consumed by the sitting CMs so if the local government system went confusing then who would be blamed. Some months would go for teething or structural problems? If structural problems, then was it just oversight or deliberate sabotage by the politicians to bring 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment?

Coming days' history was going to clarify these questions. Had the courts not intervened to force LG elections, anger at the 18th Amendment scheme of things could have led to real pressure for central change.

### **MQM's FAISAL SABZWARI LOST:**

MQM's parliamentarian and senior leader Faisal Subzwari's sudden departure from the political scene stirred speculation whether the MQM's 'golden boy' had followed the footsteps of former leaders and left the party.

Subzwari had gone abroad with his wife and children, most likely to the United States; yes many were sure. He left Karachi towards the ending July 2015 telling the workers that he was abroad on vacation and would return within three weeks.

However, the insiders believed that Subzwari would not come back soon. In fact, the departure of so important legislator came at a time when rumours of a '**new MQM in the making**' were out; plans were backed by former leaders, Mustafa Kamal and Anis Qaimkhani etc.

**A new MQM:** Party chief Altaf Hussain, in his address, himself told that conspiracies were afoot in Islamabad to form a new MQM. Lashing out at some party leaders, he had also said that Rabita Committee members had left the country when the party needed them most, and were enjoying their lives abroad. However, the MQM Secretariat told that Faisal had informed the party before leaving in accordance with party rules. He was scheduled to return after a month but could not till mid 2016.

Subzwari had developed differences with the MQM in March 2015, when Altaf Hussain ordered him to resign from his seat from the assembly for not being present during his tele-address. Subzwari left his last message on Twitter on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015 – it was an Eid greeting, surprisingly coinciding with Mustafa Kamal's last twitter message – also an Eid greeting.

MQM party and Altaf Hussain had also seen the absence of another vocal leader, Haider Abbas Rizvi; who was keeping a low profile to avoid being implicated by law enforcement agencies' in cases of sectarian killings.

It was not the first time that leaders had distanced themselves from the MQM's high leadership. After the 2013 general elections, when the then Rabita Committee and Karachi *Tanzeemi Committee* were suddenly dissolved by Altaf Hussain, several party leaders had initially sidelined themselves and some finally left.

In August 2013, *Karachi's former mayor and Senator Mustafa Kamal* quietly left the country, moving first to Tanzania and then settling in Dubai, informing party leaders through emails that he had left because of his wives' illness and personal problems.

Days later, a close aide of Kamal and another senior leader and former Rabita Committee's deputy convener, Anis Qaimkhani followed Kamal's footsteps to be in Dubai. He had left the party and the country after Altaf criticised and rebuked him over Kamal's departure.

Over the period of time, former minister of IT, Raza Haroon, also distanced himself from party politics and apparently got settled in UK. He initially worked in MQM's International Secretariat in London but gradually went inactive – finally left the party to join Mustafa Kamal's ***Pak Sarzameen Party*** [PSP] in 2016.

Waseem Aftab, an in-charge of the Karachi *Tanzeemi Committee* [KTC] and later elevated to become member of the *Rabita Committee*, also disappeared from party politics after the general elections of May 2013.

Another KTC in charge, Hammad Siddiqui, fled to Dubai in May 2013, with the party terminating his membership. Siddiqui was wanted in cases of land grabbing, china cutting, and an attack on Sindh activists – later, in 2016, was arrested in Baldia Town Inferno case.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015**, the Lahore High Court sought record of Altaf Hussain's speeches in the near past taking the matter seriously.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015**; the Chief of the Army Staff [COAS], Gen Raheel Sharif, and PM Nawaz Sharif during a meeting at the PM House agreed that the Karachi operation would continue irrespective of any political expediency. The meeting was viewed as significant in the backdrop of developments with regard to the then on-going Operation **Zarb e Azb** to eliminate terrorism and heinous crimes.

Army Chief's that meeting lasted about three hours and covered several areas of national security. It was agreed that there would be no let-up in the operation in any part of the country including Karachi. No pressure would be accepted in this regard, it was decided.

Discussing the operation in Karachi, the two giants agreed that courts would decide the cases regardless of their background, political or otherwise. Implementation of the National Action Plan [NAP] in Punjab with special reference to the assassination of Punjab Home Minister Col [rtd] Shuja Khanzada was given a serious consideration in that meeting. The Punjab Rangers had already initiated action in that regard.

The PM and the COAS noticed that the *modus operandi* of sectarian outfits operating in Punjab was different from the Taliban; hence, a different approach had to be coined to deal with them. Those days were important in the turning history of Pakistan because of the 'guided' visits of US National Security Adviser [NSA]'s Dr Susan Rice and another US expert on South Asian Affairs Dr Peter Lavoy to Pakistan and their *policy* meetings with the high-ups here.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015**; the Lahore High Court [LHC] directed the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority [PEMRA] to implement ban on the broadcast of images and speeches of MQM Chief Altaf Hussain across all electronic and print media till further orders. A three-judge LHC bench headed by Justice Syed Mazhar Akbar Naqvi and comprising Justice Mazhar Iqbal Sidhu and Justice Erum Sajjad Gull was hearing separate cases initiated by Advocate Aftab Virk, Abdullah Malik and others against the MQM leader.

PEMRA had told the court that the print media did not fall under the jurisdiction of the regulatory body; therefore, the Additional Attorney General Naseer Ahmed Bhutta was directed to ensure implementation of the ban in the print media by conveying the court's order to the Chairman Press Council of Pakistan. Ordering a complete ban on the broadcast of images and speeches of the MQM Chief till the court announced its final verdict on treason allegations against Mr Hussain.

One other petition filed by advocates Abdullah Malik and others, called for a lifetime ban on the live telecast of Altaf Hussain's speeches, maintaining the MQM leader was in violation of Article 5 which asks for showing loyalty to the state and obedience to the constitution - thus a case of treason should be registered against Altaf Hussain under Article 6 of the Constitution including disqualification of his party's parliamentarians.

Subsequently the bench directed Additional Attorney General Naseer Ahmed Bhutta to ensure implementation of the ban in the print media by conveying the court's order to the Chairman Press Council of Pakistan.

The petitioners had argued that ***Altaf Hussain was a British national and no foreign citizen could head a political party in Pakistan under the Political Parties Act.*** He had no right to deliver speeches on television channels in Pakistan, the petitioners held.

However; it was on record that PEMRA had already banned the live telecast of Altaf Hussain's speeches since a week back. The petitioners argued that the MQM chief, by making speeches against the armed forces and Rangers, tried to ridicule the whole nation in the eyes of international community.

The MQM immediately announced that the party would stage a protest against the LHC order banning the broadcast of images and speeches of MQM chief Altaf Hussain in all electronic and print media – and they did. In a meeting held after the announcement of the court's directives, MQM's *Rabita Committee* pondered over the situation and decided to stage a protest outside Karachi Press Club the same day. The MQM also held an emergency press conference at the Press Club after the protest.

The reaction from the MQM appeared the very next day.

**On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** a Geo satellite van came under fire along the Shaheed e Millat Road. Three armed motorcyclists opened fire on the vehicle, pumping bullets into the bodies of the driver and the satellite engineer accompanying him. The engineer identified as Arshad Ali Jaffery, later died while under treatment in hospital; the driver had luckily survived.

Next day after the shooting at the Geo van, senior journalist Aftab Alam was shot dead outside his home in North Karachi once again by unknown terrorists.

Pakistan had been declared the most dangerous country for journalists by international watchdog bodies during 2008-15 and the things were not

changing. It was unclear who was carrying out those attacks and why. The question, however, was if the media could survive an open war apparently being conducted against it. The purpose was hidden but desire remained clear to strike fear amongst the media personnel perhaps to push them into silence which was totally un-professional and never possible.

Significantly, despite the then ongoing large-scale operation in Karachi, security forces were unable to either protect media personnel or apprehend those carrying out the attacks. The situation needed to be dealt with on an urgent basis but no progress seen except tall claims on all sides. The massive intelligence network had all apparently failed. The media, of course, never had the capacity to defend itself against armed killers. Media professionals were especially vulnerable to gunmen or other assailants.

The two attacks on two consecutive days were no coincidence; were clearly thought out and planned – but not be discovered that who was responsible. Media owners or media channels could not pressurise the government to protect their workers and in turn prevent the citizens of Pakistan from being denied access to knowledge, information and news being their basic constitutional right by all means.

### ***MURDERS DROPPED IN KARACHI [2015]:***

Referring to ***'the News' dated 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015;*** the MQM released a list of 46 members who were allegedly killed by the Rangers in Karachi; first time a political party had accused the force of a ***'campaign of extra-judicial killings'***. The list was handed over to the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, racking up pressure on him to make the force, and the military more accountable – thus liable.

The MQM had also accused the military of illegally detaining their members but without any details. Neither the Rangers nor the armed forces responded to requests for comment on the list knowingly that Karachi operation was launched in late 2013 to tackle soaring crime rates and on repeated demands of the general populace; more from MQM and the ANP.

Police spokesman Qamar Zaib Satti told the media that some cases of alleged extrajudicial killings were being investigated by a directorate set up by the Supreme Court. Federal Information Minister Pervez Rashid also denied if the MQM was being singled out and said that:

*"...the Karachi Operation is only targeting criminals and not any particular party. The prime minister has formed a grievances redress committee to tackle the MQM's concerns. Their reservations are of political nature and they will be addressed politically."*

While Karachi murder rates had dropped sharply and many local businesses welcomed the Rangers operation, allegations of brutal and illegal methods were mostly ignored because of impotent judicial system in Pakistan. The federal government also knew it that only the most wanted criminals of *bhatta* mafia and serial killers were being killed in 'police encounters' as they were never afraid of the courts – never punished.

Not a single person from all 46 cases was justified as innocent by the MQM whereas the police and Rangers had full details of their involvements in loots, arson, snatchings and killings. When senior MQM leader Nadeem Nusrat was asked about the past record of his listed members, he had no record of any.

The UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances referred 35 cases of illegal abductions of MQM workers to the government in May and 20 in August, concluding a "*pattern of specific targeting*" of the political workers. However, for their part, law enforcement agencies and many Karachiites accused the MQM of racketeering, abduction, torture and murder of opponents and holding the city to ransom by calling mass strikes at will.

The MQM denied the charges and said it was being victimised; aimed to weaken the MQM to free space for some other party, more sympathetic perhaps. Despite the accusations, the Rangers had plenty of support in Karachi. For months, PM Nawaz Sharif himself praised the crackdown. A major textile business owner said: **"I say give Karachi to Rangers for 100 years at least - then we can sleep easy."**

The reality was that the federal or the provincial government did not own the Karachi operation and Zardari developed differences with Bilawal also over the action against MQM. The PPP feared becoming the next target after the MQM because the army had take action against every criminal.

The truth remained that the Karachi operation was being carried out with the support of the Centre and the Sindh government was being informed about the details only when required. The army chief's fears were seemingly correct that **'the destabilisation was under a planned effort, meaning that something was going to happen'**.

Gen Raheel Sharif's statement might have been aimed at India because no party could work against national security without external help - evidences of linkages of the MQM with India were cropping up.

In fact, the army was carrying out the operation in Karachi on the basis of intelligence information but the political parties had political objectives. That was the reason the PPP had not owned the operation though it was started with the approval of both MQM and the PPP in government; rather **CM Qaim Ali Shah was officially made the 'captain' of the team.**

Till ending 2015, Sindh continued to be an arena of fight, with the Sindh government confronting both the federal government and the paramilitary Rangers, apparently overriding the objections of the province. As a result, a politico-constitutional crisis continued brewing that jeopardised the democratic dispensation in Sindh and beyond. Interestingly, all three contenders were justifying their respective stance on legal and constitutional grounds.

The Rangers claimed 'absolute powers' under the Anti-Terrorist Act [ATA] to arrest 'any person', including a public servant, who was suspected of involvement in offences related with terrorism. However, the **'assumed absolute powers'** were subject to due process of the law under Article 10-A of the Constitution.

Further, the Rangers' quest as an anti-terrorism agency to go against those who were prima facie involved in terrorism-related 'corrupt practices', could lead to double jeopardy for detainees. Dr Asim Hussain was grilled first by the Rangers under the ATA and then NAB authorities were investigating corruption charges against him.

Sindh government claimed that under Article 147 of the Constitution, it could make the requisition of federal agencies' services to certain conditions of an administrative nature. It could not override a statutory provision for the Rangers to discharge a duty. For instance, the provincial government cannot ask a police officer to seek permission before arresting a public servant if he has committed a 'cognisable' offence under the Code of Criminal Procedure [CrPC]. The Rangers were given policing powers in Sindh – so the CrPC was the domain of the Rangers too.

Federal government claimed under Article 148(3) of the Constitution, that it could directly appoint the Rangers in a province to exercise policing powers and perhaps ***the legal position is that 'the Rangers can otherwise act as an appendage to provincial police or administration.'***

[But a plain reading of Article 148 may not support this interpretation, as the article is rather declaratory in nature:

*148(1): Federal laws must be complied with by a provincial government in exercise of its executive powers;*

*148(2): the federal executive authority is to be exercised in a province in the interests of that province;*

*148(3): the federation is bound to protect the provinces from external aggression and internal disturbances and to ensure that provincial governments are run in accordance with the Constitution.]*

Thus, the said provision gives no explicit or implicit authority to the federal government under Article 148 to practically assume the policing power of a province through its forces (the Rangers) at their own. However, if conditions so arise, the centre may impose emergency or governor's rule in a province under Article 232 and 234.

Shahab Usto in daily '**Dawn dated 28<sup>th</sup> Dec 2015**' summarised it as:

*".....thus in Sindh (of those days), all three contenders were stretching constitutional and legal provisions to the lengths of their respective political and institutional interests.*

*The need was of complementary and coordinated efforts to ensure peace and continuance of a constitutional order in Sindh. Instead of scoring points against each other, a dispassionate but deeper appreciation was required to understand the rationale behind the divergent views of the provincial government and the Rangers."*

The Rangers' demand for more rational powers was justified on operational grounds. But, the provincial government could also be taken as justified in demanding a minimum threshold [permission] for arresting its functionaries in order to protect their fundamental rights.

**[The intelligentsia were astray with the logic of 'Fundamental Rights' for some 'beloved functionaries' of the Sindh government whereas the same Sindh government were not bothering, since EIGHT years, about providing drinking water, garbage removal, sewerage administration, local bodies elections, giving charge of the city to the**

***elected Mayor, mega corruption through China Cutting and Land mafias etc – for 22 million people - where the fundamental and constitutional rights were taken care of.***

Hence, the issue was not strictly legal or constitutional; it was related to operational formulations. The viable solution could be to let Rangers act freely against private terrorists and political opponents, leaving the corruption and terrorism tainted public servants and 'acceptable' politicians to take refuge in the CM House Karachi.

It was, however, obligatory on the provincial government to overhaul its anti-corruption agency, making it truly independent and effective to stamp out malpractices that feed into terrorism – statistics speak that not a single case during eight years' PPP rule till then appeared to be concluded. That was why the federal agencies like FIA & NAB continued to intrude into domains of the PPP and CM Qaim Ali Shah.

It was also a truth that the general populace praised the Rangers' policy and actions keeping in view their performance in Karachi – a shame for the provincial government in the field of crime control.

*During the year 2015; Pakistan Rangers Sindh arrested at least 4,074 suspected criminals during 2,410 raids and operations. Out of the 4,074 arrested, 2,198 were formally handed over to police for persecution – which included 887 terrorists, 268 target killers, 97 extortionists and 49 kidnapers; the official record of the Rangers also kept more details.*

*During the raids in 2015, at least 12 Rangers personnel were killed while 20 were injured through a total of 69 encounters with 'criminals' – while the paramilitary force killed 152 'hardened criminals' and 'terrorists' in those events.*

*During 2015, the Rangers held that at least 2,765 weapons including machine guns, light machine guns, sub-machine guns, rocket launchers, detonators, avan bombs and explosives were recovered; 1,92,944 rounds of ammunition of different calibre were also taken into custody. About 18 abducted individuals were got released during the year due to efforts of paramilitary force personnel.*

Assisting the police in Karachi since 1989, when the Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP] government was in saddles in Islamabad, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto had called in the Rangers and the Frontier Constabulary to curb rising political violence in the metropolis. However, in the third stint of the

PPP rule under President Zardari, the paramilitary forces were given limited policing powers though increasing number of killings on sectarian, political and ethnic grounds were noticed in Karachi.

**NAP IMPLEMENTATION:**

**On 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** admitting slow progress in some key areas of the **National Action Plan** [NAP] against terrorism, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif ordered swift legislation to purge the country of illegal weapons. He told his cabinet colleagues during the apex committee's meeting held at his office:

*"I want the whole country to be de-weaponised; the interior division will formulate a draft policy for de-weaponisation of the country.*

***There is no room for sectarianism in Pakistan.** Such organisations will not be allowed to work in the country. The government has started taking action against them."*

The premier's saying was quoted in the minutes of the cabinet meeting. All the relevant ministries and divisions were asked to suggest appropriate amendments in the laws for NAP's effective implementation, he ordered.

Poor execution of nine of the 20 areas of NAP had irked the prime minister, who directed Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan to take these points seriously. Listing the nine weak points were:

- *a lot was needed to be done as regards **madrassas**, its financial audit and curriculum*
- *the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority [PEMRA]; formulation of sanctions over terror news flashes.*
- ***terrorist financing**; sources, ways to block money laundering, checks on **drug transportation** and its stocking, checks for **weapon smuggling** and selling*
- *reforms in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas [FATA]; roads, schooling, employments, safe travelling etc – more to **include the FATA in regularised provincial administration.***
- ***Afghan refugees**; their up to date listing and information, ways to send them back to Afghanistan.*

- **Making new laws** and amendments; regarding madrassas, FA-TA area development etc
- the National Counter-Terrorism Authority [**NACTA**]; to make the department active through various administrative measures.
- **religious persecution**; measures that it could not be mis-used.
- **Sectarianism**; ways and methods to eliminate the curse, effective policing etc.

The cabinet expressed satisfaction over progress in the remaining areas of the NAP: subscriber identity modules, executions, armed militias, speedy trial courts, hate speech, the Karachi operation, counter-terrorism forces, militancy in Punjab, glorification of terrorists, proscribed organisations and Balochistan.

Terming the Karachi operation a key part of the NAP, PM Nawaz urged the MQM to try to resolve their issues on the floor of the house instead of resigning from the assemblies. Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, who was a member of the parliamentary committee that had formulated the 20 points of the action plan, said:

***"The glass is half full, as far as the national resolve to curb, contain and crush terrorism is concerned."***

For this campaign to reach its logical conclusion, Mushahid listed three vital factors:

- *civil-military harmony is indispensable,*
- *the NAP should be a one-window operation run by an anti-terror tsar, and*
- *public opinion should be mobilised through a counter-narrative via the media.*

Senator Mushahid Syed added that:

***"We should realise as a nation that it's now or never, and we can't allow any compulsions or constraints in this campaign. For too long our country has been hostage to self-imposed compulsions.***

*Now the people are feeling a change for the better, and this factor is spawning cautious 'can-do' optimism that the country can reverse the wrongs of the past and move forward with clarity, cohesion and noble commitment."*

All politicians had shown consensus that the military was playing a proactive role in executing the NAP. Listing various reasons of slow progress of the NAP, they agreed:

*"As far as the first key point of de-radicalisation goes, un-addressed seminaries' reforms are needed. A separate department cell of the police has yet to be established to tackle sectarian violence. Major amendments in the criminal justice system have yet to be made; and that NACTA has yet to be strengthened."*

A cogent suggestion was that the federal government needed to alert the provinces with louder instructions for executing the plan more aggressively. Moreover, need for scrutiny of hundreds of thousands of arms licences issued in the past years was welcomed.

***"This remains one of the main causes behind free flow of weapons that fuels violence across the country."***

On *madrassa* reforms, a joint board of ministries of the interior, religious affairs and education should have taken up the issue. *"Lack of coordination between the government and madrassas' representatives remains a major stumbling block to resolve this core issue since 2005,"* some one had quoted.

However, the orders of the prime minister were sucked in the air – ***no action seen on any item till a year at least.***

### **SINDH PPP vs RANGERS & ARMY:**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> December 2015:** Pakistan's Federal Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan told the media at Punjab House that Sindh government must not be under any illusion; Karachi operation was being made controversial for one individual; warned of releasing videos of Dr Asim if allegations did not stop; the federation mulled over other options - the federal government would not leave the Rangers alone.

Fact remained that the Rangers as an institution was being ridiculed. The gangsters wanted the paramilitary force to leave Karachi; the Sindh government was damaging the Karachi operation, making it controversial

amounting to undermine the services of the Rangers in ensuring peace in the metropolis.

In fact the Sindh government had turned a non-issue into a controversy and pursued delaying tactics in extending the Rangers' powers. All those efforts were to derail the ongoing operation and encouraging criminal plus terrorist elements in Karachi. It was evident that the CM Sindh Qaim Ali Shah wanted to save Dr Asim and it went to the last extent to support an individual. However, the federal government was determined to block all possible roads towards Mr Zardari and its allies in corruption.

On the side show the Sindh government pressurised the PML[N]'s government through the media. The Rangers, being a federal force, had been carrying out the Karachi operation since about two years with the consensus of all the political parties including the PPP's Sindh government - the federal government also had alternative legal and constitutional options.

The Interior Minister Ch Nisar threatened through the media that if the allegations against the Rangers continued then he would make the documented proof public, including the JIT report, the video recording of Dr Asim's statement and the related reports of the NAB and FIA. He urged that the Sindh government should endorse the action, particularly when the people of Karachi were supporting the Rangers' presence to eliminate miscreants from the city. The Interior Minister asked: "

*To whom is the Sindh government trying to convey a message through this non-serious attitude?*

***It is a matter of record that it was the MQM's leadership which had first demanded deployment of the Army in Karachi on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013.***

The federal government, at that time, tasked the Rangers for the operation as it was not possible to deploy army personnel in Karachi amidst the war against terrorism in the country. Then the Rangers' deployment was made with the consent of all political parties with the Sindh Chief Minister Mr Shah was made captain of the entire operation.

PPP's Chief Asif Ali Zardari, during a meeting in 2013, had also endorsed the Karachi operation, which created a feel-good factor but astonishingly the Sindh government had referred the said powers issue to the Sindh Assembly for discussion in December 2015.

Commenting on allegations levelled against NAB and the FIA, Ch Nisar said that though NAB was established during Gen Musharraf regime but mostly the staff had been appointed and promoted during the PPP regime. The incumbent NAB Chairman was deputed with the consent of the PPP leadership, the PML[N] had not appointed even a single person in NAB, while the same was true for the FIA.

Referring the Sindh CM's complaint regarding the FIA over seizing files from the Karachi Building Control Authority's office, the interior minister had already instructed the Director FIA Karachi to address the reservations. The FIA was not expected to take instructions from the Sindh government; it never happened before nor was there any provision in the FIA Act 1974.

It was on record that Sindh government was not spending even a single penny on the Sindh Rangers; all the expenses of the Rangers were being borne by the federal government, which amounted to Rs:9 billion annually; that amount didn't cover the expenditures of intelligence agencies in Sindh, which were being paid by the Centre separately. The minister said that:

*".....books could be written on 'actions' undertaken by corrupt elements in Sui Gas, PIA and other institutions. Those who have occupied Sindh's resources are the ones attacking it by devouring its resources like termite.*

*He [Ch Nisar] does not want to talk about one's character - on one hand, they criticise the government in the National Assembly and on other hand, they request for recruitments, transfers, extensions, perks and privileges and other benefits."*

However, through the whole scenario, it was the Pak-Army and Rangers who got humiliated on various counts.

**On 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** when Sindh Assembly's session began after a four-month pause the members of the opposition parties expressed their concerns over the Sindh government's lack of interest in bringing a resolution to extend the policing powers of Rangers in the province. However, Speaker Mr Durrani refused their pleas on the ground that there was no resolution in place on the assembly's agenda for that day. The provincial government was at loggerheads with the Rangers.

On the previous night, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stepped in to defuse the brewing controversy between the centre and Sindh over the extension of special powers to the Rangers. After returning from Turkmenistan, the PM called up CM Sindh to discuss the matter. CM Shah briefed the premier

about his government's grievances vis-à-vis actions of the paramilitary force. He also complained to the premier about Saturday's statements of the federal interior minister, Ch Nisar Ali Khan.

**On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015;** Sindh Provincial Assembly passed the above referred resolution with following conditions; It was resolved that:

- *Any person who is not directly involved in terrorism and is only suspected of aiding and abetting terrorists or by way of terror financing or facilitating terrorists **shall not be placed under preventive detention under any law without prior written approval of the Sindh Chief Minister.***
- *In case a person is suspected of the above, cogent reasons with complete evidence justifying such preventive detention shall be provided to Government of Sindh, which will, based on the available evidence, approve or reject such proposal of detention.*
- ***The resolution clearly indicated that powers of the Rangers regarding 90-day detention of the suspects were curtailed.***
- *The Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) shall not raid any office of the Government of Sindh or any other government authority without prior written approval of the Chief Secretary, Government of Sindh.*
- *That Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) shall not assist any other institution / organisation apart from Sindh Police in carrying out its actions.*
- *That it is further resolved that Government of Sindh whilst granting any powers to Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) and Sindh Police shall take into accounts all of the above conditions.*

The Sindh Assembly passed that resolution for giving special policing powers to the Rangers but limiting them with above conditions. The Rangers were given special policing powers following the start of a surgical operation in 2012. Their powers had expired on 6<sup>th</sup> December instant.

The MQM, PTI, PML[Q] and PML[F] all launched strong protests and the resolution was rejected by all of them collectively; the members of these parties tore apart the copies of the resolution and later walked out of the session. The resolution said that the Sindh government entrusted, for twelve months, certain functions to the Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) to assist the civil administration and police under the Article 147 of the Constitution

making it mandatory for such decision of the Sindh government to be ratified by the provincial assembly within 60 days.

During May 2013's national elections, the MQM faced perhaps its strongest electoral challenge in Karachi since 1985. For 36 years, Altaf Hussain has been leading the party with an iron fist equally effective during 22 years abroad. However, during the last four years, MQM remained under tremendous pressure from various directions.

Local traders bristled whenever the party gave call for a strike; Altaf Hussain's health kept deteriorating; and the noose of Scotland Yard Police continued tightening around the party's major heads, on charges of money laundering and murder initially - but then money laundering investigations were finished in mid-2016.

Many warring factions within the MQM surfaced up, tearing it apart from inside - the party's exemplary discipline had started fading away. To exert more direct control over the party, in the summer of 2013, Altaf Hussain revamped MQM's entire central leadership. He also held a closed door session at the Azizabad Secretariat where he encouraged his supporters to humiliate some of the most well-known public faces of the party.

However, the above step proved to be all deception and illusionary. Without a succession plan, MQM appeared to pass through future hurdles without splitting into multiple factions; if it had to survive on the national scene.

## **Scenario 161**

### **ON OTHER ISSUES ON KARACHI:**

### **Why Karachi police failed to convict its criminals:**

**On 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013;** Azhar Fateh of **NBC News New York** wrote:

***"Karachi is at siege by an array of criminals such as the Taliban and from splinter groups with political support.***

***Over 2,200 people were victims of homicide in the city last year [2012] – the highest number in nearly two decades.***

*80 percent of 60 senior Karachi police investigators when surveyed said that witnesses fear reprisals from militant organisations or want to avoid being drawn into a difficult trial."*

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Yet relatively only a few of those killings were successfully investigated and prosecuted. The local police held that over the last few years 23% of murder investigations led to conviction. A 2011 report by Pakistan's Human Right Commission, however, put the number as low as 10%.

SSP Ch Aslam [since assassinated in January 2014], who used to head the anti-extremism unit of Karachi Police blamed the low conviction rate on the judiciary's unwillingness to accept testimony by police officials. In Pakistan, police officer's testimony is not admissible as evidence under the prevailing Evidence Act.

*[Though, in the 2009 case of Barkat Ali, Justice Arshad Khan of the Sindh High Court ruled that evidence offered by police may be treated as good as evidence of any other independent witness – but most court proceedings do not follow the ruling.]*

Experts held that judges often disregard police testimony because of the reputation of Karachi's police force for corruption and subservience to political powers. In 2010, Transparency International [TI] ranked Pakistan's police as the most corrupt institution in the country. In Pakistan, the reputation of the police makes the judges suspicious of their words. But senior police officers maintained:

*"Unlike in drug arrests where courts do accept the testimonies of Anti-Narcotics forces as sole evidence, the police in Karachi don't enjoy any such credence and so these criminals are released on bail, sometimes in 24 hours."*

Particularly in Karachi, the key witnesses in criminal cases often refused to cooperate – because of well-founded fears of reprisals from militant organisations, or concerns at a lengthy court proceeding thus avoid being drawn into a difficult trial. Lack of education and training were other causes.

***Thus it is the confirmed fact that the most significant reason for low conviction rate has been the unavailability of witnesses; due to fear or favour.*** Almost 100-150 weapons are seized daily in Karachi, yet most of those arrested are released due to the stringent evidence rules.

Karachi's former police chief, Fayyaz Ahmed Laghari, told the Sindh High Court in February 2013 that his department had only 250 investigation officers in a city of 22 million people.

It remained a hard fact that many officers of Karachi Police were conscientious and honest, but were overwhelmed by difficult conditions. Most work 12 hours a day, six days a week, for pay of less wages that barely cover food and housing.

Yet, history reveals that Pakistan's government was capable of reform. The country's **Motorway Police** was equipped and salaried well thus widely known for its integrity and professionalism. It ***was ranked among the 13 most corruption-free governmental organisation of the world by Transparency International [TI] in 2011.***

A High Court order of 2013, to allow police officials directly approach cellular companies for telephone records, which was previously done via intelligence agencies and used to take months, was appreciated by the people and the politicians equally.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013;** at least 10 police officials including two sub-inspectors were suspended under charges of corruption and 31 more were taken into custody under allegation of money extortion in Karachi. According to the DIG South, six police officials were suspended for involvement in 'other' crimes. The above police officials returned seized weapons and ammunition of Lyari's gangsters, after taking bribe of Rs:300,000.

In mid 2015; in the second and crucial phase of targeted operation against criminals in Sindh, action was suggested against some top politicians, including some provincial ministers, bureaucrats and journalists involved in corruption of billions of rupees and land grabbing. All the home work with the help of intelligence agencies had been completed by the Rangers and Anti-Corruption officials till ending April 2015.

Besides the terrorists, law enforcing agencies [LEAs] this time were determined for action against elements who were involved in the matters of huge corruption of billions of rupees and also in selling out precious government lands.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** the Sindh Apex Committee meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali, reviewed the implementation of decisions taken earlier regarding the ongoing security operation in Karachi and the National Action Plan [NAP]. DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar briefed the committee on the ongoing security operation in the metropolis.

The meeting was attended by Corps Commander Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar, Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ibad, IGP Sindh Ghulam Hyder Jamali, Minister Interior Sindh Suhail Anwar Siyal and other senior Sindh government officials. The meeting resolved to carry the operation forward with more vigour, intensity and to consolidate the gains that have been made.

### **MQM WINS LOCAL BODY POLLS:**

The MQM's achievement in the local government polls held in Karachi once again proved wrong all those *pandats* who had predicted its political death. With its massive majority in the union councils, the party that was alleged and held responsible for all the ills suffered by this metropolis were given the mandate to once again run its affairs.

It was not the victory itself but the scale of it that had bewildered and surprised even the most passionate opponents of the MQM. What made the MQM more acceptable to the people despite its 'unsavoury' reputation was not hard to grasp for those who understand the political and social dynamics of the mega city - Karachi.

It was not for the first time that the MQM survived a targeted operation [mostly] against it by the security forces and bounced back with a bigger public mandate. Yet its success in the latest LG polls carried much greater significance with its electoral success; in the past having often been attributed to its reign of terror, pressure and coercion.

In those LG elections, apparently there was no such atmosphere of fear preventing the opposition from campaigning in the party's hub. Though the MQM raised allegations against the Rangers for chasing the alleged militants of the MQM but more or less there was no serious cry.

There was a ban on airing Altaf Hussain's telephonic addresses and the publication of his statements. On the polling day, the FIA registered a case against the MQM Chief charging him with the September 2010's murder of Imran Farooq. Scotland Yard's investigations against him and other senior party leaders allegedly involved in the murder and money laundering cases were perhaps moving towards their logical ends.

The MQM blamed that there was enormous changes in the demography and ethnic balance in the city but even then the party marked its success. Perhaps, the most plausible reason for the voters' continued loyalty to the party ignoring all its excesses and its alleged involvement in criminal activities was its deep roots among the people of Karachi.

No other political party of Pakistan was able to build such an organisation at the grass-roots level to present any serious challenge to the MQM's political supremacy. The fact remains that ***the people had in fact voted against PPP's Sindhi ruling class, their 'vaderaism' [means feudal mentality] and height of bad governance in Karachi.***

The PPP's Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah and its mainly feudal cabinet continuously tried for eight years to rule the metropolis city in the way they were ruling rural Sindh. It was largely a manifestation of growing public frustration over the way Karachi was being administered by the Sindhi *Waderas*, depriving the city of 22 million people of an elected local government – an utter violation of the constitution.

Karachi city was run by a 'rouge gang' of provincial bureaucrats who had little stake in the city. The downgrading of the local population in government jobs and the absence of even basic municipal facilities had all added to the public distress and anger. Throughout the eight years there had been no electricity, drinking water, water sewerage, rubbish and garbage removal, cleanliness and zero public health amidst the worst law & order situation in Karachi – even no planning or proposal was in process.

As part of the coalition government with the PPP from 2008-13, the MQM had also been responsible for many of these problems faced by the city, but it was still seen by its voters as the only political party raising its voice on the said issues. The other parties had failed to present any alternative solution thus the political edge over the MQM – PTI confined itself to public gathering, speeches and Imran Khan's tall banners but the party had no program or strategy in hand for that mega city.

It remained a fact that Rangers' on going operation, by and large, had the public's support, and undoubtedly it delivered positive results by bringing

down the level of violence snatches, kidnapping, extortion and murders in the city. But for the MQM and its associated families, these vices were just a routine life – for them there should have been more ‘fine characteristics’ of the mega-polis from any ruling political faction.

ZAHID HUSSAIN in his article appeared in media **on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015** noted that:

*".....Most shocking, however, was the complete routing of the much-touted PTI - JI alliance that only won some 20 seats between the two parties. The alliance was projected to give a tough fight to the MQM, but there was really no competition in the end.*

*The margin of defeat suffered even by senior leaders of the two parties is an indicator of a virtually one-sided contest."*

While the *Jamaat e Islami* [JI], once an arduous political force in the city, had consistently lost ground, it was the *Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf* [PTI] which had pledged to dent the MQM fortress BUT ended in *Thuss*.... Alarmingly a dismal picture.

***[In fact, the PTI lost even the political space it had gained in the 2013 general elections when unknown first-time party candidates managed to get a significant number of votes even in the most secure MQM constituencies.]***

In Karachi at least, the PTI 2013 wave had long subsided failing to turn into the promised *tsunami* washing away the MQM citadel. In fact, the PTI in Karachi has never been able to move out of its Defence or Clifton enclaves. Zahid Hussain [et.el 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015] had rightly diagnosed:

*"....., that party [PTI] mainly concentrated on negative campaigning instead of focusing on a concrete programme addressing the major problems faced by the city.*

*Its alliance with the JI seems to have also eroded its support base that largely comes from the upper middle socially liberal class."*

After local election win, the MQM started taking over the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation and heading towards clash with the Sindh government over the devolution of power. PPP's provincial government was determined not to give up its administrative and financial control over KMC.

This indeed led to a new and more intense power struggle fuelling political unrest in the city. The voters mandate and their verdict should have been respected in a noble way.

Referring to the **ARY TV News** dated **7<sup>th</sup> December 2015**:

According to latest unofficial results, MQM secured 136 seats; while the party made a clean sweep in the District Central.

On the contrary, PPP was at second position with 32 seats of chairmen, followed by independent candidates with 10 seats, PML[N] secured eight seats; next PTI with six seats of chairmen in the metropolis whereas *Jamaat e Islami* [JI] could only win six seats. .

The leading candidates in the electoral alliance between JI and PTI suffered major setback; JI's Karachi chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, PTI Karachi's Ali Zaidi and PPP's Karachi President Najmi Alam lost the contest.

The elections were held in six districts of Karachi – District Central, District West, District Korangi, District East, District South and District Malir.

In Karachi, there were 209 union committees and 38 union councils. Voters in urban areas of Karachi elected 1,210 members while those in rural areas voted for 304 seats in 38 union councils.

According to Election Commission of Pakistan [ECP], as many as 48 candidates had already returned unopposed in all 247 union committees and councils; 18 candidates were elected unopposed in District Central, followed by 13 in West, nine in South, six in Malir and two in East.

Out of total 4,141, the ECP had declared 1,791 polling stations as highly sensitive; only 234 polling stations in the city were declared normal. The Sindh government had deployed 35,057 police personnel, 7,400 Rangers soldiers and 10 army companies each with 80 soldiers in the city to maintain peace and order on polling day.

Unofficial results available with APP on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 revealed that PPP was the runner up bagging 25 UCs and PML[N] clinching victory in 19 UCs followed by JI-PTI alliance with their chairmen in 18 UCs and JUI-ANP alliance winning in four UCs.

Polling in UC 17, Jamshed Town had to be cancelled due to death of PPP candidate Imran Usman a day earlier.

As per unconfirmed results MQM clinched 50 of the 51 UCs in district Central; 33 out of 37 UCs in district Korangi; 20 out of 31 UCs in district East; 22 out of 46 UCs in district West; three out of 13 UCs in district Malir and 11 out of 31 UCs in district South. PPP, the second largest winning party won 11 UCs in district South; five out of 13 UCs in Malir district; four out of 46 UCs in district West; four out of 31 UCs in district East; one out of 51 in district Central and nil in Korangi district.

Earlier, after a defeat in local bodies poll in Lahore, PTI leader Shafqat Mehmood resigned from his post while MNA Arif Alvi of the PTI resigned from Karachi's office after disappointing performance in Karachi.

**SHARJEEL MEMON FIRED:**

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015;** Sindh minister and PPP leader **Sharjeel Inam Memon** was dismissed from the post of Minister for Works, Services and Archives, a notification in this regard was formally issued. The notification, dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December read as:

*"In exercise of powers conferred under clause 3 of Article 132 of the Constitution, on the recommendation of Sindh CM and approval of Sindh Governor, the status of Sharjeel Inam Memon as Sindh provincial minister is hereby de-notified with immediate effect."*

Minister Memon previously held the position of the Sindh Information Minister before he was replaced by senior PPP leader Nisar Khuhro in July 2015. Memon's portfolio was later reshuffled in August; he continued to hold the portfolio of the archives and local government departments and was given the additional charge of the works and services department.

Memon was away from the country since past few months; he was living in London and Dubai. His name was included in the Exit Control List [ECL] though he had not been booked in any criminal case till then.

**[On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2014;** the Sindh High Court [SHC] issued a notice to PPP leader and Chairman Karachi Water and Sewerage Board [KWSB] Sharjeel Inam Memon in a case relating to an allegedly bogus tender. The application against Memon, filed by former chief engineer KWSB, Abdul Raheem Khatri, alleged that the provincial minister okayed the false tender of **"greater sewerage plan."**

*The ex-KWSB Chief Engineer Mr Khatri alleged that he was sacked for opposing the tender's approval and maintained that only the provincial chief minister had the authority to order his firing.*

*Khatri also alleged that the tender was given to a company named Mohammad Ayub and Brothers by copying his signatures, adding that he had not signed off on the tender.*

*Subsequently, the SHC issued notices to Memon among others party to the case to appear in court on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014.]*

The announcement to sack the provincial minister came at the conclusion of a five-hour long Sindh Apex Committee meeting; he was no more a minister. ***The water in the kettle had started boiling in earlier weeks of the year 2015.***

After Peshawar Army School massacre of December 2014, the COAS once said during a high level meeting that the Sindh government needed to take concrete steps to eradicate corrupt practices among its ranks.

In that meeting former President Asif Ali Zardari wrote something on a slip of paper and passed it on to Sharjeel Memon, the then Sindh information minister, for further delivery to the provincial Finance Minister Murad Ali Shah - it was written on the slip: [**Gen Raheel**] ***Sharif was deviating from the agenda of the meeting.***

Gen Raheel Sharif, however, kept talking about corruption, arguing that it was the root cause of deteriorating law and order in Sindh. He said:

*".....corruption and crime were intimately linked and at least some of the money made through corrupt practices was being used to finance target killings and other acts of terrorism."*

Some media sections [**'Herald'** dated **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015** is referred] reported that the Army Chief wanted *the Sindh government departments to report directly to the Corps Commander Karachi* but no logic was seen behind that news. Even otherwise such orders were not to be agreed by a political government nor could the military office Karachi bear that undue burden for no reason.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** the Rangers' team arrested one Babar Chughtai on the allegations of land grabbing and funding target killers affiliated with the MQM and he had named several KMC officials involved in illegal allotment

and sale of government lands. Initially given in the custody of the Rangers for 90 days by an Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC], Babar was released, though he was still facing inquiries being conducted by the Anti-Corruption Establishment [ACE], Sindh.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** in Sindh's Apex Committee meeting, the DG Rangers had told that the ruling PPP was protecting mafias who made \$2.3 billion annually in Karachi through extortion, smuggling, control over the water supply and land-grabbing – but the news was blocked for the local media; **Reuters Report** dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015 is referred.

**Referring to 'Samaa TV' News Channel on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015**

*"The leadership of PPP has decided to get rid of some corruption - tainted provincial ministers.*

*The decision was taken at a second high-level meeting of the PPP in a week. The meeting was jointly chaired by PPP Chairman Bilawal Zardari and Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari in Dubai."*

Several ministers were likely to lose their portfolios that would be taken back gradually; that *'first phase of the reshuffle would start in a couple of days'*. The ministers were directed to show their utmost performance ahead of the local bodies elections, while a couple of others were given a three-month deadline by Bilawal Zardari. Major changing in Sindh bureaucracy was also a part of the re-shuffle.

At the helm of Sindh affairs, PPP leadership was then brainstorming **'the new faces'** to run the provincial administration amidst changing situation in Sindh in the backdrop of Karachi operation and overall political scenario - PPP Chairman Bilawal Zardari was eager to jump-start into action with a fresh team.

The Dubai meeting was attended by Sindh CM Qaim Ali Shah [who was to be fired soon], Speaker Sindh Assembly Agha Siraj Durrani, Shehla Raza, Information Minister Sharjeel Memon, Mazoor Wassan and others.

When the apex committee met again on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015; the army officers handed CM Sindh Syed Qaim Ali Shah a list of ministers and heads of various provincial departments who were to be removed from their posts because of allegations of corruption against them. The provincial government paid no heed to the list. Even that news was fully doubted because normally the Pakistan Army does not go beyond their limitations.

However, allegedly the army exerted more pressure on the CM Sindh for their removal, the Sindh government made nominal changes in the portfolios of ministers and undertook a minor shuffle among senior officials. Sharjeel Memon, who was on top of the army's list as most unwanted minister, saw his portfolio change from information to works and services.

The army then asked Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to intervene and move the federal authorities against corruption in Sindh but he was not willing to exert direct pressure on the provincial government. He did not want to disturb his intimate relationship with Mr Zardari thus pretended that the federation did not want to antagonise the Sindh's ruling party, PPP.

This prompted the army to move on its own and mobilise intelligence agencies, the Sindh Rangers and federal investigating institutions to curb corruption in the province.

PM Nawaz Sharif, however, was not pleased when he came to know that a team of the Federal Investigation Agency [FIA] had completed inquiries in seven corruption cases against former PM Yousaf Raza Gilani and was all set to submit a charge sheet against him in the court.

Sources within the FIA claimed the team was expecting a thumbs-up from Islamabad on its accomplishment but instead it faced a blunt question — senior government officials in Islamabad asked who had ordered them to move against PM Gilani.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** to blow its own trumpet high, the Sindh government went serious about eradicating corruption; the ACE in Sindh was awoken from its deep slumber. The chief minister ordered the ACE to work on all the pending cases of corruption and complete inquiries against all government officers allegedly involved in corruption. The provincial government was also given Rs:50 million for the ACE – as a special grant – so that it could carry out its job in a proper manner.

*[The Sindh ACE had been trying to survive on an annual budget of just Rs:two million to meet the expenses on cumbersome investigations other than staff salaries at its Karachi directorate. This was not enough even for local travel in Karachi on official assignments.]*

About 1,500 corruption cases were pending at the Anti-Corruption Department since 2013. Yet the provincial government committees that approved the initiation of inquiries into corruption cases did not even meet once in the previous two years.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** Dr Asim Hussain was arrested and handed over to the Rangers by an Anti-Terrorism Court for 90 days – its complete details are given separately in this book as full chapter.

Sultan Qamar Siddiqui's trial was formally started over charges of terror financing immediately there after.

Faced with external pressure to put the ACE back on track, the Sindh government held the meeting of its highest powered committee on corruption, **on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015**. The two lower level committees also met subsequently, completing the officially required probes by 24<sup>th</sup> October 2015. Since then, the ACE arrested 97 provincial government officials on corruption charges and submitted 78 charge sheets in courts for trial.

In order to improve the ACE's image, the government transferred all circle officers who were known to have secured lucrative postings through political connections. Raids were carried out and discreet inquiries initiated in major departments and many absconders, officers and citizens were apprehended across the province,

Had the Sindh government shown the level of interest in corruption eradication as it did after COAS's reprimand, it could have been saved from the embarrassment it faced then. The anti-corruption measures taken by the federal authorities in Karachi and elsewhere in Sindh were not required.

Referring to '**the Express Tribune**' dated **25<sup>th</sup> February 2016;**

The National Accountability Bureau [NAB] continued investigating Sindh's former information minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon, in a Rs:5 billion government **advertisement distribution scam**. NAB officials disclosed this before a Sindh High Court [SHC] bench during the hearing of Memon's applications for bail in corruption cases and against the placement of his name on the Exit Control List [ECL].

The former minister, who was then living in self-exile abroad, had filed two applications seeking pre-arrest bail in connection with graft inquiries initiated by NAB against him. The NAB told the SHC that it had initiated an inquiry against the PPP leader on a written complaint of the provincial Information Secretary, Zeenat Jahan.

An initial inquiry had revealed that as provincial information minister, Memon had approved the award of government advertisements worth Rs:5+ billion to seven advertising companies. It was also revealed that he

misused his official authority and had misappropriated Rs:3 billion in advertisements award, thus causing a loss to the national coffers.

Headed by Justice Ahmed Ali M Sheikh, the SHC's Division Bench took the report on record and adjourned the hearing for three weeks due to absence of Memon's lawyer.

**On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016;** the NAB filed formal reference against PPP's Sharjeel Memon and 10 others in the Accountability Court of Karachi; the court accepted the reference for hearing.

Besides Sharjeel, other accused included Zulfiqar Ali Shallwani, Aneeta Baloch, Mansoor Ahmed Rajput, M Yousuf Kaboro, Inaam Akbar, Altaf Hussain Memon, Riyaz Munir, Fazal Mehmood, Mohammad Hanif, Asim, Masood Hashmi, Gulzar Ali, Suleman Mansoor Umer, Syed Naveed and Sarang Latif Chandio. They were accused of corruption worth Rs:5.76 billion in the above cited case.

### **THE PUBLIC OPINION IN PRESS:**

Referring to **the 'Herald'** dated **2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015;** see the public opinion on that FIA + NAB & Rangers' move:

#### ***Sheikh Ali Dec 02, 2015 12.19pm:***

He [Dr Asim] is being punished because of his origin background as he is from Karachi...I agree all are corrupt, there are many who are far more corrupt who have wasted human lives. At least Dr didn't do that. Why doesn't the army catch them?

#### ***KHAN Dec 02, 2015 12:26pm:***

We need a special attention from the Chief of Army Staff to curb the corruption in Sindh! Rangers and the FIA doing a great job...NAB is still in question as far as corruption in Sindh is concerned.

#### ***REHAN Dec 02, 2015 12:59pm:***

Corruption cases need to be treated as Terrorism cases. Whenever a corrupt politician is caught by the rangers, politicians are either bothered by

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"Why us?" or they try to wriggle out by highlighting that it is not a case of terrorism so the rangers have no authority.

**MOHAMMAD IQBAL Dec 02, 2015 01:04pm:**

The biggest corruption takes place in Sindh's Anti-corruption department.

**AW Dec 02, 2015 01:08pm:**

Granted that corruption has crossed all limits in Sindh, but how about Punjab which is not too far behind? The people are waiting for the Army to take similar actions in Punjab

**MUHAMMAD USMAN Dec 02, 2015 02:04pm:**

PPP is both corrupt and incompetent

**ARSLAN Dec 02, 2015 03:06pm:**

So the army tried its level best to get these politicians to fix things themselves before taking direct action. I hope critics of the institution will read this article and tone down the boys bashing.

**ASHRAF CHOUDHRY Dec 02, 2015 03:26pm:**

Eliminate the corrupt, regardless of their colour, creed, religion and status. It is no less than the white plague. Otherwise, Thomas Robert Malthus' theory of population will be inevitable.

**MUHAMMED ALI UK Dec 02, 2015 03:36pm:**

The Rangers and NAB should go all the way...anyone who has done wrong should be having sleepless nights.

**PAK CITIZEN Dec 02, 2015 03:44pm:**

Action needs to be taken against all corrupt officials. Dr Asim's arrest alone is not sufficient.

**ZEN Dec 02, 2015 03:57pm:**

@sheikh ali Should be happy that they are finally cleaning up Karachi. After all Karachi has had the most terrorism in past decades.

***PAKISTANI Dec 02, 2015 04:07pm @sheikh ali:***

Why didn't you question his origin when he was made federal minister?

***MUHAMMED ALI UK Dec 02, 2015 04:54pm:***

@sheikh ali Sir, if they are corrupt they should be caught and punished. Sadly the PPP broke all records of corruption and now it is payback time. Is this not why various political leaders can now be found in Dubai?

***SAF RANA Dec 02, 2015 05:22pm:***

Unbelievable, this is the same as saying "a degree is a degree weather it is real or fake"; no one is being punished due to their origins, they are being rounded up because they are criminals! They happen to wear suits, it's called white collar crime my friends.

***SYED HASSAN HASEEB Dec 02, 2015 05:56pm:***

It has taken a long time, with hardly any results to show except mere words. The most notorious people have left the country and nobody stopped them. Their names are being put on the Exit Control List now — isn't this a bit funny? On the streets no body is safe. If Sindh has in fact become safe, remove the guards and policemen escorting all high government officials.

***TARIQ Dec 02, 2015 09:38pm:***

Well done General Raheel Shareef, Pakistan Army, FIA and all law-abiding honest policemen and women!

***MUHAMMAD AWAIS Dec 02, 2015 10:36pm:***

These are things that judiciary should look into not the Pakistan Army. But then again judiciary is corrupt itself. NAB should be made an independent organisation free from all political interference. I'm pleased that there is someone looking into these corrupt political officials and they should be brought to justice and all the black money should be recovered no matter what the cost.

I think there should be special courts created which only deal with corruption cases. We should take the lead from Iceland and punish all our corrupt officials, to set the precedent and somehow to be brave enough to stick to the initiative irrespective of internal and external political pressures. Until we do so we will not be able to move forward into the direction we want to which is prosperity, growth and development.

***BLUNT Dec 03, 2015 12:26am:***

@sheikh ali Stop being an apologist for corrupt people

***NAVEED Dec 03, 2015 12:37am:***

The Government should ensure every penny of ill-gotten wealth is recovered from such people. The best punishment would be making bricks for government projects that they embezzled from.

***KHAN- USA Dec 03, 2015 05:08am:***

The second name of corruption is Sindh and the first name is Punjab!

***ZACK Dec 03, 2015 05:17am:***

Premier political party heads go hand in hand in corruption and none of these guys wanted to take any action on corruption as they themselves took part in corruption which resulted them becoming billionaires. I salute the army and pray that corrupt politicians are caught and brought to justice. Pakistan should only be ruled by the army until we revise the constitution and make it impossible for these crooks to be elected.....

I urge the young generation to support army, not the crooked politicians.

***NASIR Dec 03, 2015 08:42am:***

Let it be the fractured relations with Army High Command and PPP leadership. This fracture is positive for the people of Sindh and Pakistan. May this fracture increases to other parts of the country.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015;** that list of allegedly corrupt politicians of Sindh was disclosed at a meeting of the Sindh Apex Committee – and made public so the people could know the real worth of their politicians.

**PPP BLOCKED RANGERS' OPERATION:**

Rangers' Operation in Karachi, which had always been criticized by politicians, particularly PPP and MQM's members of national and provincial assemblies as unfair and biased, took a new turn which decisively determined the shape of a new political landscape in Karachi where the nexus between corruption, terrorism and politics was bound to break for good.

Through blocking the Rangers' way, some economists opined that, the peculiar aim of the PPP and MQM was to cripple the economy of the city which was intermittently brought to halt with frequent shut-down strikes—many shops including other business centres were forced to be closed.

The PPP has been ruling Sindh since 2008 in the last stretch but it hopelessly failed to create peace and prosperity in the province, especially Karachi, due to its corrupt and inept leadership. The most shocking development was that in order to hide its corruption, PPP leaders started using Sindh card by provoking the Sindhis against the federation; both Zardari and Qaim Ali Shah equated the Karachi operation with an attack on Sindh.

It was on record that the PML[N] government led by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had launched the targeted operation in Karachi **after obtaining consensus of all stakeholders** like political parties, business community and members of civil society who wanted peace in Karachi. Only after that, Karachi was handed over to the Rangers with powers to take action against the culprits without any discrimination.

The Karachi Operation against terrorists, target killers, kidnappers, land mafia and '*Bhatta*' mafia continued unabated; the Rangers and Police arrested several criminals including those who were found involved in corruption - besides capturing huge catches of arms and weapons. However, due to their political exigency and in order to keep their vote bank intact, the PPP and MQM kept on warding off the operation in one way or the other.

It is also on record that once in 2014, the Governor Sindh Ishratul Ebad Khan had submitted his resignation, as MQM dubbed the operation with the pretext that it was against its office bearers. While, this party had itself supported the operation, and even demanded to hand over Karachi to Army. It was illogical; they simply wanted to blackmail the federal government by creating hurdles for the Rangers, FIA and the NAB.

One could recall CM Qaim Ali Shah's statement of **15<sup>th</sup> September 2013:**

*".....that the targeted operation initiated without any discrimination and the Rangers and Sindh Police have been directed that even not to spare any person belonging to the ruling party, if involved in crime or corruption."*

The said statement was made in the backdrop of arrest of MQM's MPA, Nadeem Hashmi **on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013** for his involvement in firing at a police mobile in the Haideri area of Karachi in which the two policemen were killed. In the same month, some MQM workers were arrested, who were found involved in other criminal activities.

Later, the Rangers' JIT also proved that the MQM was behind the Baldia Town factory fire [2012] in which 258 persons were burnt and killed. **On 8<sup>th</sup> February 2015**, the Rangers also arrested a senior MQM worker namely Rafiq Rajput who not only ran a team of 'hit men' but was also involved in the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 carnage in the Karachi when the defunct CJP Iftikhar Chaudhry was visiting Karachi.

The PPP and MQM have been ruling Karachi and Sindh for many years through their shady alliance, dishonest government officers and supporters; the Rangers' operation had given a setback to their malpractices. When these parties felt that they were losing their grip over Karachi and Sindh, their leaders started halting this operation through various strategies.

The question of corruption in Sindh and the allegations of victimization of the province were accelerated by the irresponsible political leadership of the PPP. Everyone knew that in one way or the other, corruption, crime and terrorism were linked with their political companions.

However, vitality and importance of the operation vis-à-vis role of the Sindh Rangers was widely appreciated on all forums – more by Karachiites. The peace was coming back to the city.

Referring to analysis by Sajjad Shaukat appeared on internet pages **on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016:**

*".....that previous two operations in 1992 and 1994 had failed because of political expediencies. As a consequence, it could not achieve desired results and the city remained infested with terrorists and criminals."*

*The Sindh government has failed in maintenance of law and order, providing good governance to the people due to corruption, as it also exposed its non-seriousness and callous attitude.*

*....since last 8 years of PPP tenure, 15 thousand people lost their lives in Karachi only. With such figures, PPP's exploitation of Sindh card and politicization of rangers' powers are unjustified."*

PPP's adopted defiant role was openly debated to expose immature, interest oriented and opportunistic politics of the party leadership with reference to Zardari's family owned property marked politics. The petty and parochial politics, ensuing into growing confrontation between Sindh and federation over "Rangers' powers" issue was unwarranted and damaging for the nation as well as the democracy.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016;** The Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif spent five hours discussing the law and order situation and assured the Rangers that the army would ensure a logical end to the Karachi operation. The civilian government was vacillating and not keen to provide the judicial and political back up to complement the Rangers operation. 26 Joint Investigation Teams [JITs] had yet to be formed to investigate serious mega-crimes in the province.

The PPP was on the defensive and felt the Rangers blade was going to cut deep into its body; thus were adopting the policy of go slow in all administrative matters – it was an utter lack of political fore-sightedness.

Altaf Hussain in his speeches vehemently criticized the Rangers' actions accusing the Sindh government of being intoxicated and ineffective. The PPP tabled an anti-Rangers resolution in the Sindh assembly to curb and clip off powers of the Rangers.

Reports were indicating that the Rangers were gradually trying to rope in senior PPP leaders including Mr Zardari and his sister politician Faryal Talpur etc. The Rangers claimed to have clues linking Uziar Baloch and the Lyari gang to Mr Zardari in Bilawal house. It was alleged that Zardari was in nexus with the Baloch Liberation Army in providing them money to purchase arms for terrorism in Balochistan. For fear of being arrested, the MQM, PPP, and high bureaucrats of Sindh went underground or left the country – settled mostly in Dubai and London.

To get freed Dr Asim from clutches of the Rangers and NAB, the PPP came up with the Sindh Assembly resolution to restrict the Rangers power but in vain as the army was hell bent in implementing the National Action Plan

[NAP]. Politics, corruption money and terrorism were intertwined in Karachi with many senior government officials and politicians linked to it.

In routine way, the Rangers pursued their agenda of cleaning Karachi but the political parties had gone offensive to counter the Rangers' moves. In the follow-up of Sindh Assembly's resolution, the PPP Senators in the Senate cooked up a bill curtailing the powers of the NAB where former petroleum minister Dr Asim was in custody on charges of corruption and supporting terrorism.

Federal Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan accused the Sindh government for jeopardizing the Karachi operation to save its skin when it let the Rangers powers lapse on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2015 without extending it. PPP's Maula Bux Chandio while rebuffing Nisar's claims played down the resolution of the Sindh Assembly. Chandio denied any conflict brewing between the PPP and the Rangers in press and media but in fact it existed.

The Rangers' stay was later extended by the Sindh government under threat from the Federal government to go for article 234 of the Pakistani Constitution implementing governor rule in the province.

[Article 234 of the Pakistan's Constitution reads:

*"If the President, on receipt of a report from the Governor of a province, is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, the President may, or if a resolution in this behalf is passed (by two houses of the parliament separately) shall, by proclamation (a) assume to himself, or direct the Governor of the province to assume on behalf of the President, all or any of the functions of the Government of the province, and all or any of the powers vested in, or exercisable by, anybody or authority in the province, other than the provincial assembly".]*

The federal government decided to protect the Rangers operations at all cost as the army was not willing to restrict its operational capacity of investigating corruption charges. PPP launched a severe protest claiming that the Rangers were overstepping their mandate. PPP's Faratullah Babar roared in the Senate:

*"The Rangers' mandate was to curb terrorism, targeted killings, kidnapping for ransom and extortion; they are over-stepping their mandate by investigating corruption cases."*

While political crisis started to brew between the Rangers and PPP government in Sindh, **Mr Zardari and his sister Faryal Talpur discreetly left the country because Dr Asim, during interrogation, had spilled the beans implicating Zardari**, PPP and MQM leaders in serious offences including money laundering. The hurdles appeared that for corruption charges Rangers had to have permission from the chief minister Sindh.

Under the National Action Plan [NAP] in which corruption was one of the most important clauses, the Rangers had started investigations into corruption in the province and activated the NAB office. ***NAB confirmed arrest of Secretary Sindh Excise Department, Badar Jameel Mendhro and Director Sindh Anti-Corruption Department Khadim Hussain Channa, for their alleged involvement in corruption.***

NAB investigations have also been initiated against former Chief Secretary Sind Ghulam Ali Shah Pasha, Chairman Chief Minister's Inspection Team Subhan Memon, Qadir Bux, Gadda Hussain Abro, Imtiaz Solangi & Salih Nukrich for illegal allotment of land.

Referring to Shahzad Badar's **Report** appeared at '**Dunya News**' of **31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**:

*"According to Rangers Karachi statement, different political and religious groups were making around 230 billion rupees annually through illegal activities in Karachi.*

*Sindh Anti-Corruption Establishment [ACE] Chairman Mumtaz Shah has stated that 52 officers from different government departments of Sindh are under arrest over charges of corruption, embezzlement and misappropriation of government funds.*

*Seventy two first-information reports [FIRs] have been registered, while 209 inquiries were initiated against officials on corruption charges."*

The fact remains that the arrest of Dr Asim Hussain made the PPP leaders insecure and fearful; they started crying terming it foul play. The most disturbing factor for the PPP owners cropped up when Dr Asim was charged with corruption indicating a possibility of arrest of Asif Zardari once again. Asif Zardari remarked that all this unmistakably action presented a clear pattern of political harassment and revenge. By doing so, Sindh had been immobilized under the direct orders from the Prime Minister's House.

It was evident that Asif Zardari was trying to bring forward a charge-sheet against the PML[N] but not at all interested to clarify the charges against the PPP's inept government and corrupt politicians.

Syed Khurshid Shah had contributed his share of threats by saying that:

*"If former president Asif Ali Zardari is apprehended, there will be a war. Pakistan Peoples Party would fight repression in a democratic way from within the Parliament. The PPP is being victimized in Sindh and the ruling party must understand that political parties are its aides."*

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah also expressed his anger over this arrest. While taking to the media, Syed Qaim Ali Shah said:

*"This is unwarranted and not fair. It is not appropriate to arrest any individual at will; we do not practice the law of the jungle in Sindh."*

Nevertheless, it was the last opportunity to bring peace in Karachi and nation was ready to render any sacrifice.

The courage and vigour with which Rangers were implementing the National Action Plan in Karachi, the crackdown on political personalities was bound to raise the political temperature in the city. The PPP was protesting and demanding a similar operation by Rangers in Punjab. Had the Rangers be allowed to accomplish their clean up mission in a fair transparent manner, the nexus between politics, crime, corruption and terrorism would have broken much earlier.

Prolonged tensions in Sindh had been creating uncertainty, thus leading to favourable conditions for outlaws to play their mean games. Efforts were also initiated to 'depoliticise' Sindh Police and build their policing capacity.

Nonetheless, the patriot people of Sindh were aware of the fact that for the sake of their political interests, the so called political elite of Karachi were misguiding them by using the Sindh card – in fact damaging the Pakistan as a country and as a cause, too.

## **Scenario 162**

### **DRUGS & WEAPONS IN KARACHI**

#### **TALIBAN IN DRUG TRADE [?]:**

Afghanistan's most population used to assume that they cultivate poppy only for export. Today ... at least 15pc of the drugs produced in Afghanistan are consumed by them.

It used to be widely alleged by the western media that Afghan Taliban commanders generally lived in Pashtunabad village near Quetta in Pakistani prov-

ince Balochistan, after being kicked out of Afghanistan in September 2001. In later years, Taliban commanders moved out of Pashtunabad — or Sohrab Goth in Karachi and started acquiring well built houses in Quetta city neighbourhoods like Kuchlak and posh localities of Karachi like Clifton.

Taliban members started building and buying flashy mansions; once, the stereotype Taliban leaders was mostly seen with an old, second-hand, beaten-up Toyota Corolla; then the younger lot, by contrast, preferred to drive new Toyota Land Cruisers or other luxury cars. The source of their sudden influx of wealth was no secret in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Helmand is Afghanistan's largest opium producing province; according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 154,000 hectares of land had opium poppies planted in year 2012. Ahmad Woror, the Director Narcotics Control in Helmand province of Afghanistan, once told the American magazine:

*"The Taliban are more involved than ever in systematically promoting, financing, organizing, and protecting the drug trade. Drugs are ultimately providing the money, food, weapons, and suicide bombers to the insurgency and the good life to Taliban leaders in Quetta, Karachi, and across Afghanistan."*

[**'Newsweek'** dated **12<sup>th</sup> June 2013** is referred]

The drug trade, of course, has been an important part of Afghanistan's economy for a long time; local Taliban leaders have long benefited as well. But then the Taliban's central leadership decided to jump in that trade. Soon the drug trafficking became focal point and pervasive part of the Taliban mission raising many alarming questions – mainly that if Afghanistan appeared becoming the world's first open drug-market.

The western press alleged that Mulla Akhtar Mansoor and Mullah Dadullah Akhund, the known Taliban commanders, were already thriving drug dealers back in 1994, just when the Taliban movement was being launched. However, **Mullah Omar—who led the Taliban and ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 had outlawed opium production, trafficking selling or storing as being *haram*, and against Islamic injunctions.**

But the poppy cultivation and thus the drug trafficking in Helmand and Kandahar continued very discreetly. According to a 2009 UNODC report on opium production, the 10% Ushr Tax used to be netted \$22 million to \$44 million a year; and the Taliban earned another \$70 million by providing protection to drug-laden convoys travelling through their territory.

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Time passed quickly. During 2011-13, the Taliban's central leadership played a much more pivotal role in the Afghan narcotics industry; heroin and opium trade was encouraged. The farmers were prompted to plant poppies, lending them seed money, buying the crop of sticky opium paste from their fields, refining it into exportable opium and heroin, and finally transporting it to Pakistan and Iran.

In the past the Taliban had been only going after the 10% Ushr Tax and protection money, but then they started running the business from top to bottom. They systematically divided the areas they controlled into drug zones and assigned them to their powerful and favoured local commanders. In June 2013, they were earning \$200 million plus annually from the drug trade – and that was from Helmand areas only.

Why the shift? The '**Newsweek**' cited above explains that:

*"...for years, the Taliban relied partly on donations from sympathetic citizens in the Gulf states to fund their military operations.*

*Recently a lot of that Gulf money has dried up, as rich residents have turned their attention to other Sunni Islamic causes such as Palestine, Egypt, and Syria. This may have spurred the Taliban to look for other sources of funding."*

Most of the country's opium was being produced in largely the Taliban-controlled areas of the south and southwest [98%] of Afghanistan. Taliban's insurgency plan was going weaker while the drug money had helped to fund the movement at the local level for years. The leadership realized that since it couldn't stop it, then why not get involved and seize control of the trade in a systematic and well organized way.

In 2010, when Mullah Omar's deputy and brother-in-law was arrested by Pakistani forces in Karachi, his two top deputies, Mulla Akhtar Mansoor and Abdul Qayyum Zakir, planned vying for power; both come from historically competing southern tribes—the Ishaqzai and Alizai, respectively. Both tribes belonged to the most fertile opium-producing areas of Helmand and Kandahar provinces as well as along the most lucrative drug-smuggling routes.

During the planting season, the Taliban commanders often provide seeds, fertilizers, and advance payments and, of course, promise of protection. Despite a big push, Afghan government eradication efforts have largely been ineffective, with just 6pc of some 380,000 acres of poppies planted during 2013 could be destroyed; the **UNODC report** is referred.

The UNODC estimated that till 2010 there were about 500 heroin laboratories [*for conversion of opium into heroin*] operating in the country, and there were tens more then. Most of the labs were in the remote, no-go, Taliban-controlled areas of Nowzad and Baghran districts in northern Helmand province. Neither Afghan government nor US forces could access those areas. Only US Special Operations Forces could get there but drug control was not their priority nor was it included in their agenda.

The drug cartels do not tolerate competition thus most small smugglers quit the business when Taliban leadership jumped in. Bigger traffickers were tolerated when they cooperated with Taliban on their terms. Taliban also joined hands with Northern Alliance in the trade though having blood-tensions since decades.

Leading members of the Northern Alliance had long produced opium and refined heroin in northern provinces like Badakhshan - exporting both products north through Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan and then on to Russia and Europe. Later, in association with the Taliban, they were able to ship their harvest through Taliban-controlled areas in the south and into Iran and Pakistan; India became their largest buyer and stockist.

The Northern Alliance warlords, government officials, the police, and the Taliban ultimately reached an unwritten understanding that they were all part of one cooperative drug chain. Before the drugs reached Taliban areas, the shipments used to be escorted from the north by the warlords, Karzai government officials, and Afghan police. All shared the profits when Taliban couriers delivered the northern shipments to buyers across the borders in Iran, India and Pakistan.

*[The highest-quality heroin comes from the northern Afghanistan and is normally exported by Afghan forces. Although the north produces only a fraction of the drugs that come from the south, the opium is of better quality because of the cooler climate and more abundant rains.]*

During 2010-13, given the newfound drug wealth in hand, the Quetta Shura [*Taliban's governing body*] decided to set up a monitoring mechanism to ensure that the revenues are shared from top to bottom. As a result, the Shura established an Economic Commission [EC] during ending 2012 to keep and scrutinize the whole income. Then 70pc of the drug profits were earmarked for the EC to spend on food, weapons, explosives, and medical care for the insurgency, while 30pc were supposed to go directly to the field fighters wherever they were sent.

For field-fighter Taliban, it was not a fair split, as the frontline guerrillas were doing most of the work, taking the biggest risks, and bearing the brunt of casualties and suffering. Local commanders complained that they were being ripped off most of their due share. Some held that:

***"...top leaders collect and pocket about 80pc of the drug revenues from five southern provinces. This is holy money for the jihad, so no one should take more than their fair share."***

Some Taliban supporters, following the ultra-orthodox Islam, expressed doubts about their leadership's heavy involvement in narcotics. Pro-Taliban cleric Maulvi Jan Mohammad Haqqani once told the western media that:

*"It is a great pity the Taliban are dealing with drugs that are expressly prohibited in Islam. The Taliban should not be involved in drugs, as it is hurting the positive image we are building."*

But the others held the opinion that:

*"Fighting the enemy with drug and kidnapping money is the same as fighting with infidel American money."*

Ignore the both - these were lonely voices; let us move ahead.

**During 2013-14;** in Afghanistan the Taliban increasingly went focused on the drug trade than on fighting the enemy. Their definition of *jihad* was perhaps changed in new circumstances. The Taliban fighters in the field were found using all of their energy protecting poppy fields, their drug interests, and convoys from government forces. During these years, more than ever the Taliban were constantly fighting poppy-eradication teams; spending most of their time supervising and protecting their drug business.

**During 2015;** the Taliban in Afghanistan staged resurgence, capturing and briefly holding the northern **city of Kunduz**. It was the first time the group had held a major urban centre since the withdrawal of most American forces in 2014.

***[ Why Kunduz was such a prized target for the Taliban. It's about drugs and the Taliban kept an overwhelming dependence on drug trafficking as a source of funds.]***

The above views were confirmed later by Ed Follis, the US Drug Enforcement Agency's Attaché in Afghanistan, in his interview on '**PRI's The World Radio**' dated **15<sup>th</sup> October 2015:**

*"[Kunduz] is one of the principle export areas in the north — it's a staging locale for the vast majority of heroin products that are trans-shipped to Russia. That's [the trade route] they need. And*

*this has recurred with other narco-terrorist organisations around the globe.*

*The Afghan Taliban are dependent on opiate trafficking for about 95pc of its income. And without that source of funds they would be highly localised, and they would revert back to their original organised crime portfolio: human trafficking, arms trafficking, kidnapping for hire and so on."*

El Follis also argued that it all depended upon the changing priorities of the US-led coalition. ***The shift from the original goal of pursuing Al Qaeda towards a goal of creating democracy in Afghanistan was poorly planned.*** Nation building required much more than removing the Taliban. Follis said:

*"The re-construction of Afghanistan started not just after the Taliban, but after 30 years of the absence of any government. It was pure anarchy or occupation for all of that time."*

Mainstream western media started worrying that the Taliban were brewing profits from the drug trade since 2010. No; it has been the practice woven in the Afghan social fabric since decades. Thom Shanker's opinion had appeared in ***The New York Times***, far back on **23<sup>rd</sup> December 2008**:

*"United Nations figures show that Afghan insurgents [Taliban] reap at least \$100 million a year from the drug trade, although some estimates put the figure at five times as much".*

See the American magazine '**Foreign Policy**' dated **1<sup>st</sup> April 2011**:

*"Yet, the Taliban receive only a small portion of the benefits generated by the drug trade. Indeed, they take 2 to 12 percent of a \$4 billion industry; farmers, traffickers, smugglers, and corrupt officials collectively earn much more."*

One could also ponder upon the suggestion [**'the guardian'** dated **25<sup>th</sup> June 2014** is referred] forwarded by William Patey, the British ambassador to Afghanistan from 2010 to 2012:

*"...if we cannot deal effectively with supply, then the only alternative would seem to be to try to limit the demand for illicit drugs by making a supply of them available from a legally regulated market".*

Why to blame only the Taliban for the drug trade? See the state of affairs after election of the new President Ashraf Ghani in 2014. Referring to **Mathilde Simon's** essay which appeared in '**Foreign Policy Journal**' of America on **27<sup>th</sup> November 2015**, is worth consideration.

*"...the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs writes: there are credible allegations that many central, provincial, and district level government officials directly engage in and benefit from the drug trade.*

*Rampant corruption is a main obstacle in fighting against illicit drugs and implementing programs."*

**Another aspect:** Canadian celebrity writer **Michel Chossudovsky's** research script [*First published in 2005, updated in January 2015*], titled as:

***The Spoils of War: Afghanistan's Multibillion Dollar Heroin Trade***

[Washington's Hidden Agenda: Restore the Drug Trade]

available at [www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) analysed the real facts involved.

*"In 2014 the Afghan opium cultivation has once again hit a record high, according to the UNODC's [2014 Afghan Opium Survey](#).*

*In the course of the last four years, there has been a surge in Afghan opium production. The Vienna based UN Office reveals that poppy cultivation in 2012 extended over an area of more than 154,000 hectares, an increase of 18% area over of 2011.*

*A UNODC spokesperson confirmed in 2013 that opium production is heading towards record levels."*

*According to the 2012 Afghanistan Opium Survey released in November 2012 by the UNODC, the opium production for an area of cultivation of 154,000 hectares was in excess of 6000 tons.*

Before 2010, a global conversion rate of about 10 kg of opium to 1 kg of heroin was used to estimate world heroin production. Since 2011, UNODC estimates that a large proportion of the Afghan opium harvest is not processed into heroin or morphine but remains available on the drug market as opium. Chossudovsky finally concluded that:

*"....revenues derived from global trade in heroin constitute a multi-billion dollar bonanza for financial institutions and organized crime.*

*The article first published in May 2005 provides a background on the history of the **Afghan opium trade which continues to this date to be protected by US - NATO occupation forces on behalf of powerful financial interests."***

Opium cultivation in Afghanistan went upwards manifold in recent years; produced around 90pc of the heroin consumed worldwide. According to the United Nations, ***in 2014, poppy cultivation reached its highest level since the 1930s and the trend would continue in the coming years.***

Many programs aiming at eradicating opium cultivation and focusing on providing alternatives to farmers have badly failed due to the high level of corruption permeated in the Afghan system.

As the drug trade flourished with the time in Afghanistan, farmers cultivating opium were taken into a vicious cycle affecting all parts of Afghan society, politics and economy. Most western literature regarding the drug trade in Afghanistan stated that stopping the cultivation of opium would defuse the conflict by reducing the Taliban's funding.

Yet, this statement was only partly true.

### **DRUG BUSINESS IN KARACHI:**

**On 24<sup>th</sup> November 2012;** the Deputy Superintendent of Police in a district of Karachi, Zameer Abbasi, was out making the rounds during night hours. He received a cell-call about a small explosion at a nearby building. When he arrived at the scene, smoke was pouring from a third-floor apartment window.

DSP Abbasi rushed to the flat. Inside, red chemical had been sprayed across the white walls. It was a laboratory: conical flasks connected by rubber tubing, sacks and boxes labelled with the names of chemicals, a small centrifuge were there. A silvery blue powder was spilled across the bathroom floor, and blood-red footprints crisscrossed the living room. ***"It looked like some kind of chemical reaction had happened,"*** he couldn't guess it exactly.

From 2000 to 2010, Karachi's population grew more than 80pc. Over the past decade, millions of Pakistanis had fled the fighting and terrorism in Pakistan's northwest to settle in Karachi. But the flood of migrants in search of jobs and opportunity had also brought countless menace, hazards and nuisance to Karachi.

Gangs tied to political parties have long operated in the poorer parts of the city, running extortion rings and land-grab schemes and it was in the knowledge of all. Karachi's glamour and business both had lost.

Then Pakistani Taliban militants started gaining foothold in the mega-city, carving out territory in neighbourhoods like Manghopir and running criminal and smuggling rackets. Soon they expanded their activity like robbing banks, kidnapping and extortion; also administered their norms of justice.

From restless Balochistan province, a war economy driven by a decade of conflict in Afghanistan had opened Karachi and its ports to narcotics and weapons smuggling. Pitched fire-fights that went on for days between gangs, or between gangs and the police, were not uncommon for the media and public but the ruling joint regime of the PPP, ANP and MQM kept on smiling at such situations.

Karachi had become the world's most dangerous mega-city, with a homicide rate of 12.3 per 100,000 residents. The city had 1,723 reported murders in 2011— and more than 2,000 in 2012. Then added to that explosive situation were drug gangs often with links to Afghanistan and some linked to Iran also. They brought with them a new commodity that was increasingly making its way from Karachi's ports to the wider world – methamphetamine, a lethal and fatal chemical used in heroin formation.

Taimur Khan wrote in '**Foreign Policy**' of 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013:

*"Opiates had always been Karachi's drug of choice. With 90pc of the world's heroin production from across Afghanistan, Pakistani drug barons have reaped the benefits of proximity.*

*Despite a ban on opium production in 1955, Iran saw heroin resurgence in subsequent decades, becoming a major regional production centre.*

*But after the mullahs came to power in 1979, the drug trade shifted east. Heroin was produced en masse in Afghanistan and Pakistan to fund the mujahideen fighting the Soviets."*

**The drugs primarily travelled to the world's market through Karachi port and on to Europe.**

But as the global appetite for heroin declined, producers and smugglers turned to methamphetamine, demand for which was soaring in nearby East Asia. Iran emerged as the biggest producer of methamphetamine in the region, but Pakistan appeared to be the natural transit route to eastern markets like Malaysia and Australia; their links were also showing up in places in all continents around.

*[The production of methamphetamine is a complex and combustible process, requiring proper laboratory and various chemical ingredients — the **most notable is ephedrine** or its close cousin, pseudo-ephedrine. These precursors have legitimate uses in cough, cold, and allergy medications, acting as a decongestant.]*

In April 2011, Karachi port officials discovered 540 pounds of ephedrine hidden in packets of spice mix bound for Australia. That same year, officials in Tehran reported the seizure of 1,170 pounds of ephedrine coming from Pakistan. In June 2012, a group of men with more than 1,750 pounds of *methamphetamine* was stopped at Karachi's airport; those seizures were just the tip of an iceberg.

Pakistan, like most countries, notifies INCB its need for ephedrine as annual legitimate requirements. In 2007, Pakistan reported a legitimate requirement of 11 tons of pseudo-ephedrine to the INCB. In 2010, it reported 53 tons — nearly three times the amount that most countries produce, making Pakistan the world's fourth largest consumer of pseudo-ephedrine. That means, the drug trade had corrupted the highest hierarchy in the government, too.

In September 2012, the then PM Yousuf Raza Gilani's son, Ali Musa, himself an MNA, was arrested for increase in ephedrine quotas for two pharmaceutical companies. One of these firms, Berlex Lab International, which was granted a license to procure some 14,300 pounds of ephedrine, claimed it sold its tablets to a company called Can Pharmaceutical.

However, an APP report had cited:

*"Investigators discovered the address for the company was a residential house in Multan, and nobody answered the door. The owner of the company didn't answer his phone."*

{One could go through Scenario 103, titled as **2MNAs + Federal Minister In Court** in the book '**The Living History of Pakistan Vol-I**; pp 1677-90 [2015] GHP Surrey UK – the famous EPHEDRINE CASE to find out the missing lots.}

In year 2010, Pakistani officials reported four seizures of smuggled ephedrine, totalling 585 pounds in Balochistan, as well as more than 14 tons of diverted cold medicine. Matt Nice, of the INCB's Secretariat in Vienna, said that those seizures of ephedrine originating in Pakistan suggested that a significant portion of legitimate cold medicine got diverted to the black market. INCB noted that:

*"If the declared annual requirement is so high that 500 kilograms can go missing in Pakistan, then that means you have something that's probably already been infiltrated."*

Citing the investigation of the said Gilani Case, the scam worked like this:

- You register yourself as a pharmaceutical company.
- Then you register yourself for a chemical like ephedrine.
- Then you get a quota for ephedrine on an export order.
- Then you say, '**Can I have this converted to local consumption because my export order has fallen through?**'
- Then you falsify your distribution documents AND have it smuggled anywhere on X 10,000 times more profit.

At all steps along this path, it's mandatory to bribe the concerned officials and bureaucrats to get documents signed and deflect attention.

Corruption had a long and disgusting history in Pakistan, but drugs added an extra layer of societal corrosion. On paper, evidence suggested that the ephedrine trade was already having a deleterious impact on a country that didn't need any more problems. Drug use, particularly of opiates and cannabis, was already high in Pakistan, with 1 percent of the population using heroin and 4.1 million people to be drug-dependent.

Just as the transport of massive amounts of heroin through Pakistan inevitably created a local market too, and millions of addicts, the new focus on methamphetamine has led to a lucrative trade on Karachi's streets.

'**Crystal**' is the code name of drugs known in whole Karachi; originated from Lyari; PPP's stronghold since Z A Bhutto's 1970s but crime-ridden and a dense network of slums housing some one million people. It's basically a

no-go zone for law enforcement. Police always [*till 2015 at least*] needed to ask permission or negotiate entrance with the district's crime boss: **Uzair Jan Baloch**, head of the [later banned] People's Aman Committee, a gang cum political party cum charitable organization.

When police attempted an operation in Lyari in April 2012, Baloch's men held them at bay for days under a hail of bullets until the police retreated. In late July the same year, an elite police ranger unit raided Baloch's mansion; he had disappeared.

In Manghopir, a violent, impoverished slum in Karachi's north, the drug users could be easily spotted. In 2013, crystal's price was Rs:500-800 per gram; or \$5 to \$8/gm - more expensive than heroin. Most of the young men tweaking in the streets were foot soldiers for Baloch's gangsters:

*"The [Lyari] gangsters hire the kids, get them addicted to crystal, and then make them do crimes when they are high so they have no fear. Then they pay them with more crystal."*

'**GEO News TV**' of Pakistan told **on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2013** that the police and Rangers continued the targeted search operation in different areas of the metropolis, Karachi, as many as 159 accused were arrested while arms and drugs were also recovered. According to Sindh Rangers' spokesman, Rangers conducted raids at 13 different places then to apprehended more the said criminals.

Areas where the Rangers conducted raids included Federal B Area, Rangarpara, Ali Barohi Goth, Lines Area, Disco Bakery, Zia Colony, Haryana Colony, Godra, Musa Colony, Quaidabad, Tariq bin Zyad Society, Zia-ul-Haq Colony and North Nazimabad.

On the other hand, West Zone police arrested 58 culprits during 24 hours out of which 26 were the absconders and proclaimed offenders required by the Karachi police in earlier cases [*might be they were let loose intentionally by some rogue policemen just for few bugs*]. Drugs and weapons were also seized from their possession, too.

East Zone police also conducted raids and apprehended 55 accused including three extortionists, seven proclaimed offenders, 22 fugitives and three suspects during the earlier day. Arms, motorcycle, liquor, drugs and stolen electric wires were recovered from their possession.

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South Zone police, during the last 24 hours, arrested 21 persons including 11 fugitives while ammunition, drugs and liquor were also seized from their possession; no details about weapons were released.

Till ending 2013, about 1.2 million drug addicts, the majority of whom were heroin users, were living a miserable way in Karachi; police was helpless to combat drugs on the streets. ANF's more than 1,500 troops held staggering quantities of hash and heroin: 9,863 pounds of hash apprehended on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2013 in Killa Abdullah, 613 pounds of heroin on 26<sup>th</sup> April in Karachi. And on 26<sup>th</sup> July the ANF seized some 117 pounds of ephedrine, 95 pounds of ephedrine mixed with vanilla powder, and, bizarrely, 1,272 bottles of ephedrine mixed with jam.

After indictment of PM Gilani's son and PML[N]'s Hanif Abbasi in ephedrine cases, the genuine pharmaceutical companies in Karachi went afraid to apply for new quotas. But nothing was going to happen to the culprits – as they had strong political backing, the labs and traffickers were their own teams, laws of evidence were 150 years old and courts were in their pockets. The most insiders held:

*"...there is such easy money to be made [by diverting ephedrine] that it will remain politician's game - it's like bootlegging."*

One year before Ali Musa Gilani was charged in Islamabad, another young Pakistani man was arrested for his alleged role in selling ephedrine on the global black market. Shiraz Malik, then 34, was taken into custody in 2012 after landing at Prague's airport on a flight from Dubai. He was running on-line Shama Medical Store in Karachi's *Hijrat Colony* and had shipped numerous consignments of opium and ephedrine to Mexico. Under 'company information' the site reads:

*"...we are **abal** to provide u any kind of **medicion** and any kind of **row** material all our **tha** world, and we also **doing** drop shipping all **or tha** world."*

[One could see the spellings and grammar in the phrase]

Shama Medical Store and Shama Hospital's 4-storeyed building is still there off 56<sup>th</sup> Street of *Hijrat Colony* Karachi but it looks like abandoned since long – however, the business is still active from that address; local police officially denied having heard of that address.

There could be hundreds of such like dens in Karachi.

**THE DUBIOUS WEAPONRY TRADE:**

Weapons reach traders and public in Karachi mostly by sea and road both. In northern Afghanistan, the weaponry comes as Iranian and Russian assistance for the Northern coalition and from there through the Taliban it travels downwards. Saudi Arabia finances much of the effort for the Taliban side, while a tax revenue, *Usher and Zakat*, from the production and sale of drugs also contribute heavily to Taliban coffers, an amount estimated at \$200 million from this alone. In addition, Taliban get tax from transporters, on heroin production, and border administration etc.

Much of the Taliban funds, tax collections and contributions are banked in Pakistan. Much of the hard weaponry snatched, under the table buying or stolen by Afghan Taliban, used to be frequently shifted across the border from Afghanistan and sold in Karachi.

It is estimated that before departure from Afghanistan in ending 2014, around \$6-8 billion worth of weaponry was left and dumped by the US and NATO forces in various parts of the country. Most of its part was sold on its way to Karachi and *'purposefully declared looted or stolen'* on 2000 km long highway. Certain Pakistani factions of Taliban got weapons from the international black market to fight with Shiites and Rangers in Karachi often funded from a criminalised economy.

Weapons in Karachi were not just for fighting the gang wars in or around Lyari or Golimaar or Sohrab Goth but were also required by and for the drug mafia who used to move like small armies, with anti aircraft guns often kept in their vehicles openly. This drug mafia had largely been co-opted by the Pakistani Taliban, war-lords of Sohrab Goth and Lyari in Karachi in return for paying substantial amounts to the "kitty", with the Taliban's Quetta Shura allegedly dominating.

Another route that had steadily grown with time was the Central Asian route both in terms of narcotics as well as weapons. The level of cooperation between the drug and arms traffickers was worth study here, as also the fact that there were very few ethnic barriers in the trade.

*[In January 2000, an attack on Batken in Kyrgyzstan, by trained 'fundamentalists', later known as Taliban, was launched by Namagani of Uzbekistan.*

*It was to dominate the main land route of narcotics into Osh and from there onwards to China , Russia and Europe.]*

It is worth noting that the price for an AK-47 in Russia was around \$400-1000 till 2011 leading to conclusion that trade in weapons has been taking place in both directions - re-cycling of weapons with new material being pushed in for Karachiites and being sold off individually or in lots at some point in time to the criminal gangs. The rise of Central Asian mafias of drugs and weaponry was indeed possible through the vitality of the 'Afghan links' well beyond its borders.

Some trade of drugs and weaponry continued for years through Pak-Afghan borders under the Taliban's control. Weapons were endlessly being bought, traded or gifted to the various sister concerns of religious outfits and *pashtuns* in Karachi and Quetta to launch vast attacks on Shiite community on suitable occasions.

The large sized and most well equipped Afghan Taliban camps were along the Pak-Afghan border, like Khost, Kandahar and Helmond, to make out *mujahideen* from the Egyptian, Arabs, Sudanese and Punjabis lots; also termed as the staging camps for Al Queda in the American literature. The whole show was being financed by Usama Bin Laden - the largest group was '**Harkat ul Ansar**'.

Pakistan's support to *mujahideen* during Gen Ziaul Haq regime [1977-88] was miss-used by certain shrewd local Afghan leadership. As the operation against Russians gathered force, the legitimacy to the cause was provided by certain groups in the name of religion [Islam] – while the main beneficiary was America and it remains so till today.

Thus the operation was not only financed by Saudi, Iranian and American currencies, but also by narcotics trafficking, especially in heroin, and weaponry trafficking; new, used and redundant.

Since long the weapons and drugs are shipped and traded in Karachi by a variety of actors. Estimates vary, but most agree that up to 80pc of the weaponry businesses were being controlled by certain gangs which were connected with major stake-holder political parties in the city. The weaponry kept on moving into the cities around as well as into the hands of diverse ethnic and sectarian groups that were armed by the so-called democratic political and politico-religious parties - having formed a coalition against the Pak-Army and Rangers.

The fact remains that personal profit of many actors in that illegal trade was significant. Much of the narco-money obviously was the property of political actors whose cooperation was necessary at all levels of the arms and drugs traffic. As a TV commentator put it:

*"Karachi is silently and visibly being kidnapped by narco-barons. They can influence and buy anyone at any level in any department. The judiciary, the civil administration and the police cooperate and coordinate with those narco-traders or their nominees and weapon dealers just in routine."*

In Karachi, the religious parties, who had been fundamental to the *jihad*, started imparting armed training in their own seminaries. This gave birth to another class of suicide bombers in the city while the bombs and suicidal jackets were allegedly arranged and supplied by the Taliban. Ethnic and sectarian groups with the support of religious parties on their back and sitting governments of PPP and PML[N] respectively went more active in criminal activities like extortion, killing and kidnapping.

At the lowermost levels were the *Pashtun* trucker mafia who operated into the city frequently, of course, having their own pressure group as transporters. For some in Karachi, the drugs and illicit arms business were no more a crime since 2001 because the state actors and politicians were sponsoring them in the name of democracy; of course, at the lowermost levels the local police and small traders used to run their circles in cooperation with each other.

See the news clips around – the said recoveries of weapons and arrests would be just for the press and media to make out news thus eyewash; next day all culprits would be on bail and doing the same 'jobs' again.

**On 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011;** Federal Interior Minister of Pakistan Rehman Malik told media that weapons recovered during raids by law enforcement agencies in parts of Karachi were being smuggled in from Israel. Hinting at the involvement of foreign hands behind the unrest in Karachi, he said:

*"Israeli-made weapons were being used by miscreants in the port city. Over 200 persons have been arrested in connection with the recent wave of violence and Israeli-made weapons including AK-45, have been recovered from them. It proves that foreign hands are behind the unrest in Karachi."*

The minister said investigation was being conducted to ascertain who were supporting these people and supplying the weapons. He said the media

would be given access to question the suspect on why they were killing innocent people.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2013;** Rangers recovered explosives, grenades and other weapons from fruit crates on a truck in the Old Sabzi Mandi Sakhya Ground area of Karachi. The raid was launched on the hideout of Peoples *Amn* Committee [Darvesh Group] and recovered a truck which contained automatic weapons and huge quantity of narcotics hidden in apple crates. Two accused were also taken into custody from the spot.

The targeted operation in Karachi began on 5<sup>th</sup> September that year, and since then more than 300 suspects were arrested within two weeks.

The Rangers were leading the operation which was being conducted across the city – not just in the political strongholds of one party. Separately, the police have conducted 975 raids and arrested 1,232 criminals. Till then they had not raided the 'no-go' areas, including Sohrab Goth and Manghopir. These areas were ungoverned territories where law-enforcers had no writ.

**On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2014;** Karachi Police and CIA apprehended 93 outlaws in raids and encounters while 18 weapons and drugs were also recovered. Karachi Police and CIA nabbed 24 absconders, 5 proclaimed offenders and 16 persons carrying illegal weapons in 107 raids conducted in different areas of the metropolis along with three encounters. Eight accused of murder, two of armed robbery, 2 of kidnapping for ransom, 7 drug peddlers and 29 involved in other crimes were also arrested.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014;** Pakistan Railways seized illegal weapons, explosive material and drugs at Lahore Railways Station which, according to **ARY News TV**, were transported from Karachi to Lahore by a media team just to "expose" the inabilities of the public utility.

An FIR against the railways officials along with the sender and receiver involved in the transportation was duly registered and they were arrested. Controversy prevailed during a press conference that whether it was just a joke to show inability of the Railways or an actual illegal act on part of the local TV team.

ARY TV team claimed that the Railways Police failed to seize the weapons and drugs until the reporter of the TV channel arrived at Lahore Railway Station Platform Number 2 and brought it to the TV screen.

The TV channel claimed that the whole episode badly exposed the Railways authorities which could let anyone transport anything through the public utility – the whole show was arranged to convey a lesson for PML[N]'s Railways Minister Saad Rafique who was making tall claims those days about the performance of the Railways department.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** Police apprehended as many as 13 drug dealers in wounded condition during a raid in Korangi and Liaqatabad areas of Karachi and also claimed of confiscating weapons from their possession.

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015:** Sindh Rangers arrested six terrorists of a banned outfit and recovered weapons during a crackdown in Karachi; the paramilitary troops responded to an intelligence report and conducted raid in Baldia's Ittehad Town.

**On 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016:** two drug dealers were shot in police encounter in Pirabad area of Karachi while police discovered huge amounts of drugs and weapons during the operation.

The Counter Terrorism Department [CTD] of police conducted a raid near Nishtar Road area of Karachi and arrested three suspects. The suspects confessed to have killed a policeman in addition to other crimes including selling and renting out weapons. Meanwhile, during the raids in different parts of the city, Rangers captured 11 drug dealers and seized huge amounts of drugs and weapons from the suspects.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016:** a huge cache of weapons was recovered from Sakhi Hassan graveyard of Karachi; the catch included guns, pistols and 200 rounds. According to police, the sophisticated weapons were concealed by banned outfits in the graveyard.

#### **NATO WEAPONS DUMP IN KARACHI:**

**On 5<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** a huge cache of NATO weapons and ammunition was recovered by police during a raid on an empty house in the Azizabad area of the metropolis. Police seized a large number of weapons including anti-aircraft guns, SMGs, LMGs, sniper rifles, hand grenades and rocket launchers hidden in the water tank of an empty house. Bullet-proof jackets and helmets were also recovered during the raid.

The raid was conducted after the police was tipped off by a political [most probably the MQM's] worker already in police custody. It was the **"biggest recovery of arms and ammunition in the history of Karachi"**.

Karachi's police chief, however, told that:

*"In the light of disclosures made by a detained suspect, big-wigs of a political party [MQM] provided help in procuring these arms and ammunition.*

*These arms were supposed to be used by the elements residing in London particularly with cooperation of RAW [Indian intelligence agency] for terror activities in the metropolis but it was foiled through timely action by security institutions.*

*These weapons were hidden for terror acts to be perpetrated by terrorists of a political party based in South Africa."*

All the recovered weapons were shifted to the office of Sindh Inspector General of Police. As per press release issued by Sindh Police, recovered weapons included 11 anti-aircraft guns, 17 grenade launchers, 39 LMGs, 9 RPG-7, 82 SMGs, 11 7-MM, one M-16, 32 China rifles 7.62, 10 G-3, 5 sniper rifles, 2 repeaters, 9 short SMGs and 245 magazines of SMGs and G-3. The police also claimed seizing 200 hand grenades, 2000 rifle grenades, 140 bullet-proof jackets and huge quantity of ammunition.

During his press conference, the Sindh AIG police informed the media that forensic tests will be conducted to determine whether the weapons had been used in the past to conduct terrorist activities in the metropolis. The police were looking into how long the house had been vacant and who it belonged to.

Referring to the 'Dawn' dated **5<sup>th</sup> October 2016**:

*"Then [on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015] a number of party workers, including member of MQM's Rabita Committee Amir Khan, were detained during the raid. Huge cache of arms seized near Nine Zero in Azizabad while **London elements with cooperation of RAW planning killings through network of political party based in South Africa [or else where around]."***

In March 2015, a large cache of ammunition was recovered by Rangers during a raid at MQM headquarters, Nine Zero. Rangers' spokesperson

Col Tahir told that the ammunition stolen from NATO containers was also seized during that search operation.

[Now see here **the 'Dawn' dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013;**

*The US embassy in Islamabad refuted media reports suggesting 19,000 shipping containers belonging to the US and International Security Assistance Force [ISAF] had been stolen from Karachi ports.*

*The head of the Sindh Rangers paramilitary force, Maj Gen Rizwan Akhtar, told the Supreme Court last week that about 19,000 containers had gone missing a few years ago and that a shipload of arms and ammunition had been brought to Karachi and their whereabouts were never ascertained. Local media reports suggested the containers carrying weapons may have belonged to NATO forces in Afghanistan.*

*The US Embassy held that:*

*"While the US routinely uses Karachi ports for both diplomatic and military shipments, neither the US nor ISAF has ever shipped weapons or ammunition via Karachi ports.*

*We have engaged the appropriate Pakistani authorities on this topic. We have underscored that the US is able to account for all shipments that have arrived in and transited Karachi ports."*

**On 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015; the US government again refuted the allegation; see below.**

[WASHINGTON: The US State Department has said that the United States and the International Security Assistance Force [ISAF] had never used the Karachi port to transport weapons and explosives.

*A Rangers spokesman told reporters in Karachi this week that they found weapons and ammunition stolen from NATO containers when they raided the MQM headquarters, Nine Zero, on Wednesday. The State Department, however, has sent out two tweets, rejecting the claim.*

*"For general information: The United States and ISAF have never used the Karachi port to transport weapons / explosives, said the first tweet.*

*In the second tweet, the State Department rejected the suggestion that weapons or explosives found at Nine Zero could have come from NATO containers.*

*Since there exists a strict and effective system for transporting weapons around the world, such incidents are impossible, it said".*

*Published in **Dawn, March 13th, 2015]***

A point to ponder was that it was the official stance of the US government in White House. One doesn't know that what was actually packed in ISAF containers and with the connivance of whom – corruption at high level has been quite rampant in US also. The CIA's role is also known to the whole world which is over and above the US administration sitting in Washington or the Congress or the Senate.

This was something Karachi people were talking about; look at its port, which remained under the control of criminals patronized by both PPP and the MQM. How many NATO containers had gone missing since 9/11 – follow the press news not the official stance of the US government. Some of them contained weapons that had ended up with terrorists; such weapons were there in caches all over the city.

The arms could be the ones stolen or secretly sold or gifted away [people could guess the countries like India, Iran, US or Israel] from NATO supplies, declared lost long ago.

Referring to **the 'China Post'** dated **9<sup>th</sup> October 2016:**

*"Even by the violent standards of Karachi, the size of the arms haul uncovered in a raid [on 5<sup>th</sup> October] is astonishing. The authorities say the haul — seized from a storage facility in an abandoned house in the Azizabad locality — is the city's biggest weapons' seizure. Among the big guns recovered are anti-aircraft guns, grenade launchers and an assortment of other ordnance better suited to the battle-field.*

*The location of the house where the weapons were recovered is close to Nine-Zero, the sealed MQM headquarters. Police say the weapons were to be used for acts of terrorism on Muharram 9 by **elements in London** in cahoots with RAW."*

The owner of the property was apparently coerced by "**political elements**" to let them use the house as a weapons dump. Despite the well-earned reputation of the MQM for violence, the fact that such heavy weaponry — including anti-aircraft guns — was recovered from this congested locality raises many questions.

- *How did such a large cache of weapons end up in one place, without the knowledge of the law-enforcement agencies, particularly the intelligence units?*
- *Many of the arms recovered were "**military grade**"; how did they remain undetected?*
- *Why the authorities didn't release information about the origin of the weapons and the elements responsible for building up this armoury.*

The arms haul dictated how precarious peace in the metropolis really was. Had the weapons been used as intended, the consequences could have been drastic. The level of violence in Karachi — be it of the ethnic, sectarian or criminal variety — were hoped to come down considerably as more such seizures were being tipped from various corners.

That kind of ammunition and arms were enough to hijack the city. And that's just one house, wonder how many such houses in Karachi could have hidden arms for MQM or some other outfit. Rangers were urged to investigate the arrested ones properly to recover every single illegal gun from the surroundings.

Some people raised fingers that the police and Rangers were not efficient enough. How could such amount of weapon or ammo reach inside the city in the first place; and no one was taking responsibility. It was caught from HQ of MQM which meant that political establishment was involved with attacks inside the metropolis city.

## **Scenario 163**

### **TERROR-FINANCING IN KARACHI**

#### **TALIBAN's FLURRY IN 2014 & AFTER:**

Five months of the Karachi operation led to the arrest of 568 TTP members, since September 2013 till ending January that year. That included the detention and custody of 296 people affiliated with the MQM, 101 with links to the Awami National Party [ANP] — a secular Pashtun political party — and 171 members of Lyari gangs allegedly associated with the PPP.

Sharfuddin Memon, Adviser to the Sindh's chief minister on security issues, however, claimed the operation had led to a 50% drop in assassinations

and kidnapping for ransom in the city; police morale was high but the conviction rate for serious crimes was just 5%. The law enforcing agencies [LEAs] were not feeling shy to deal with the Taliban insurgency as well.

Taliban factions were mainly based in districts with a majority population of Pashtuns; these areas that encircled the city included Baldia and the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate to the west and Gadap in the north. However, the residents in these areas were upset to feel that TTP's hold had gotten stronger over the past year where other crime had been seen low.

In addition to the main TTP faction from the Mehsud tribe of South Waziristan in the FATA, long established in Karachi, the city got increasingly plagued by other TTP factions from the Mohmand tribal area and the TTP Swat. Islamist militants also had influence over some non-Pashtun districts of the city, such as Lyari in the southwest where TTP ally *Lashkar e Jhangvi* [LeJ] had got a strong base.

In early 2014, the TTP dominated 33 of Karachi's 178 administrative units—known as union councils but then continued expanding in shanty settlements that merge into the surrounding desert. The militants were getting more educated recruits [due to acute unemployment], including non-Pashtuns, and spreading to neighbouring areas outside Karachi, including Hub to the west and Jamshoro to the northeast.

The Taliban milked money mainly from their own communities; on a monthly income of Rs:40,000, TTP used to take a levy of Rs:1,000 @2.5% called as '**Islamic Rate**'. Concrete blocks made for use in construction, a major business in the Pashtun areas, were then sold for Rs:18 each, of which three rupees used to go to the Taliban. The businessmen held that TTP's hold had hardened day by day over the past year.

Referring to '**the New York Times**' dated **11<sup>th</sup> August 2014**:

*"Till ending July 2014, Karachi's embattled police force had lost its 100th police officer in that year; during the year 2013 there were 166 police deaths, which was itself a record.*

*Since decades, the ethnic politics, sectarian militancy and old-fashioned criminal gangs had been contributing to that grim situation - but much of the toll came from the city's newest force for violent chaos, the Pakistani Taliban [TTP]."*

**On 7<sup>th</sup> August 2014;** the Taliban claimed their 102nd police victim, the official sources of police notified. Gunmen ambushed the victim, Sajjad Abbasi, a 35-year-old constable dressed in civilian clothing, as he pulled into a gas station on his motorcycle. It was the fifth police death at the Pirabad police station that year.

***Attacking on the security people in uniform, whether in army or police, had been the TTP's most effective strategy to spread terror in less time*** – all their history in FATA borders stands witness to it. They applied the same approach here in Karachi. In the sprawling Pashtun slums on the city's eastern and northern flanks, Taliban militants gunned down police officers, assaulted poorly defended police stations and sent suicide bombers to assassinate top police commanders.

Ghulam Qadir Thebo, the Karachi's Police Chief, once told media:

*"It's a very serious threat; the Taliban are well trained and well organized, with a network that is linked to global jihad – however, the new threat has spurred our lower and mid-ranking police "*

Security was quickly made tight at police stations and around police officers' homes. More than 1,000 former soldiers were inducted into the force. Officers mounted a series of hard-hitting operations, in conjunction with the paramilitary Rangers and intelligence services that hit the Taliban hard amidst usual baseless accusations of brutality.

The growing spate of killings on both sides dictating a shadow war that, till then, was limited to Karachi's Pashtun neighbourhoods. Laurent Gayer, French author of book, "**Karachi: Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City**" once spoke to the media:

*"It's about territorial control; the Taliban have taken over areas, brought in their people and established strongholds. The question is how far they can go.*

*In many ways, Karachi has become an adjunct of the conflict in the tribal belt. The city's militant factions are organized according to conflict-hit Waziristan, the Swat Valley and Mohmand."*

The circumstances around made the Taliban powerful players in the city's already complicated mosaic of violent gangs linked to crime, politics and ethnic groups. **Taliban attacks killed 80 Pashtunes, including 17 of-fice bearers of ANP**, and largely driven it from the city. They attacked

vaccination teams like in FATA and the police were subjected to unprecedented assaults.

The Police Station Mominabad was bombed three times in six months. One policeman was killed and two others were wounded in an attack in June [2014]; in July, a police inspector was shot dead as he travelled to work. The authorities responded by raising the station walls and installing surveillance cameras; yet several officers had applied for a transfer.

Even the traffic police came under fire; on 30<sup>th</sup> June two traffic officers were shot dead in Orangi area of Karachi.

The police were constrained by intense politicization in their ranks [*senior officers are often chosen for their allegiance to a political party in whole Pakistan*] — while the force remained dismally understaffed. Karachi had just one active-duty police officer for every 1,524 inhabitants. **Of the city's 27,000 officers, including clerical staff members, about 8,500 were then permanently engaged in "VIP duty" — guarding businessmen, politicians and government officials.**

Hassan Abbas, author of *The Taliban Revival* said in an interview:

*"Experts have long called for an overhaul of the police force as an urgently needed step to bolster Pakistan's stability. The people of Pakistan are resilient, but state institutions are failing them."*

**On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2015;** five militants of the then freshly formed Al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent [AQIS], including its Karachi Chief and Deputy Chief, were killed in an encounter in Orangi Town Karachi. The police had unearthed a bomb-making factory and seized a huge quantity of explosive material, three suicide jackets, laptop and some documents during the raid which was conducted on information about the hideout of AQIS militants in the Khairabad area.

The suspects were involved in the suicide attack on Rangers' officials at *Qalandria Chowk* in North Nazimabad a month earlier and were planning further attacks on security agencies.

[Later, **on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015;** two alleged AQIS militants were also killed in the city's *Gulshan e Iqbal* Block 13D; **an ISI officer had lost his life in the said operation.**]

**On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** the Inter-services Public Relations [ISPR], marking the **Zarb e Azb** Operation's first anniversary, interalia, said:

*"Zarb e Azb has shattered the Taliban's control & command system, affecting the activities of their Karachi factions. The Operation disrupted the Taliban militants' free Karachi-Miranshah movement by destroying their offices and compelling them to flee the area."*

However, the analysts claimed that actual action against the TTP in Karachi started after the attack on Army Public School in Peshawar in December 2014. Most of the key Taliban commanders and supporters in the city were killed by the Rangers after the Peshawar attack. The elderly figure of Pashtun Business Community in Karachi held:

*"We haven't seen the Taliban killing anyone or asking traders for extortion in the last six months. The TTP militants have disappeared and the residents of Pashtun neighbourhoods are now feeling secure."*

*However, now police and other law enforcement agencies harass the community on the pretext that they have been involved in providing financial support to the TTP.*

*We have been forced to pay millions of rupees as protection money to avoid being targeted by the TTP, mainly because of the failure of the government to provide them security."*

Referring to Zia Ur Rehman's essay appeared in '**the News**' dated **14<sup>th</sup> July 2015:**

***"....that even a number of police officers in Taliban strongholds paid 'protection money' to local TTP leaders during their control."***

It was astonishing but the fact remained that during those days, four factions of the TTP, as detailed earlier also, were operating in Karachi city.

The TTP South Waziristan faction was led by Khan Said alias Sajna and mainly comprised Mehsud militants. The group was then working independently after leaving the TTP in May 2014. His associate Wali headed the group in Karachi but Khan Zaman alias *Goonga* was the operational commander in the city; later the law enforcement agencies, in the ongoing

crackdown, killed many of their key leaders and militants, forcing them to go into hiding or flee the city.

The key TTP leaders then killed in Karachi included Abid Mucharr, Abid Chota, Zikria Mehsud, Mufti Javed, Khazan Gul, Zahidullah, Ubaidullah, Amir Zada and Khwajlak. Khan Zaman and Wali's whereabouts were not known till July 2015 while the Rangers were after them.

Another faction of the TTP Mehsud militants was led by Sheharyar Mehsud, who was the successor of Hakimullah Mehsud in Waziristan; one Daud Mehsud, a former policeman in Karachi, was then heading the group in the city. The group was weakened in Karachi because of their fighting with militants of the TTP Sajna faction; then most of them left Karachi.

The TTP Swat chapter was loyal to the organisation's central chief, Maulana Fazlullah. In Karachi, their organisational set-up was very secretive and mainly involved in the killing of Awami National Party [ANP] leaders and policemen in the West district.

The TTP Mohmand faction that renamed itself the ***TTP – Jama'at Ahrar*** after parting ways with the main TTP in 2014 was led by Abdul Wali alias Omar Khalid Khurasani. The group had otherwise gone weakened because of the killing of their key leaders and supporters in **Zarb e Azb** main operation; its existence in Karachi was not known till mid 2015 at least.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015;** four Taliban terrorists involved in police officials' killings were arrested with the help of intelligence agencies; government weapons were also recovered from them. The arrested suspects were involved in killing four police officials in Korangi among others.

**On 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** the Taliban claimed responsibility for killing prominent blogger and rights activist Khurram Zaki, who was gunned down in Karachi. He was killed just after he had tweeted on Sadiq Khan MP, on winning his London Mayor elections:

Qari Saifullah, a purported spokesman for the Hakimullah Mehsud group of the TTP, said in a statement that Zaki had been targeted for criticizing a prominent cleric Maulana Abdul Aziz associated with Islamabad's Red Mosque.

Zaki was riddled with bullets while sitting in a roadside cafe in Karachi's northern district, who was then leading a campaign against Maluna Abdul Aziz for the latter's alleged support for militancy.

**TERROR ACCOUNTS FROZEN:**

The Pakistan Rangers reinforced their on-going National Action Plan [NAP] Karachi operation against militants and criminals in Karachi in mid 2014 making it a part of **Operation Zarb e Azb**. More intensified in early 2015 after Peshawar Army School massacre, but the ruling PPP and the MQM both parties kept on increasingly saying *'it appears to be aimed at them'*.

The intelligence agencies and the Police in Karachi maintained that **'many criminals have powerful political protection'**. A list consisting of the names of 350 high level figures including corrupt government officials and politicians was purposefully made open in media as the ongoing targeted Karachi operation was set to enter its second phase.

**On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015;** Pakistan government resolved to freeze a number of accounts used to funnel Rs:10.2 billion in cash to terror and Anti-Money Laundering [AML] suspects, officials overseeing the National Action Plan [NAP] told the media. Law enforcement agencies also recovered Rs:101.7 million either from clerics or workers of banned organisations.

Those actions — taken with the assistance of the State Bank of Pakistan — were part of the overall efforts to throttle the flow of foreign funding to terrorists and proscribed organisations in the country.

Nine days after militants mounted a bloody attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014, the government formulated the action plan in a bid to purge the country of all kinds of terrorism. The National Counter Terrorism Authority [NACTA] was asked to move ahead under UN Security Council resolutions 1267 and 1373; Pakistan was bound to stop terror funding.

The plans were also in hand to establish global sanctions regime against designated individuals and entities associated with notorious global terror networks. The civilian and intelligence agencies had already arrested 150 people, half of them clerics, in violation of laws dealing with *hawala, hundi*, suspicious transactions and anti-money laundering by registering cases against 130 individuals who were getting money from foreign countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Australia, the US, the UK, Hong Kong, Qatar, the UAE and Kuwait.

*"The said Terror Funding Drive was launched all over Pakistan. The Law Enforcement Agencies [LEAs] held 83 people and registered 64 cases under hawala and hundi, 50 people were apprehended and 57 cases were registered under anti-money laundering and 17 were detained and nine cases registered under suspicious transactions.*

*Crackdown against those who delivered hate speeches and violators of loudspeakers, the law enforcement agencies registered 5,017 cases against clerics while 4,647 of them were arrested.*

*Over 3,758 clerics were held in Punjab, 508 in Khyber PK, 197 in Sindh, 94 in Islamabad, 86 in Balochistan and 30 clerics were detained in Gilgit-Baltistan. Police had confiscated more than 1,466 instruments from several mosques and madrassas across the country; 40 shops were also sealed that were selling and distributing hate material.*

*Senator Tahir Mashhadi of MQM believed that a better financial regulation system could lead agencies to choke terror funding. Meanwhile, the security agencies held 29,612 suspects who had alleged links with banned outfits since the crackdown started after 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014.*

*The law enforcement agencies questioned 0.32 million suspects in more than 27,000 raids across the country. The Khyber PK police took the lead over other provinces by arresting over 16,813 suspects while the security agencies detained 3,466 suspects in Balochistan."*

**On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** formal approval was given for the next phase of the Karachi operation in which economic terrorism was to be rooted out and corrupt high-ups including bureaucrats and politicians were aimed at to face the legal consequences. National Accountability Bureau [NAB] and Federal Investigation Agency [FIA] were green signalled in that connection. Chairman NAB Qamar Zaman Chaudhry had flown into Karachi after having a number of vital meetings in the federal capital; he had presided over that significant meeting in Karachi himself.

**On 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** the special apex committee meeting in Karachi decided to extend the writ of law enforcement agencies [LEAs] to city's weakly governed areas, DG ISPR Asim Bajwa tweeted:

- *"Effective policing and surveillance will be carried out in Karachi's suburbs to prevent sneaking terrorist attacks.*
- *....that the department officials will be appointed on transparency and merit to help the system for long term sustainability.*
- *.....that the criminals will be punished regardless of their political affiliations.*
- *.... That the wrongs and abettors will be apprehended regardless of political, religious, ethnic and sectarian identity."*

The meeting was held at the Corps Headquarters in Karachi to discuss the security situation following a deadly attack on the Ismaili community in Safooa Goth killing 44 persons at the spot; the armed gunmen had boarded a bus and opened indiscriminate fire on commuters from the most harmless sect. Militant group Jundullah had claimed responsibility for the attack.

The said meeting was attended by the Sindh chief minister, governor Sindh, the army chief, Director General of the ISI, chief secretary and IG Police Sindh, Director General of MI, DGMO and Director General ISPR with other related departmental chiefs.

During the day, initial investigation reports had revealed that the culprits hailed from Afghanistan. Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry, meanwhile, claimed that India's spy agency RAW was involved in creating unrest in Pakistan.

Later during the day, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met with former president Asif Zardari at the PM House in Islamabad; the two discussed the apex committee meeting and how to combat terrorism in Karachi.

To follow the Apex Committee's decisions and for their implementation in city, a meeting of the city's police chiefs was immediately called to discuss the security strategy in the aftermath of Safora massacre. The meeting at the Central Police Office [CPO] was headed by Karachi police chief Additional IG Ghalum Qadir Thebo, heading the probe committee, and attended by other high-ups such as DIG East, DIG West, CIA and Counter-Terrorism Department. A hefty cash prize for also decided for the informer of culprits of that sad event.

**On 15<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed that the government remained committed to wiping out the menace of terrorism. While addressing a ceremony at the PM's Office, he said special courts had been established after the unanimous decision of parliament for the speedy trial of terrorists. He also recalled his recent visit to Kabul, saying

he and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani were on the same page for joint measures to counter terrorism.

**On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** in the Apex Committee meeting presided by the Chief Minister Sindh and attended by the whole Sindh cabinet and top bureaucracy, Maj Gen Bilal Akbar, DG Rangers, told that land-grabbing mafia operated systematically under the patronage of prominent political parties in Karachi. He recommended a crackdown on terror-funding activities across Karachi, in which the law-enforcing agency claimed several influential personalities of Sindh were directly involved.

Maj Gen Bilal Akbar briefed the apex committee on terrorism-funding activities in Karachi, highlighting the involvement of several high-profile personalities in land grabbing and collecting extortion. Also that illegally acquired funds were channelled to various criminal outfits and individuals — including those involved in the Lyari gang wars. Such funds were also distributed to several 'influential' personalities and officials in Sindh.

In his report, DG Rangers said donations collected in the guise of charitable works, even money from hides of sacrificial animals, were being injected into criminal activities in Sindh, adding that **'armed wings of political and religious parties have been feeding on these funds'**.

Maj Gen Bilal Akbar also revealed that money collected from shops and markets via extortion totalled billions of rupees, adding that political parties, city administrators, police officials, construction companies and real estate agents were involved in china cutting. The land-grabbing mafia operated systematically under the tutelage of prominent political and sectarian parties in Karachi; pointing towards MQM, ANP, PPP and the LeJ.

Then the Apex Committee of Sindh decided to come down hard on the financiers of terrorists and the sources they generated money from. Information Minister Sharjeel Memon said:

*"Today, it has been decided that action will be taken against the financiers of terrorists, land grabbers, suspects involved in collecting 'fitra' for vested purposes and extortion because this money is used in terrorism-related activities."*

The meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah, was attended by Governor Sindh Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan, Corps Commander Karachi Lt Gen Naved Mukhtar, Director General [DG] Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar, Chief and Home secretaries and Inspector General [IG] police.

**{TERROR FINANCES:** *Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy remained mainly focused only on bombing Waziristan; no one planned on cutting off the supply lines of militants.*

*The Pakistan Army and law enforcement agencies needed to tackle this problem head on; they could go serious about dismantling the firepower of terrorists but missed the line throughout post Nine Eleven era.*

*There were two basic funding channels for the militants.*

- *Firstly, charity collected through Zakat, Sadqat, madrasas and mosques, revenue earned through shops built around mosques, the collection of animal hides and remittances sent from overseas Pakistanis – but those channels were only a fraction of the funds.*
- *Secondly, incomes through criminal activities such as bank robberies, kidnapping for ransom, banditry, illegal taxation and drugs – the main sources of income.*

*Apart from one or two Saudi or other Gulf princes who used to fund terrorists in individual capacity in the name of Jihad; since a decade those sources had gone dry. However, money through charities from Gulf countries created issues; during first decade of this century, this charity was about Rs:90 billion – where was it spent and whether the government knew about its spending - NO.*

*Zakat money from Karachi and Faisalabad only had been enough for extremists; Lal Masjid in Islamabad was funded by prominent businessmen and none else.*

*During Eid, Mehsud tribesmen living in Karachi are forced to pay 'bhatta' in the name of donations for fighters in Waziristan. They normally work as teams. If one group of militants collected money through criminal activities in Darra Adam Khel, another made collections in Khyber.*

*Using drug money to finance terrorism is still appreciated in Afghanistan. In Pakistan, the smuggling route used to transfer drugs and other illicit items used to be taxed by militants operating in those areas.*

*Federal Investigation Agency [FIA] still keeps counter-terrorism wing that included a section on financing. They monitored all home remittances coming in Pakistan through any bank or private source but could not contribute any significant information ever.*

*Ministry of Finance's financial monitoring unit [FMU] is located in the State Bank of Pakistan building in Karachi – but not a single case it referred ever for disciplinary or penal action.*

*Despite strict checks to monitor the illegal 'hawala' system of sending remittances home, there were around 10,000 people or locations from where such illegal transactions used to take place. Even otherwise, a group needs only about one lac rupees [about £900] to carry out suicide mission in the city – the amount could be sent from Islamabad or Peshawar through new schemes using fake NIC numbers any time.*

*Monitoring was also exercised over the huge amounts of money got pumped through stock exchange markets in the Karachi Stock Exchange [KSE]; various powerful stockbrokers in the city were working on behalf of criminal syndicates and underworld dons to convert black money into white. Reportedly, much of this money landed into coffers of militants and their sympathisers.}*

The Sindh Information Minister Memon revealed that 48 seminaries in Karachi and Sindh had been identified as hatcheries for extremist elements; and that the action against them was ready but no one ever heard any progress under any said seminary. The participants were all set to expedite action on the decisions taken and it brought fruit during the next few months too.

### **CHINA CUTTING NEXUS:**

**On 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** an evil nexus of political leaders, civil servants and gang lords was found by Rangers involved in nurturing and sheltering organised crime and terrorism in Karachi. Billions of rupees collected from extortion, land grabbing, targeted killings and rackets were flowing in to the coffers of some top personalities of the Sindh province, DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar said in a briefing to the apex committee held the other day.

The Rangers' report, made open through press release, estimated the volume of crime economy at over Rs:230 billion a year. While the DG Rangers suggested elimination of terrorist networks for a peaceful city, the apex committee proposed setting up a special body to look into the proposal seriously.

Besides heinous crimes, well organised networks were running illegal marriage halls, illegal parking, match fixing and beggar mafias. The funds from terrorist activities were being distributed among the various factions of the criminal gangs of Lyari besides corrupt politicians and bureaucrats.

Political parties, city district government, district administration, construction companies, estate agents and police officials were all parties in that heinous crime of the land grabbing and were part of mafia. All they worked in a coordinated manner and most of them were patronised by big political parties of Karachi while some top political leaders and builders were also involved in this racket.

The report said that the money obtained illegally from the Karachi Fish Harbour was distributed among criminal gangs of Lyari and some influential personalities of Sindh. The amount extorted from small markets, roadside vendors, graveyards, schools and even from NGO Charities and trusts scampered into billions of rupees.

**China cutting** emerged as a new trend which means *illegally selling out green belts and service lanes in shape of small plots*. Land grabbing and china cutting could be divided into three parts: construction on state land, encroachment on state land and on private properties.

**Iranian diesel**, smuggled and sold to petrol stations in the city was an important source of funding for terrorism and crime. The money was used for raising private armies of political groups in Sindh and of the landlords. In this illegal business, influential persons of Sindh were involved and they regularly got their share.

**Water** was another source of income for gangsters. Illegal supply of water remained a billion rupee business in the city.

**Ghost Employees;** in the previous eras, various governments devised the system of ghost employees and the salaries obtained from those accounts were distributed monthly among a well organised racket of political leaders and civil servants. Such black money was used for promoting other crimes and terrorism.

DG Rangers openly declared to the media that an estimated Rs:230 billion annually was obtained through various illegal means which was a loss to the national exchequer and put the citizens to untold suffering.

Sindh Rangers' operation was otherwise successfully continuing against terrorism, target killings and other crimes but the elimination of terror networking was also essential for laying the foundation of durable peace in the metropolis and in the country.

Political parties, who were blamed and their leadership which was being deprived of their billions rupee income, started raising high voices across the spectrum while demanding open investigation and transparency into claims made by DG Rangers on illegal rackets in Karachi.

PPP's Senator Aitzaz Ahsan, who himself is amongst few clean politicians in Pakistan, tried to nullify Rangers' Report through a media conference outside Parliament House next day – but could not face the media when questions were raised. His effort to defend his party's corrupt colleagues had miserably failed.

Meanwhile, Pakistan *Tehreek e Insaaf* [PTI]'s Shah Mehmood Qureshi demanded the federal government to make the Rangers report public. The public had unanimously given their mandate against terrorism so it was high time that the government could choke the financiers of such heinous acts and eradicate terrorism. Of course, it was the first time top government officials, businessmen and bureaucrats were named in a high-profile report by the Rangers.

MQM's Chief Altaf Hussain, however, lashed out at the army for interfering in issues relating to the police and civil administration, saying the army was only responsible for the protection of the territorial boundaries of the country. The Chief held that the allegations regarding hides of the sacrificial animals and *Zakat* etc posted by the Sindh Rangers were baseless and unfortunate.

#### **LAND OFFICES RAIDED IN KARACHI:**

**On 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015;** at around 3:10pm, the Rangers raided the Sindh Building Control Authority [SBCA] offices searching for evidence of land-grabbing, though provoking a furious response among the PPP's corrupt

politicians as they were allegedly involved in illegal construction and China Cutting – illegal plotting of state owned land in the metropolis.

The paramilitary force surrounded the SBCA building for several hours and only ended its siege after grilling officials regarding illegal construction and approval of controversial building plans for political consideration or huge monetary gains. Rangers' officials confiscated important data relating to such unlawful practices besides interrogating SBCA staff regarding former Director General of the building authority, Manzoor Qadir.

Separately, ***on the same day***, five officials of the Lines Area Development Project, accused of China Cutting 1,200 plots worth Rs:4.5 billion and selling them to builders and land grabbing mafia, were arrested by the National Accountability Bureau [NAB]. The law enforcement agencies were carrying out operations against criminal and terrorists in the port city since two years.

The arrested officials included Deputy Directors Lines Area development project Farid Naseem and Shahid Umer, Additional Directors Atta Abbas and Rashid Nasim, and Director Waseem Iqbal. The said 1200 plots were sold for bribes instead of being auctioned – and allegedly the money was used for terrorism and financing terrorists participating in gang wars in Karachi.

Rangers' personnel acquired a stash of data from the Sindh Building Control Authority [SCBA] and took photographs of certain documents there during their visit to the Civic Centre. Their appearance sparked a wave of panic in the neighbourhood. The '**Express Tribune**' told:

*"Besides photographing documents, the Rangers also obtained data from the design section and Challan department through computer USBs along with other important files.*

*The Rangers officials also inquired about the former SBCA DG Manzoor Qadir and asked the SBCA officials concerned not to leave the country or city."*

Mumtaz Haider, Director Master Plan was the acting in-charge since Qadir had resigned about a month earlier; Qadir disappeared since that day he resigned and had gone abroad on long leave.

In a heated speech after the Rangers raid, former president Asif Ali Zardari warned the army not to overstep its mandate while threatening:

***"Don't disturb us or we will also respond to a brick with a brick," he said. "There is a limit to everything. Do not interfere in matters where you have no authority."***

[The full details of Mr Zardari's threat have been discussed on the earlier pages in this book.]

However, Sindh CM Qaim ali Shah immediately addressed a letter accusing the Rangers of overstepping their authority and declaring that ***"this is an attempt to usurp the mandate of the political government"***.

The CM Sindh and its cabinet had decided to investigate these allegations in detail but the implementation was pushed into the dark tunnels of lethargy through an announcement that ***'a committee will be formed'*** – till today no committee formed nor any investigation launched by the Sidh government or its chief minister.

**Next day;** Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah constituted a three-member task force to examine the report submitted by DG Rangers about the financing of terrorism through organised crime.

The task force, which comprised Justice (rtd) Ghulam Sarwar Korai, District and Sessions Judge (rtd) Arjun Ram K Talreja and provincial Home Secretary Mukhtiar Soomro, was directed to submit its report within four weeks. The chief minister told the task force to examine the report and evidence about financing terrorism, ascertain responsibility and recommend measures to curb these illegal practices.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** a joint team of Pakistan Rangers Sindh and Federal Investigation Agency [FIA] during earlier night conducted a raid on the land department of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation [KMC], Civic Centre to seize record of official lands, estimated to be hundreds of acres, allegedly allotted to private persons through fraudulent means.

Babar Chughtai, a former Chairman of the Association of Builders and Developers [ABAD], told that the said raid coincided with other agency's simultaneous action. The story was in air since long that corruption at the KMC was linked to incidents of violence and money laundering; thus the FIA jumped in the matter as money laundering was its domain.

The FIA revealed that around 700-800 acres of land belonging to Federal Government institutions was given to private persons through questionable means. This land was located in *Surjani Town* and Northern Bypass. An

inquiry into this land scam was initiated. The land record to this effect was seized during the raid. Initially, the inquiry focused on alleged usurpation of the lands belonging to federal government but there was also a move to initiate the same probe about the lands belonging to Sindh government.

During the raid, however, the FIA took away 17,000 files, it was alleged. Might be an exaggeration as the KMC officials got a chance to miss-appropriate the whole record to destroy the evidence of corruption in remaining files and put all burden on FIA's shoulders. However, the said move of the FIA had immensely displeased the Sindh government.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015;** Sindh's Local Government Department wrote a letter to the FIA in this regard, contending that the FIA had 'transgressed' its powers by raiding the Karachi Municipal Corporation [KMC] offices and warned it of initiating '**criminal and civil proceedings**' if the seized land record was not returned. The FIA contended that they seized the land record to probe the land scam with proper procedure and added that any effort to 'hamper' the probe would be likely to 'benefit' the criminals connected with rogue politicians.

According to the Sindh Local Government's letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> July, the FIA raided offices of the KMC's land department with '*no prior information*' and '*after office hours.*' The Sindh government argued that the jurisdiction of the FIA was confined to matters pertaining to the federal government — but the KMC was not part of the federal govt. The confiscation of the original record of KMC's land department from the '10th floor' of the Civic Centre, was termed as '*abuse of power*'. The letter said that:

*"...the ill intent of the FIA officials is evident from the fact that instead of making an inventory and making copies of the said record, original files were taken away in an illegal and unlawful manner without proper procedural formalities."*

FIA in his response to the Sindh government's letter pointed out that the FIA was engaged in a formal enquiry into funding of criminal activities in Karachi, which had its origin in the illegal sale and purchase of land — a practice also known as '**China-cutting**.' It further elaborated that:

*".....it was expected that the KMC and the Karachi Development Authority [KDA] would work shoulder-to-shoulder with the FIA and assist in completion of the said enquiry, which was purely in 'public interest.'*

*But, regrettably, instead of appreciating genuine efforts of FIA, an attempt is being made to hamper the legal proceedings under the FIA Act of 1974. KMC was bound under law to provide assistance and information to FIA for completion of the enquiry on merit."*

The FIA's Counter-Terrorism Wing had registered Enquiry [No: 11/2015] and seized relevant land record under "*proper seizure means.*" In fact the said enquiry was registered on the basis of interrogation of various accused persons who had disclosed that they remained involved in the menace of land grabbing and China-cutting in different areas of Karachi on state-owned amenity plots including play grounds, parks, land of mosques etc. and built up properties by KDA, KMC and Board of Revenue, of course with connivance of inside officials.

The detainees had also disclosed that huge amounts were shared / transferred to activists of a few political parties of Karachi and the said funds were in fact used for criminal and terrorist activities. During interrogation, names of senior officers of the Sindh government such as head of Water Board, Manzoor Qadir Kaka, former DG KBCA; Saif Abbas, Najam-uz-Zaman, Arif, Shakir Langra, Iqbal Nawaz - Directors of land department of KDA; DSP Javed Abbas, etc had also surfaced.

Some political workers namely M Ahsan alias Chunno Mamo, brother of Muhammad Anwar of MQM in London, Nooruddin Khumani, Mohsin Shaikhani, Ilyas Sehgal, Hammad Siddiqui, Anjum Jameel Siddiqui, Zafar Faridi, Naeem Yousufzai had also come on record.

***[The two most prominent instances of such collaboration were the actions taken against Dr Asim Hussain, former federal petroleum minister, and Sultan Qamar Siddiqui, the vice president of the Fishermen Co-operative Society.]***

The two dignitaries belonged to the PPP; the former was a close confidant of Mr Zardari and was still officially the Chairman of Sindh's Higher Education Commission; while the latter was considered close to some senior PPP figures in Sindh government. The terrorism allegations against them, however, link Hussain with MQM's target killers and Siddiqui with religious militants who allegedly killed more than 40 Ismaili Shiites in Karachi's Safoora Goth earlier that year.

The investigations revealed that most of the record pertaining to China-cutting available in the KDA office was fake. Director FIA Shahid Hayat pointed out that the FIA had seized record only from the 3rd floor of the

Civic Centre, not from the 10th floor, and did it on the pointation of KDA officers who admitted that:

***"....the 'said files' was not part of official record of KDA rather it was prepared solely by the activists of a political party and it was exclusively controlled by those activists.***

***.....those special files were fraudulently prepared thus giving right of land to different people illegally for mostly monetary considerations and huge amounts, which did not become part of govt. treasury.***

***....evidence also came on record to suggest that money realized through these illegal activities was being laundered to Dubai / UAE and UK through banking as well as illegal channels."***

FIA also suggested a joint team consisting of FIA, NAB, Sindh government's Anti-Corruption Establishment and Sindh Local Govt. to investigate the scam, which initial investigations suggest involved ***"tens of billions of rupees."*** Also that 'Intimidation of a public servant in order to force him to refrain from discharging his lawful duties constitutes offence punishable under section 6 (1)(m) of ATA 1997,' warned the Director FIA.

Astonishingly, next day, Chief Minister Sindh's spokesperson in a statement said there was no "controversy" between the Sindh government and the FIA - the FIA had agreed to return the seized land record. Perhaps a working relationship had been developed.

Later, the case and the files were transferred to the National Accountability Bureau [NAB] for onward process and investigations into the whole set of misdeeds. In such cases the federal authorities – the Rangers, the NAB and the FIA – were indeed closely collaborating.

On the parallel lines, the PPP launched a much calculated move of accusing the Pak-Army of trying to usurp the powers of Sindh government, intensifying a showdown between the military and politicians in Karachi. Since the first week of June that year, politicians and the military were found trading insults and taunts over corruption in the mega-city.

PPP politicians from Sindh started raising alarms that the military was seeking to weaken the main political parties in Karachi. In fact they were scared

of their own mega scandals of corruption thus of slowly tightening of the military's grip around them.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015;** Federal Minister Gen Abdul Qadir Baloch had claimed that the ISPR statement about weak governance was actually directed against the performance of the Sindh government which had failed to take action on the report of Rs:230bn annual corruption.

**Next day;** Senior Sindh Minister Nisar Khuhro 'corrected' the media that the Rangers' report on corruption had failed to come up with any proof before a three-member body led by a retired judge of the Sindh High Court to substantiate its allegation.

Speaking to reporters, the senior minister termed the statement of Mr Baloch – as '*irresponsible*'.

Without naming the Rangers, Khuhro went on to say that nobody appeared before the three-member task force headed by retired Justice Ghulam Sarwar Korai with proof and, therefore, the allegation stood rejected.

***[Forgetting that Pakistani rogue judiciary's role is world known; Pakistan has been ranked at no:192 out of 197 countries by World Judicial Forum whereas Pakistan's military ranked amongst first FIVE in the world.***

***How a Major General rank army officer could appear before a partisan retired judges committee – especially constituted to sign a clean chit for sitting PPP's lethargic and corrupt government.]***

Mr Khuhro roared:

*"...if you will talk about us, we will talk about you and this will go on for all times to come.*

***85 cases of terrorism had been scrutinised and 74 cases were recommended for trial in military courts but the federal government had approved only 11 cases."***

Khuro's remarks clearly indicated that it was the nexus within the PML[N]'s federal government which was patronising the terror activities in the country – Rana Sanaulah and Ch nisar Ali were targeted. That meeting was presided over by CM Syed Qaim Ali Shah and attended by Governor Dr Ish-

ratul Ibad, Mr Khuhro, Home Minister Sohail Siyal, Chief Secretary, IG Sindh police and other senior officials.

**On 25<sup>th</sup> September 2016;** in a major move to clamp down on terrorism financing, the State Bank of Pakistan [SBP] directed all banks in the country to freeze accounts worth millions of rupees linked to 2,021 individuals listed on the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997.

*"All banks, development finance institutions and microfinance banks have been advised to take immediate action as per requirement of the law against individuals, whose names are included in the lists of fourth schedulers provided by the National Counter-Terrorism Authority [NACTA]."*

*Section 11-O of ATA provides for freezing and seizing of money or other property owned directly or indirectly by a proscribed person."*

A list of 2,021 individuals — mostly leaders and office-bearers of sectarian groups — was sent to banks along with the directive. Some prominent names on the list were Maulana Abdul Aziz [Lal Masjid], Mohsin Najfi [Shia leader], Maulana Ahmed Ludhianvi [ASWJ], Aurangzeb Farooqi [ASWJ], Allama Maqsood Domki [Majlis Wahdat e Muslimeen), Pariyal Shah [ASWJ], Maulvi Kabir [ASWJ], Sibtain Shirazi [defunct Tehreek e Jafria Pakistan], Mirza Ali [defunct TJP], Ramzan Mengal [LeJ], Sheikh Nayyar [defunct TJP] and Shahid Bikik [Lyari *Amn* Committee].

Interestingly, the list also had names of some people who had died.

More than half of the listed persons [1,443] were from Punjab, followed by Sindh [226], Balochistan [193], Gilgit-Baltistan [106], Islamabad [27] and Azad Kashmir [26].

No one from Khyber PK was included in the list.

The list sent to the banks did not include the names of all 'fourth schedulers'; the NACTA officials held that the complete list was between 6,500 and 8,000 names and might go impossible to implement it seriously. But it was not clear what criterion was used to include names in the list forwarded to the banks.

*[The federal government lists someone as a proscribed person in the fourth schedule if he is suspected of involvement in terrorism, or is an activist, office-bearer, or an associate of an organisation*

*kept under observation under Section 11D or proscribed under Section 11B; and is part of an organisation or group suspected to be involved in terrorism or sectarianism.]*

It is believed to be the first time that freezing of such a large number of accounts on suspicion of link to terrorism was ordered in Pakistan. The financial aspect of terrorism had received little attention till then. The latest move followed criticism that not enough was being done to squelch terrorism financing. NACTA's former Director General Tariq Pervez described:

*".....the SBP decision is a **long-awaited step in the right direction**. It must be followed up by other actions required under the law, including cancellation / denial of passports and arms licences and travel ban for the listed persons."*

Director of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies [PIPS] Amir Rana was sceptical about whether the move would substantially dent the financial sources of banned organisations. His concern was that:

*"....the freeze order focuses on the leadership of the sectarian groups, while hardcore terrorists are absent from the list.*

*Moreover, accounts of individuals have been frozen, whereas no action has been taken against accounts of banned groups."*

In fact, a comprehensive action covering both traditional and non-traditional sources was required instead of just targeting the normal banking.

## **Scenario 164**

### **KARACHI IN YEAR 2016 - I**

#### **HIGH CRIME CONTINUED IN 2016:**

**On 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016;** an Assistant Sub-Inspector [ASI] of police and his two accomplices were arrested for kidnapping people for ransom. The SHO and two other officers of the Pakistan Bazaar police station were suspended following the arrest of ASI Akram and his accomplices, Mushtaq and Umair, who impersonated as Counter-Terrorism Department [CTD] officials.

SSP West Karachi Azfar Mahesar received a complaint from a citizen a night before that some men, claiming to be CTD officials, had kidnapped his brother, Jamshed and were demanding money for his release. The SSP ordered Mohammadpur pp in-charge Imran Gujjar to handle the case.

Gujjar started [covered] negotiations with the kidnapers and a ransom amount of Rs:0.1 million was finalised. The officer then called them to a location near the CTD Garden HQ for handing over the cash. Gujjar with a police team rushed to the scene in civies but did not find the kidnapers there. Later, the officer and his team traced the call and arrested Umair, who was negotiating with Gujjar on the phone.

Umair was taken to the Mohammadpur post where he told interrogators that he worked for Mushtaq, who had ties with Pakistan Bazaar police officers. Umair was then told to call Mushtaq and inform him that he had received the money.

Later, the police team tracked down Mushtaq and arrested him in an area on the outskirts of the city. During interrogation, Mushtaq disclosed that he kidnapped citizens on the directives of ASI Akram and other police officers.

The SSP West informed Additional IG Karachi Mushtaq Mehar about the ring of kidnapers. The Karachi police chief ordered the suspension of Pakistan Bazaar SHO Zaheer Ahmed and demoted him. He also directed the SSP West to arrest the officers and rescue the kidnap victim.

On the SSP West's orders, Gujjar raided the Pakistan Bazaar police station where he found that ASI Akram and his other associates had already been rounded up by Rangers and the abducted man also rescued. The SSP West suspended the office crew of the Pakistan Bazaar police station for their involvement in the kidnappings. The Karachi police chief ordered a departmental inquiry into the case also.

**On 17<sup>th</sup> January 2016;** brother of PML[N]'s local leader, Mir Ishtiaq Baloch, was shot dead in Lyari's Baghdadi area in the early hours of the day ahead of a planned 'peace rally'. A passer-by was also shot at and wounded in the gun attack. The victim had also contested the recent local government election on a Union Council Chairman seat in Lyari.

Mir Ishtiaq Baloch, alias Mulla Pappu, 35, was sitting with his friends in his office of Union Council-7 on Ahmed Shah Bukhari Road when a gunman attacked him; a passerby, Irfan, was also wounded. They were taken to the Civil Hospital Karachi, where doctors declared Ishtiaq as dead. It was no doubt a targeted killing incident.

He had contested for the Chairman seat of UC-7, where he was gunned down, and was defeated by the PPP candidate with a margin of 40 votes. He had challenged the results before a returning officer, who advised him to submit the same when election tribunals would be set up. PML[N] leader Mir Ashfaq Baloch said:

*"I had announced that we would take out a rally on 'peace' in Lyari on Sunday, which was supposed to pass through several areas but the gangsters killed my brother.*

*I wanted to make Lyari a cradle of peace but the gangsters did not appreciate our efforts and pumped five bullets into the body of my brother. Thus they turned the planned peace rally into the funeral procession of my brother."*

However, a senior police officer told the media that violence had resurfaced in Lyari at a time when political alignment or realignment is taking place for top slots of DMC South. A night before, some miscreants had thrown a hand grenade, which landed near a parked mobile van of the Chakiwara police. The police were also looking into the possibility that the suspects might have wanted to target PPP UC chairman's office but threw away a grenade on seeing the police standing nearby.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016;** the Rangers arrested six suspects of terrorist activities in Karachi, including four officials of the **Fisherman Cooperative Society** [FCS] who were allegedly working as facilitators of Lyari gangsters; they were Saleem Deedak, Mehar Bux, Mohammad Saeed Baloch and Dil Murad of Kalri area. The suspects were moved to the Rangers HQ for interrogation and later taken to an Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC], which allowed their preventive detention for 90 days.

The initial interrogation showed that the four were affiliated with the Aziz Jan Baloch and Baba Ladla groups of Lyari and were working as their facilitators. They further disclosed that on orders of Uzair Baloch they had recruited 150 men who belonged to the Lyari gang war. They admitted providing funds to the Baloch Liberation Army. The Rangers spokesman said criminals of the Lyari gang war and Baloch Liberation Army purchased weapons with funds provided by the suspects to carry out acts of terrorism in Karachi and Balochistan.

The four also allegedly provided millions of rupees acquired through corruption to well-known political personalities of Sindh. They were nominated in murder FIRs at different police stations of Karachi but the cases were taken back on political grounds.

A larger number of civil society activists and residents of Lyari organised a protest outside the Karachi Press Club in the afternoon demanding immediate release of their Fisher Folk organisation. The Rangers did not bring Saeed Baloch, who was also Secretary General of the FCS's labour union, to court, so some people of Lyari jointly organised the protest to press the government for his release. The groups also went to the Sindh High Court [SHC] against that alleged illegal detention. Fatima Majeed, the PFF's Vice-Chairperson, demanded a transparent inquiry into the case saying:

*"Saeed Baloch is a prominent civil society activist who has been struggling for fisherfolk's rights since the inception of the PFF. There is some misunderstanding and the Rangers should investigate it properly."*

Karamat Ali, Director of the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research, said ***bureaucrats in government institutions were involved in corruption***, while Baloch was the Secretary General of the FCS's labour union. "How can a trade unionist be part of embezzling the funds?" he questioned.

The FCS' troubles started when the provincial government appointed Dr Nisar Morai, close aide to the PPP leader Mr Zardari, as its Chairman in January 2014, replacing the previous one through illegal means. It was a general perception that in the fishing industry, a myriad of problems, including corruption, extortion and security, followed that controversial appointment.

Rangers had arrested Sultan Qamar Siddiqui, the Acting Chairman of the FCS, on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and two days later arrested its two Directors, Muhammad Khan Chachar and Rana Shahid, over their alleged involvement in taking extortion money, killings, corruption and funding Lyari's criminal syndicates.

**Nisar Morai** had already left the country during the same days but before the crackdown, fearing arrest.

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016;** Pakistan police killed at least 12 terrorists involved in target killings and seized a large cache of arms in Karachi. SSP Malir, Rao Anwar told the media reporters that:

*"Eight suspected militants were killed in the Pipri area while four others were later shot dead in Gadap on the outskirts of the city. They all belonged to outlawed militant outfits and opened fire on*

*the raiding parties of police when they raided their hideouts on creditable tip-offs.*

*In Pipri, the militants were heavily armed and opened fire after which the police retaliated and killed eight of them; four other terrorists fled the scene in the cover of darkness but were chased down to Gadap where another encounter took place and they were also killed by the police."*

The raids were conducted after information provided by two arrested high profile terrorists, Naeem Bukhari and Farooq Bhatti, adding that the deceased men belonged to ***Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent*** [AQIS] and *Lashkar e Jhangvi* [LeJ]. Police had recovered heavy cache of suicide vests, explosives and hand grenades from the hideout in Pipri; two policemen were wounded in the exchange.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** unknown assailants gunned down social media campaigner and civil society activist Khurram Zaki, 40, in Karachi; four suspects riding on two motorcycles opened fire on Zaki while he was eating dinner at a restaurant in Sector-11B of North Karachi. The activist was killed, and two others – journalist Rao Khalid and bystander Aslam – were critically wounded in the attack.

A former journalist, Zaki was an active campaigner for human rights and was the editor of the website and Facebook page '***Let Us Build Pakistan***' [LUBP] which claimed to "*spread liberal religious views and condemned extremism in all forms*".

Zaki was last in the media limelight alongside activist Jibran Nasir in a campaign against Lal Masjid cleric Maulana Abdul Aziz for inciting hatred against Shia Muslims. The campaigners had managed to get a case registered against Maulana Abdul Aziz.

A spokesperson of Majlis Wahdat Muslimeen [MWM] said that Khurram Zaki was not only a prominent civil society activist but also a religious scholar who tended to attend programmes on various TV channels; they believed that banned sectarian outfits, most probably the Taliban, were involved in this gruesome murder.

### **SC ON BILL BOARDS ISSUE:**

**On 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016;** the Supreme Court [SC] asked two Cantonment Boards in Karachi to take down illegal billboards on *Sharae Faisal* within 24 hours.

The apex court larger bench, headed by Justice Amir Hani Muslim and comprising justices Sh Azmat Saeed and Khilji Arif Hussain, expressed annoyance that its earlier directives in the case of illegal billboards along the city's main artery were not implemented even though the deadline had passed. The bench was hearing the Karachi law and order *suo motu* case at the Karachi registry.

The proceedings were initiated on an application by the Karachi Cantonment Board, which had challenged the Sindh High Court order that had declared excessive advertisement tax imposed by the board on private outdoor advertisement boards, as illegal.

*[On 21 August 2015, the apex court had ordered the 17 civic agencies, including the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation [KMC], the Cantonment Boards, Defence Housing Authority and Civil Aviation Authority [CAA], to remove all the outdoor advertising hoardings that violated the regulations.]*

During that day's [11<sup>th</sup> March 2016] proceedings, the bench came down hard on the representatives of Karachi and Faisal Cantonment Boards in whose jurisdictions oversized hoardings were still not removed.

Justice Hani observed that the court had repeatedly issued directives in this regard but giant outdoor advertising boards were still present atop commercial plazas and on the footpaths along the thoroughfare and confronted whether or not they met the regulations in respect of their size, etc.

Taking serious notice of failure of authorities in complying with the court's repeated orders, the bench members ordered clearing the rooftops and footpaths along the city's main thoroughfare within a day. Next day, the chief executive officers [CEOs] of the two cantonment boards personally appeared in court with written progress and compliance.

The bench also directed the representative of Karachi's Commander of the Pakistan Navy to submit a statement regarding removal of such illegal signboards from their limits. Notices were also issued to the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General to submit replies of the federal government regarding powers of the cantonment boards to impose and recover the advertisement tax. The same SC bench:

- ....also restrained the provincial government from transferring the province's top land revenue officer without prior permission from the court.
- ....also ordered the senior member of the Board of Revenue [BoR] to probe the utilisation of Rs:4 billion for the registration and verification of unregistered state lands in Karachi.

*[Rs:4 billion were to be utilised by BoR to get record of state lands in the city verified through outsourced projects, which failed to match the 1985 records available on micro-film.]*

The SC had directed the senior member, Rizwan Memon, to probe how this large amount of public money was utilised, as the private firm had failed to successfully perform the task of compiling properties' record.

Finding the turf war between mafias supported by political groups to illegally occupy state lands, the apex court had in 2011 ordered a survey of all the unregistered precious state properties in the port city.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016;** The Supreme Court [SC] maintained that there was no law that permits installing outdoor advertising **billboards and signboards** on 'public property' and ordered the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation [KMC], the Defence Housing Authority [DHA] and all the cantonment boards to remove these billboards and hoardings across the city by 30<sup>th</sup> June then.

Amendments were also proposed in existing bylaws applicable beyond 'public properties' to achieve city-wide uniformity and ensure safety measures for citizens.

The stakeholders ordered to remove the illegal signboards included KMC, district municipal corporations [DMCs], DHA, all cantonment boards, Station Headquarters Corps 5, Karachi Commander Naval HQ and Civil Aviation Authority [CAA].

These directives were contained in the order issued after a three-member larger bench, headed by Justice Mian Saqib Nisar, heard the matter regarding outdoor display of commercial hoardings and billboards at the SC's Karachi registry. The other members were justices Amir Hani Muslim and Khilji Arif Hussain.

During those proceedings, an interim report was placed before the SC bench about a meeting held in the commissioner's office with the object

to achieve city-wide uniformity for installation of the billboards. The report reflected that all the stakeholders, who attended the meetings, proposed amendments to the respective bylaws regarding the billboards' size, positioning and other issues.

The bench was told on behalf of the government, that no billboards or hoardings of any nature could be allowed or installed on public properties. The SC bench observed in its order:

*"There is no law which permits KMC, DMCs [district municipal corporations], cantonment boards or any other agency in Karachi to install billboards or hoardings on a public property; such an act on the part of [the] permission-granting agency is against the civil rights of the citizens".*

The bench further ordered that the hoardings, which had been installed on public properties under any licence or lease, should be uprooted by June 30 by the advertising agencies concerned, which owned the poles or displaying materials, or by the contractors, if they owned such material, or by the authorities under whose permission the billboards were installed.

The judges explained in detail as to what type of property could come under the definition of 'public property'. The Supreme Court [SC] observed that the term 'public property' has wide meaning and, therefore, the judges clarified it in order to avoid any ambiguity. The term 'public property' shall include the following places:

1. Roads
2. Sidewalks
3. Islands in the centre of a road or service lane
4. Overhead bridges and underpasses
5. Overhead pedestrian walkways or bridges
6. Roundabouts
7. Green belts or dividers between a road
8. Pedestrian lanes
9. *Nullahs* (storm water drains) and the banks of *nullahs*.

#### **SC ON BAHRIA TOWN KARACHI:**

**On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2016;** the historian Gul Hasan Kalamati said that water and electricity meant for Karachi were being redirected to Bahria Town and DHA City. Mr Kalamati was one of the many speakers invited by the Irtiqa Institute of Social Science to talk on the military farms in Okara and the Bahria Town.

The title of the meeting was **'snatching from the needy to give to the greedy: a meeting to condemn atrocities committed by the government by dispossessing people from their centuries old tenancy or ownership'**. Mr Kalamati compared the Bahria Town to the East India Company of four centuries back in the sub-continent.

Under the Land Acquisition Act, *Goths, villages and the Goth Abad* Scheme, which have been registered, cannot be sold or given away. That was what Orangi Pilot Project's Perween Rahman had been working on when she was shot dead in March 2013.

The background facts were:

**[On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015; the Pakistan Rangers, during a meeting of the apex committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015, told that the Sindh government had allotted 44,000 acres of government land along the Super Highway to Bahria Town, a leading real estate firm of Malik Riaz.**

*On the other hand, Bahria Town flatly rejected the Rangers claim.*

*A letter addressed on 9<sup>th</sup> June that year by the Bahria Town's corporate office in Rawalpindi to Maj Gen Bilal Akbar, DG Rangers Sindh, said:*

**"Not a single acre of government land has been allotted to or purchased by the Bahria Town.**

***The above figure of 44,000 acres is incorrect, baseless and frivolous. We had purchased the land from private parties and paid all duties and taxes."***

*Bahria Town had also placed its plea before the Supreme Court; 'the real estate firm owns 40,000 acres land in different cities across the country.'*

*A legal aide to Malik Riaz told the media that the Rangers information was incorrect; someone might have passed incorrect information to Rangers. According to him, Bahria Town had purchased a total of 7,631 acres in Karachi to date.*

*A senior official of Bahria Town, Col Khalilur Rehman, said the real estate firm had purchased the land from private owners at prices ranging from Rs:850,000 to Rs:6 million per acre. The letter dated*

*9<sup>th</sup> June 2015, sent to the Rangers DG requesting "correction" of their record had not been replied till then.]*

**On 1st August 2016;** the Supreme Court restrained **Bahria Town** from undertaking any development activity on the state land allotted to it by the Malir Development Authority [MDA] illegally and gave two months to the National Accountability Bureau [NAB] to complete its investigation into the matter.

A two-judge bench comprising Justices Amir Hani Muslim and Mushir Alam gave the directions at the court's Karachi Registry while hearing a set of applications against illegal allotment of state land and adjustment of land in 43 Dehs [means villages] by the MDA. The land in question involved the under-construction Bahria Town project located about nine kilometres from Toll Plaza on the Karachi-Hyderabad super highway.

The NAB Prosecutor General filed an interim report in a sealed envelope along with a copy of the survey report prepared by the Directorate of Survey of Pakistan, Ministry of Defence, which was taken on record.

*[According to the sealed survey report, the total land consolidated by the MDA and handed over to Bahria Town measured 9,385.185 acres; Bahria Town had developed 386.276 acres of land which was not yet consolidated by the MDA.*

*The survey report also showed some other portions of state land that had been developed by Bahria Town despite the fact that they had not been consolidated by the MDA. The total land developed / under development but not consolidated by the MDA came to make 2,771.79 acres.]*

The bench inquired the Chief Secretary, senior member Board of Revenue, and the Advocate General of Sindh to satisfy it under which law the MDA was competent to exchange private land with the land falling in the area reserved as corridor. The three officials, however, could not offer any explanation and submitted that no such powers were available with the MDA to allot or exchange the private land with the state land.

The bench observed that it had come on record that no portion of the land pertaining to the subject matter was ever allotted under Section 10(4) of the Colonisation of Government Lands Act 1894, by the Sindh government to the MDA. The bench restrained the Bahria Town from undertaking any development activity in areas demarcated in the survey report.

The MDA was also restrained from consolidating any further portion of the private land for the Bahria Town or any other private enterprise under the garb of exchange of land in exercise of their powers conferred on them under the MDA Act or the rules framed there-under.

The bench also restricted the Board of Revenue from dealing with the land of the MDA or any other Authority which was the subject matter of these proceedings in any manner whatsoever; the court ordered:

*"In order to ensure that no further construction or development activity is carried out on the land specified hereinabove, we direct the NAB authorities through the Prosecutor General that they should immediately if possible by tomorrow obtain Google Earth maps / images of the entire land stated to be in possession of the Bahria Town as per the survey report and submit the same for record."*

Meanwhile, the chief of Bahria Town Malik Riaz Hussain claimed that the Supreme Court had not imposed any restriction on development of his projects. In his tweets, he called it "*misreporting of facts*" by the media and vowed to continue the development of the mighty project. On social media he pasted:

*"Bahria Town will continue all construction & related activities on the consolidated land 9385 acre. Twisted facts are product of cynical minds. We've been facing this mafia from day one & will continue to do so to safeguard development & investment in Pakistan."*

### **CJ SHC's SON KIDNAPPED:**

**On 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016;** Barrister Awais Ali Shah, son of SHC CJ Sajjad Ali Shah, was kidnapped by masked men in front of a Clifton superstore. However, police and other law enforcement agencies remained unaware of his kidnapping until his family reported it hours later. Mr Shah had left the SHC for Clifton to meet a friend, but did not reach there and his phone remained switched off; he was kidnapped on his way, the police confirmed later. Apparently, there was no evidence available that Mr Shah was kidnapped but the police suspected so.

The provincial administration had taken a "serious note" of the incident; a high-level meeting remained in progress for days to discuss the issue periodically. Barrister Shah was recently hired by over 700 sacked employees of

the Karachi Port Trust to plead their case. *"Leave no stone unturned for his safe recovery,"* the chief minister told the administration.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016;** Awais Ali Shah, kidnapped son of Sindh HC's CJ Sajjad Ali Shah, was recovered after an intelligence based operation in Tank district of Khyber PK. Director General ISPR Lt Gen Asim Bajwa disclosed Shah's recovery through a pre-dawn tweet. Three terrorists were also killed during the operation.

Rangers personnel drove Shah to his home morning as people in the neighbourhood distributed sweets to celebrate his recovery. He was transported to Faisal Base Karachi from Tank in a special aircraft and later despatched to his home under tight security. The Rangers had announced a reward of Rs:2,500,000 for credible information regarding the whereabouts of Barrister Awais Ali Shah.

Speaking to journalists as he was reunited with his son, SHC CJ Sajjad Ali Shah hailed the armed forces for the successful recovery of his son; adding that the army chief had been personally monitoring the team formed by DG ISI to recover his son. The PPP's provincial government played no role for the recovery. Gen Raheel Sharif called the CJ at 3 in the night and told him about the recovery of his son. The CJ said:

*"He was kind enough to let me talk to my son when I asked, and he was kind enough to arrange a plane and got him here from Tank. I've absolutely no idea about which group was behind the kidnapping. All I know at this time is that my son is back."*

DG ISPR Gen Asim Bajwa announced that chief of the army staff [COAS] commended efforts of the Intelligence and security forces for successful operation; adding that:

*"COAS commended efforts of Int & security forces for successful operation. COAS also called & congratulated CJ Sind on recovery of his son."*

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also congratulated the CJ Sajjad Ali Shah on the recovery of his son and praised security forces. A statement issued by PM's office said:

*"The Prime Minister lauded the role of intelligence agencies and security forces in recovering Mr Awais Shah and said that the profes-*

*sional and operational excellence of our security forces has made it possible for which they deserve immense appreciation.”*

Pakistan had seen high profile kidnapping of Shahbaz Taseer, son of former Punjab governor late Salman Taseer, and Ali Haider Gilani, son of former Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani before the abduction of Barrister Awais Shah over the last five years.

Taseer was held in captivity for four and a half years before being recovered from Kuchlak, Balochistan in March 2016 by the Pak-Army, while Gilani was recovered during an operation jointly carried out by US and Afghan forces in Ghazni district of Afghanistan in May 2016.

However; the real cause of the said kidnapping was that the CJ of the SHC was hearing important cases concerning with Zardari's intimate team.

Journalist Asad Kharal revealed shocking facts about the abduction and recovery of Awais Shah. He claimed that Awais Shah, after abduction, was shifted to very high-profile Sindh government official's residence in Gulshan-e-Hadid, Karachi, and on the same night transferred to Thatta via National Highway in a van of Thatta police station. After a week, Awais Shah was shifted to Larkana.

Meanwhile, talks and dealing started with three parties to shift the victim to North Waziristan. High officials of the Sindh government were involved in facilitating the abductors and providing safe passage to them from Sindh to Khyber PK then to FATA.

Army intelligence agencies were receiving information from different sources through cyber means and local human intelligence. They finally received a clue about the presence of the victim in Dera Ismail Khan as the cyber crime cell of ISI was tapping all calls to Afghanistan and Waziristan.

According to sources, some very close friends of former President Asif Zardari, who was also present in a meeting at Dubai, had planned abduction of Awais Shah. Senator Dr Abdul Qayum Soomro was among the planners; he was previously a very close friend of Maulana Fazlur Rahman. He used connections through Maulana Fazlur Rahman to activate Taliban and assured them of complete support.

In this regard, an amount of \$500,000 was paid to the group and the payment was made in Dubai in the shape of cash and three cheques including

two cheques of HSBC Banks Dubai Branch, and one cheque of Allied Bank Limited [ABL].

The sole purpose of the abduction was only to force the Sind High Court chief justice, army and rangers to release Dr Asim, let Ayan Ali flee Pakistan and drop all cases against Awais Muzaffar Tippi and Faryal Talpur. It also aimed to defame the army and Rangers and force them to accept terms of the PPP and surety from the army to allow safe arrival of Asif Zardari to start agitation against the government.

It was a political game and orchestrated by enemies of Pakistan to destabilise the country and defame the armed forces and police for their political gains. One Asad Kharal, a front man of Tariq Sial, brother of Sindh Home Minister Sohail Anwer Sial, played a key role in the abduction. He led the police van in a vehicle with tinted glasses to shift Awais Shah from Karachi to Larkana.

He handed over Awais Shah to Matni Group of the Mehsud tribe. When the Rangers attempted to arrest Asad Kharal to recover Awais Shah, he was freed from their custody after stiff resistance and allowed to flee. Fearing consequences, Asif Zardari ordered Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah and Sindh Home Minister Sohail Anwer Sial to make sure Asad Kharal was given in police custody as soon as possible to conceal the real facts from ISI and Rangers.

Sindh Home Minister Sohail Anwer Sial also called a meeting of top-ranking police officials on **8<sup>th</sup> July 2016** to ensure the compliance of Asif Zardari's orders to save the mastermind behind the abduction of Awais Shah.

Former IG Police Tehsin Anwar Shah, a veteran police officer, placed his comments on internet media:

*"CJ of Pakistan has expressed his annoyance on the kidnapping of son of CJ Sindh; distrust on the performance of LEAs; dissatisfaction on the measures for his recovery; observed that the kidnapping has caused insecurity among the judges and their families; and ordered to recover Awais Shah. Every sane person will agree with the CJP.*

*I wish the Lordships feel the pain for the families of 60 thousand innocent civilians killed by the terrorists and hundreds of Police and Army officers who laid their life in the line of fire **while caring for the human rights of the criminals in bail matters and disposal of cases ending in acquittals.**"*

Another former IG police Zafar Qureshi commented:

*"Agree with MR Tehseen Shah. His Lordship has felt the heat when a son of a judge has been kidnapped.*

*Would his lordship like to see the rate of conviction of such horrendous crimes. How many judges have been shown the door for poor performance and dubious character? – **not even one during the last two decades in whole of Pakistan.**"*

#### **AMJAD SABRI QAWWAL KILLED:**

UK's daily 'the Guardian' dated **23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016;**

One of Pakistan's most famous and respected musicians, celebrated for devotional songs from a centuries-old mystic tradition, Amjad Sabri, was shot dead by Taliban gunmen in Karachi. Thousands paid their respects, throwing rose petals over an ambulance carrying his coffin. Sabri used to perform *Qawwali* music by the Sufi tradition, an Islamic practice opposed by extremists.

Amjad Sabri, 45, was shot by two men on a motorbike as he drove through a congested area of Karachi. A relative travelling with the musician was injured but survived. TTP spokesman Qari Saifullah Mehsud, claimed responsibility for the killing and said Amjad Sabri was targeted because the group considered his music blasphemous.

The attack happened a day after a homeopathic doctor from the Ahmadi minority was killed in the same city, and two days after masked men seized the son of a top provincial judge, fuelling concerns about violence and extremism in Pakistan's economic capital.

*[Earlier, on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014; the Islamabad High Court during the hearing over a blasphemy petition filed by the Shuhada Foundation issued notices to all those party to the case; the respondents were Federal Information Secretary, CEO of ARY TV, anchors Mubashir Lucman, Nida Yasir and Shaisata Lodhi, Amjad Sabri Qawwal, poet Aqeel Mohsin Naqvi, Chairman PEMRA and Council of Islamic Ideology [CII] plus others. The issue of alleged blasphemy in one Geo TV's morning show was being highlighted negatively.*

*The petition also put the onus on Qawwal Amjad Sabri and poet Aqeel Mohsin Naqvi for the blasphemy row while seeking to ban the Qawaali that caused the issue. An FIR had been registered by the police against Geo TV channel owner Mir Shakeelur Rehman, its morning programme host Shaista Lodhi, actress Veena Malik and her husband Asad Bashir Khattak.*

*The case was registered under PPC's sections 295-A [deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs], 295-C [use of derogatory remarks, etc., in respect of the Prophet (PBUH)] and 298-A [use of derogatory remarks, etc., in respect of holy personages]. The suspects were also booked under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act.]*

But both the music, and the shrines at which *qawwalis* are often performed, have long been a target for religious conservatives who shun all forms of music and consider the shrines unorthodox. Dozens of sites have been targeted in attacks by the TTP since a decade. The murder of a popular singer from a famous and well-loved musical dynasty was a clear warning to others trying to celebrate *qawwali*; the intelligentsia held:

*"These attacks have a chilling effect on the pluralism and diversity of religious practice and cultural expression in this part of the world. That is very worrying. Whenever something like this happens, you are a step closer to anarchy at the state level and sponsored by the state itself."*

Colleagues and fans denounced the Taliban for targeting a man who devoted his life and work to religion. Invariably all held that Amjad Sabri was a true lover of God. His mission of love was tragically cut short by those who spread hate all around, and it was a great loss for all Pakistanis.

Karachi, home to 20 million people, is plagued by political, ethnic and sectarian violence. In September 2013, government launched an operation to clear out militants and criminal groups; it reduced the scale of the violence overall, but there was growing concern about such targeted killings by the extremists.

There were demonstrations overnight in Lahore and Islamabad, condemning the killing of Sabri as he was equally known and respected in the whole sub continent including India. He had derived his fame from the mark that his father, Ghulam Farid Sabri, left on this genre by composing some of the most memorable *Qawwalis* from the late-1960s to the mid-1990s. Amjad

Sabri was particularly renowned for performing a song associated with his father and uncle called "**Bhar Do Jholi Meri....**" (Fill My Bag....).

Amjad Sabri belonged to above mentioned dynasty of legendary performers, and was known for reworking classics popularised by his father and uncle. He regularly appeared on national television, and had been performing daily during *Ramadan* and other holy occasions.

The songs Sabri used to perform were part of a Sufi tradition dating back to the 13th century. Known as *Qawwalis*, steeped in mysticism and sometimes based on mystic poetry, still they are a key part of the spiritual life of millions of Muslims across south Asia and enjoyed by wider audiences of many faiths.

The spiritual songs are a lyrical expression of love with a divine being, kept in time to the beat of Eastern musical instruments such as the "*Tabla*" drums and harmonium. The devotional music, which dates back several centuries, is also known as "**the music of the shrines**", and has a special place in the indigenous Islamic faith of the Indian sub-continent.

The early Muslim preachers who came to India tended to assimilate with the local culture, and created a more tolerant and colourful version of the religion, unlike the revivalist creed of today's extremists.

The shrines of those preachers became sites of pilgrimage for followers from across the religious divide, while devotional music and dance, liked equally in the Hindu faith, too, became a part of the ritual. *Qawwali* music had begun as spiritual music performed at the shrines of Sufi saints, but has now become a popular commercial music genre as well.

The Sabri family's association with music dates back to the 17th Century, but Amjad Sabri was the only one among his siblings to take on the mantle of the family tradition. Many of his fans worry that this may be the end of a chapter in *Qawwali* singing.

In the mid-1990s, the Sabri Brothers released "**Ya Mustapha....**" on the American label Xenophile, which paired this *qawwali* party's soulful singing with saxophones. The young Amjad Sabri sings in the chorus of this recording.

Sabri also reached out to audiences through the big screen. He appeared in the 2008 Bollywood drama **Halla Bol....** (Raise Your Voice....).

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The Sabri family's own history in *qawwali* goes back centuries. The family claims (though it has been contested) that they are descended from Mian Tansen, a legendary court musician in the service of the Mughal emperor Akbar the Great, who spread his empire across almost all of the Indian subcontinent in the late 16th century, and whose patronage of the arts and literature were at the heart of a unique Mughal culture.

Like the internationally known titan of *qawwali*, **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan**, the Sabri Brothers recorded for Peter Gabriel's Real World label. Asghari Begum, Amjad Sabri's mother, told the media that approximately six months ago, three men burst open the front door of the family's residence, then left after realizing that the singer was not at home.

**The BBC of 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016** added:

*"Karachi has never seen so many people come out for a funeral. A river of human faces, from all walks of life, filled up Liaquatabad's main avenue.*

*One reason for this huge attendance may be because Amjad Sabri was so well known across the country. Sabri was also a friendly character."*

Another unusual thing was the presence of women, who are normally never a part of funeral processions. Dozens of women lined up along the pavement and a nearby pedestrian bridge. Several loud announcements were made asking the women to climb down from the bridge as it could break but of no avail; women aged 17 to 70 years were there in that mourning march.

Referring to '**Daily Pakistan**' dated **29<sup>th</sup> June 2016**: Sindh Rangers started investigating a promising lead in connection with Amjad Sabri's assassination, claiming that the singer might have been killed for agreeing to perform at a political party's fund raising campaign in the US.

The news was disclosed by renowned journalist Najam Sethi in his **GEO TV** program *Aapas Ki Baat* of a day earlier. On the show, Sethi revealed that the law enforcement agency had been investigating whether the singer's murder had anything to do with his performance at a Pak Sar Zameen party fund raising campaign in the US.

According to Sethi, Sabri was invited by the PSP to perform in the US at one of its fund-raising events.

Sabri accepted the offer, neglecting warnings given by the London's MQM in Karachi for not performing in the concert; while being a professional who could perform for any party on invitation. According to Sethi, at least one million dollars was collected at the PSP fundraiser, after which Sabri began receiving life threats from unknown persons.

The TTP Hakimullah Mehsud group — aka the Pakistani Taliban [TTP] — claimed responsibility for Sabri's death, saying that they carried out the assassination *"for blasphemy."* Sabri's assassination by the TPP was the latest in a string of high-profile attacks; the group had also been accused of being the force behind the assassination of Pakistan's former Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, in December 2007, as well as the infamous shooting of schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai in [October](#) 2012.

A few hours after Sabri's murder, gunmen fired at the car of the Sufi Qawal's friend, ***Farhan Ali Waris***, a well-known religious personality from the Shiite community, in the Teen Hati area near Liaquatabad.

Waris, known for his rendition of *Nohas* on TV channels, had just got off at his home when the car came under attack by the gunmen on a motorcycle. He later narrated:

*"They probably thought I was in the car but fortunately I had got off at my home. My security guard got suspicious when the gunmen approached the car and he opened fire on them and they ran away."*

Referring to **'the Nation'** dated **30<sup>th</sup> August 2016** and **'Samaa' TV news** of even date:

***"....renowned Qawwal Amjad Sabri was killed by a group comprising members of a banned 'Sunni' sectarian outfit and a political party of Karachi for not paying them 'Bhatta' [extortion]."***

Two members of the said group who assigned the killers were arrested by a special unit of Karachi police and efforts were on to arrest the real killers. Earlier, it was claimed by media that Imran Siddiqui, an MQM worker and an employee of District Municipal Corporation, was arrested from Surjani Town who confessed to killing Sabri and also revealed the names of his accomplices.

The police, however, corrected and confirmed that Siddiqui was arrested in another case but it was misreported that he was involved in Sabri's murder. The fact remained that some workers of MQM and LeJ, who claimed having connected with the said two outfits, had formed a gang on their own to commit crimes and make money apart from the activities of their original organizations, if true. This group had threatened Amjad Sabri and demanded Rs:50 million extortion and after refusal they killed.

Sources claimed it as Shahzad Mullah; Mullah was former sector in-charge of MQM in Liaquatabad, disclosed that a six-member team, comprising two MQM workers, was formed for that high-profile murder; the suspect's cell phone had also been retrieved. The MQM worker had confessed that he shot dead the noted *qawwali* for not paying extortion to the party.

A local TV channel claimed that as many as 40 cases had already been registered against Shehzad Mullah.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016;** the actual murderers of celebrated late Qawwali singer Amjad Sabri were arrested, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah announced during a news conference. The Chief Minister Sindh told:

*"The CTD headed by Raja Umar Khattab made a major breakthrough and arrested two people from Liaquatabad called Ishaq alias Bobby and Asim alias Capri.*

*Huge quantity of weapons is also recovered including the weapons used in Sabri's assassination. After a probe and forensic investigation, we found proof of involvement in 28 cases.*

*The men are affiliated with the Lashkar e Jhangvi [LeJ] Naeem Bukhari group; there is no affiliation with any political party, it is a proscribed organisation.*

*Asim alias Capri was Amjad Sabri's neighbour. We have not found any motive [behind the murder] as yet, but it seems sectarian to us because Sabri used to visit frequent majalis and sama'a gatherings all over the country."*

Meanwhile, Karachi police claimed to have solved four more high-profile cases. Counter Terrorism Department [CTD] carried out raids across Karachi and arrested five criminals who were involved in the murder of police and military police personnel and those who attacked a *Majlis* in the Nazi-

mabad area. A large cache of arms and ammunition was also recovered from the criminals.

## **Scenario 165**

### **PAK SAR-ZAMEEN PARTY LAUNCHED**

A little back into the history; following is a letter *verbatim* from Altaf Hussain's once trusted worker Mustafa Kamal – who after about 30 months announced his own party named ***Pak Sarzameen Party [PSP]*** - no comments from the book writer.

#### ***M KAMAL's OPEN LETTER VERBATIM:***

**By:** Ex-Nazim Karachi

**Date:** Monday, 6 January 2014, 12:15 am

#### **ALTAH HUSSAIN IS A GREAT ROGUE LEADER AND BIG BLACKMAILER:**

Altaf Hussain is running a big Mafia network from London with a secret terrorist gang to murder those who oppose him. Recently Mustafa Kamal, ex Nazim Karachi developed differences with Altaf for not supporting Pervaiz Musharaf to prevent harassment and arrest by Nawaz Sharif, PM. Actually Altaf had come to a secret understanding with Nawaz Sharif against some good bribe payment not to support Pervaiz Musharaf.

Accordingly when Pervaiz Musharaf landed at Karachi Airport hoping to get standing ovation from MQM people, he got a rude shock of sudden change by Altaf. Altaf sells MQM to the highest bidder. He presently owns six houses in UK along with millions of pounds in cash seized by the Scotland Yard as illegal money laundering. Pervaiz Musharaff was arrested and lot of bogus cases were started as usual and Altaf never raised his voice in his favour. Because Altaf is an ungrateful person.

Altaf Hussain is a great nuisance for Pakistan as he is safely sitting in London and controlling the hijacked Mohajirs. ***Those who differ, they know their end like that of Dr. Imran Farooq in London.*** The late Azim Ahmed Tariq, the first President of MQM was murdered by Altaf for opposing his mean tactics. Several others were murdered one by one but Altaf always create a drama of weeping over their deaths to fool the Mohajirs.

Altaf is a little HITLER and follows his policies. None of the present political leaders, Ulemas, intelligentsia and also the media / press and TV channels are brave enough to challenge him. The media / press / private TV channels are fully bribed to speak in favour of Altaf except with few exception like Mubashir Luqman.

It is learnt that ISI is holding the killers of Dr. Imran Farooq and have bargained with Altaf to always praise the army otherwise they will be handed over to Scotland Yard.

Anis Qaim Khani, another MQM leader has also ran away to escape death.

The Big question is when dual nationality holders can not be members of Provincial Assemblies and National Assembly, then how Altaf Hussain, a British citizen is allowed to control a big MAFIA party from London. So far the courts are afraid to take any decision in this regard though representation were made.

Iftikhar Choudhry [Chief Justice] was also requested to give a final notice to Altaf to either come back and run his MQM from Pakistan after cancelling his foreign citizenship other wise his Pakistani citizenship be cancelled and also his telephone network etc. be blocked. But he was also afraid to take action.

Now Altaf has raised a new stunt of a new province just for the sake of bargaining as he is money hungry. The foolish Mohajirs attend his meetings in large numbers thinking that Altaf is their only Spokesman / Saviour forgetting that Altaf is a good SELLER of Mohajir interests to the highest bidder particularly Punjab.

Altaf had raised his BIG Voice against the 2% quota for Karachites etc., and then he promised to re-open Indian Visa Office in Karachi and also the railway route through Khokrapar and Munabao for the convenience of the Mohajirs. But since Punjab interest was involved, Altaf sold our interest against huge bribe / Bhatta.

Every Mohajir now has to travel to Rawalpindi and stay in a hotel for three / four days and then go to India Visa office in Islamabad by taxi and after obtaining the Visa he has to go to Lahore and again stay at a hotel for two / three days to catch a train to India which involve lot of expenditure and then he has to bribe for Exit stamp and then also bribe the custom person at Lahore Station before allowed to board a train, Samjhota Express to India. When the Mohajirs come back, they have to again bribe the same people.

Now the only solution is get this Great Roque Leader removed from MQM by cancelling his Pakistani citizenship and blocking his telephone nuisance network and eliminating his secret terrorist gang. The present Dy. IG Mr. Hayat is bold enough to arrest several MQM terrorists but the courts under pressure allowed bails to them.

Mr. Rehman Malik ex Home Minister publicly admitted that he set 81 MQM arrested persons free who were actually terrorists / Bhatta gang. We need a bold person like late Gen Nasirullah Babar who will be long remembered by all the Mohajirs for removing us from the gun-point slavery of Altaf.

But nobody is bold now to do such a big work. Nawaz Sharif and the Sindh High Court and Supreme Court are all afraid to touch Altaf. Please read the articles by Mr. Karamat Ghori, ex diplomat and Malik Salim Akber on Altaf's nuisance above.

To make the matter legal, Altaf Hussain be given a chance to cancel his foreign citizenship and come back to Karachi to run MQM as per rules and as done by Governor of Punjab also or else MQM should be asked to elect a new local based leader with no foreign citizenship. If Altaf creates nuisance, then his Pakistani citizenship be cancelled in the interest of Pakistan.

The majority of Mohajirs will be more happy if this devil is removed from our mind set. If necessary the NA may pass a rule that all Pakistan based political parties must be run or headed by only Pakistani citizens with no dual nationality and those leaders who stay abroad deliberately and indulge in all sort of nuisance like that of Altaf, their Pakistani citizenship be cancelled.

The British government be requested to stop the nuisance of Altaf Hussain who is creating law and order problem with rebellion in Karachi etc. His illegal properties and bribe cash be brought back for the welfare work here.

We Mohajirs want peace with progress with development in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawab Shah etc. Due to continued unrest and strikes in Karachi, no foreign enterprise is coming to invest here. They are investing in Punjab.

Just think honestly when Altaf dies a natural death, then who will protect Mohajir's interests and who will protect us from discrimination from others and who will protect us from being avenged. It is far better to adjust ourselves now with other communities and regional people instead of following blindly Altaf's negative policy of hatred and secession to promote his greatness and domination over the Mohajirs.

Altaf is a big rogue and enemy of the Mohajirs and want to spoil our sincere love for Pakistan into hatred and corner us from all Sindhis, Baluchis, Punjabis and Pathans. We don't want repetition of internal warfare seen in the Ayub Khan's rule.

Be bold. Remove all banners and Photos of Altaf Hussain as he is not our Demy God. The Mohajirs gave their blood for the establishment of Pakistan but Altaf has ran away from Pakistan as he is a BUZDIL / Coward leader unfit to lead us.

Allah Hafiz. Thanks.

Please circulate. Don't be afraid.

***Mohajir Pakistanis settled in the West.***

### **PS PARTY FORMALLY LAUNCHED:**

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016;** MQM's former Senator and Karachi city's former mayor, Syed Mustafa Kamal conducted a press conference with Anis Kaimkhani, after they flew back into Karachi from Dubai earlier that day. He criticized his ex-political party MQM and its leader Altaf Hussain by claiming that, in the past, he had links with Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing [RAW].

Mustafa Kamal also announced his new political party without revealing the new name of the party. Later the party was joined by for-

mer MQM members Raza Harron, Dr Sagheer Ahmed, Waseem Aftab, Anees Khan Advocate and Iftikhar Alam and many more.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016;** Mustafa Kamal founded his own political party and called it ***Pak Sarzameen Party*** [PSP] while addressing a press conference in Clifton, Karachi which was also attended by its other members. The party was led by Syed Mustafa Kamal along with other members *Anees Ahmed Qaimkhani* as party President Raza Haroon as Secretary General; Dr Sagheer Ahmed as Senior Vice-Chairperson; Waseem Aftab, Anees Khan Advocate and Iftikhar Alam as party's spokesman; all they were former members of MQM.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016;** Kamal's motorcade was attacked at various locations in Mirpurkhas district. At least 10 persons, including two reporters, were injured after locals pelted the PSP with stones and eggs. About ten vehicles, including the one carrying Kamal and Anis, were damaged.

Protesters hurled abuses as well as shoes, stones, eggs and bricks on PSP's cavalcade. According to some reports, the stones and bricks were even thrown from rooftops along the roads where the PSP rally passed.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2016;** PSP leader M Kamal said '***MQM Chief is a coward who hurls abuses one day and asks for forgiveness the next day***'

Mr Kamal lashed out at MQM Chief Altaf Hussain over his alleged involvement in an attack on his party's motorcade in Mirpur Khas the other day. He said so in a veiled reference to the MQM Chief while addressing reporters in Hyderabad, also adding:

*"If we had not challenged this 'Pharaoh,' we would not have been blessed by the Almighty [to speak the truth]. ....that his party [PSP] had gone successful in attracting the masses and garnering their support which is why we are being attacked.*

*He [Altaf Hussain] is not more than a clown - media should not give the MQM Chief much importance. He is a coward who hurls abuses one day and asks for forgiveness the next day.*

*We are not afraid of death; we have recognised Allah as the one and only God and did not give any human that status."*

On the same day; while reacting to Kamal's accusations in Hyderabad, in a press conference at Nine Zero, MQM's leader Farooq Sattar said [Mustafa

Kamal] group was being led by some elements of establishment to restrain everyone from doing politics. Sattar said while addressing reporters:

*"The [PSP group] arrived on March 3 to induce so much provocation in the society so that one may not be able to do [genuine] politics; Kamal's remarks against MQM chairman were Inappropriate, provocative and unethical.*

*We demand the institutions of this country working under the Constitution take notice of this [situation]; there cannot be two sets of rules and regulations and PEMRA should differentiate between politics and provocation."*

Sattar added that the group [PSP] had a history of misappropriation, china-cutting, loot and plunder, saying they nevertheless accepted an individual's choice to make political choices.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016;** two more senior leaders from MQM and its student wing joined PSP, accusing Altaf Hussain of turning the youths into RAW agents. Muhammad Raza, a senior member of the MQM, and Waheeduzaman, former head of the **All Pakistan Muttahida Student Organization** [APMSO] announced their joining at a press conference. Former senior MQM worker Mohammad Raza said:

*"I have come back to Karachi after 16 years. I am here only because of promises made by Pak Sarzameen.*

*What Mustafa Kamal says is the truth; I went to London in the 80s and saw all of this happening in front of my eyes. But I remained silent. Now I am back in Karachi after 16 years only to be part of the ideology of Pak Sarzameen Party."*

Several APMSO workers also joined the PSP along with Waheeduzaman.

Meanwhile, Mustafa Kamal fired another salvo at MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and his close aide Nadeem Nusrat; for perpetrating violence and using strong arm tactics to run the affairs of the MQM. *"Altaf Hussain called a meeting yesterday where he asked participants to keep their phones away; but we still got out information,"* he said.

Kamal accused the MQM Chief and Nadeem Nusrat of ordering workers to carry out assassinations of political rivals. He called on the government to

announce amnesty scheme for the MQM workers involved in crimes. He also made an appeal to MQM workers to shun violence.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016;** the PSP pulled Iftikhar Akbar Randhawa, member of MQM Coordination Committee. During the previous few days, MQM held desperate press conferences criticizing the new PSP and tried to address the people.

Referring to Nadeem Nusrat's press conference in London, Kamal stated that Nusrat's press conference did not present any answers for the allegations levelled against him. Nusrat had alleged that '**certain people from the country's intelligence agencies are calling MQM members**'. Syed M Kamal also gave a brief of the allegations levelled against MQM and its chief, saying:

*"It was MQM's members and chief who gave confessional statements to British law enforcement authorities, and they acknowledged the fact that they are receiving funding from Indian intelligence."*

Mustapha Kamal and his colleagues had not specifically denied the allegation that suggested the new party was being backed by 'certain quarters' of the establishment. Meanwhile, a number of senior MQM members left the country suddenly around the time Kamal returned to Karachi, causing speculations for either side.

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016;** Syed Hafeezuddin, lawmaker of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf [PTI] in Sindh Assembly, also joined the newly launched PSP. Kamal announced this while addressing a press conference at Bagh e Jinnah — the place where his party was planning to hold a public gathering two days after. Speaking at the occasion, Hafeezuddin said:

*"Turkey's current president was once the mayor of Istanbul and he turned it into an economic centre — not just for the Muslim world but also for Europe. That is how I want Mustafa Kamal to lead this nation."*

*[Further] PTI was established in Karachi after a lot of struggle, but the party didn't do anything despite registering internal complaints. During local body polls PTI candidates left those constituencies from where it had won over 50 thousand votes in general elections.*

*The opposition in Sindh Assembly is toothless."*

Hafeezuddin was the first PTI's leader to join Mustafa Kamal's newly launched party PSP. He announced his resignation from PTI's membership and subsequently from the membership of Sindh Assembly.

However, facts were otherwise; PTI leader Ali Zaidi said that after investigations of alleged corruption and partiality against Hafeezuddin, PTI Chairman Imran Khan had already approved his dismissal from the PTI party.

PSP's Advocate Anis and Raza Haroon both slammed Altaf Hussain, saying the MQM Chief was the reason behind party members jumping ship. However, the MQM denied all allegations regarding the '**minus-Altaf formula**' and claimed its workers were being '*forced to change loyalties*'.

### **PSP's FIRST PUBLIC RALLY:**

**On 24<sup>th</sup> April 2016;** PSP was set to stage its first-ever public rally in the port city a month after its inception.

With all hopes to set the tone for future of Karachi, Mustafa Kamal's party was faced with the foremost and biggest challenge to convincingly show its street power that day at *Bagh-e-Jinnah* – a venue popular amongst Karachi's political parties for holding big public meetings.

PSP founding member M Kamal was around at the venue overnight, saying:

*"I'm grateful to God as my message came across directly to the hearts of people. I believe that a large number of people will respond to our call at this public meeting as we hope to change political dynamics of the metropolis."*

In fact, the PSP was eyeing the next general elections in 2018, not any by-elections; hoping that the party's message would be disseminated, till then, to every nook and cranny of the country through well-coordinated organisational set up. The arrangements for PSP rally were finalised till evening with strong security cordon placed surrounding *Bagh-e-Jinnah*.

A family festival was also arranged at the same venue a night before [it was Saturday night] to mobilise people for taking part in the public gathering next day. Some local singers also performed at the stage to enthral and charm the audience. Following Kamal's presser, several dissidents of MQM announced in regular intervals to join PSP.

Referring to **Defence.pk** dated **29<sup>th</sup> April 2016**; PSP's first public gathering dated 24<sup>th</sup> April in Karachi was no doubt a success by all standards of a new political party. However, certain cogent factors were playing their role in the announcement and launching of another *mohajir* representative body; for instance:

- Altaf Hussain was undoubtedly ill and could leave for eternal adobe anytime.
- 
- Mr Hussain was involved in money laundering then [*later the case was dropped by the Scotland Yard*] and Dr Imran Farooq murder.
- 
- MQM tried its level best to become national party, but could not. Its founding concept did not appeal any segment in Punjab and Khyber PK provinces at least; collaboration with elect-ables in other areas of Pakistan failed.
- 
- MQM's militant wing totally destroyed the Karachi's economy, social fabric and security notions in place; some high degree leaders of the MQM patronized them.
- 
- Irrespective of what their leaders used to say, MQM could not be absolved from being pioneering *bhatta* and *bori-band* culture in Karachi and around.
- 
- Later revelations of its undeniable connections with RAW could result in banning of the MQM in due course of time.
- 
- Altaf Hussain himself announced, many times in his televised speeches, about his pride in keeping close relationship with Indian counterparts.

Had anything happened to Altaf Hussain, how could those survive who were minting money being in MQM, in the name of Altaf Hussain, through government contracts when in official seat, *bhatta* and kidnapping if not part of government and international funding for continuing anti-state activities. In addition, many of those could face serious criminal charges.

Some intelligent reports indicated that Mustafa Kamal, a person who had been projected as the best Mayor of Karachi in his times, was backed by Malik Riaz funding.

The London MQM managed to secretly place open allegations upon Mustafa Kamal. Now look at Kamal's manifesto:

- *No PS party flag - only Pakistan flag. Generally when talking of democracy, USA is considered a bench mark. No need to mention that during political gatherings in the US, only American flag is seen by us all.*

**[Intelligentsia held the opinion** that each party must have only the Pakistan flag. No PTI bat symbol flag, no PPP's arrow symbols flag, no tiger symbol flag of PML[N]; no nothing - only Pakistan flag. The PSP was perhaps the first public gathering where there were only Pakistani flags. Nothing else and it was beautiful.]

- *Mustafa Kamal used a deceptive name for his party i.e. Pak Sarzameen Party; it could have been avoided due to various reasons.*
- *Mustafa Kamal advocated condoning MQM criminals by shifting blame on Altaf Hussain; as if those criminals were so naive and didn't know what they were doing.*
- 
- *M Kamal became emotional and concerned about the families of dead criminals but had shown no remorse for those who were killed or burnt alive by those criminals.*
- 
- *Mustafa Kamal had Anis Qaimkhani by his side, giving a clear message that the militant wing of MQM came with him and the PSP.*
- 
- *Mustafa Kamal did not condemn anyone in MQM except Altaf Hussain and some individuals of London secretariat.*
- 
- *Mustafa Kamal has been from a humble background working as telephone operator in 1990s; with no worth mentioning position in his educational or professional career. Then was seen roaming around in a caravan of Prados and Land cruisers; what resources and from where he managed.*
- 
- *Mustafa Kamal was a known honest mayor as per record but five years salary cumulatively could not qualify him to have good home especially when 50% of the salary from official position used to go into MQM's party fund.*
- 
- *Zameer Ki Baidari was related only to seek pardon for criminals; real remorse should have called for a confession followed by apology for the crimes committed, return of looted wealth and surrender to LEAs.*

Another school of thought believed that Mustafa Kamal had been pitched by MQM's London Secretariat itself and the time was not far away when complete MQM could be part of this new party. Most MQM members left within a month while rest of the workers were creeping out of the blanket on slow pace.

It could be true; the next elections would shed more light to this - despite heavy attacking, MQM had been relatively quite when it came to PSP. Politics is a very dirty game and deceptive as well.

For some, it was the same old wine in new bottle.

Many members of MQM had joined Mustafa Kamal but they were not washed clean just because they had ditched the MQM. The actions of those that participated in implementing the lawlessness and gangster culture of MQM were equally responsible as Altaf Hussain or their cronies in Karachi. There was no point of calling or changing name when those very ex-MQM politicians in power under the title of PSP were likely to behave in the same way as they did before while in MQM.

It was like the Mustafa Kamal was absorbing the body of what he said it 'evil' while attacking the head. ***'When the head is gone and the body is absorbed into you then you become that very evil you were fighting,'*** one intelligent reporter opined.

Anees Qaimkhani was the same guy, who was under suspicion for Baldia Twon Factory case. By laying foundations of PSP, he went "baptized" along with many Sector In-charges and low level mafia people. PTI had surfaced in Karachi with much fervour but that phenomenon also failed miserably, partly because PTI was seeking alliance with *Jamat e Islami* [JI].

No doubt that many of political rivals have been speaking of MQM and his anti-Pakistan nexus but the same voices lost the value as blamed being political rival though Mustafa Kamal, an insider and ex-MQM. This city has more complexity than any other city in Pakistan especially where the business class depends upon peace in Karachi.

Mustafa Kamal was expected to reveal many other truths as well. As Altaf's RAW links discovery wasn't new but Kamal didn't tell that how organization worked, who related and attached them, who had been doing the bridge work, who was running the sleeping cells and all the wrong doings and orders given by Altaf and others while they attended the secret meetings at few selected Sector offices and mostly at Nine Zero.

Not to forget about later developments in the case of Uzair Baloch especially his links with Iran. Indeed Uzair & Co had links with Iran and got the support as well to sabotage the peace of this city. On the other hand, the same mission was carried out by the MQM that it had been involved in most of the ethnic killings in Karachi especially.

MQM was not just a RAW asset but it was like a ***rent-a-militant service*** thing that whoever paid for whatever, MQM did the job no matter what it hosted like precious lives, peace of the city, money and much more; see Zulfikar Mirza's statements of mid 2011 [*cited in Volume-III of this book*] regarding MQM having contracts with International Agency(s) to work for them.

Many people in Karachi joined, supported or had links by way of paying good amounts to them whether it was MQM, Amn Committee or Taliban for personal benefits as well. Still many Pakistanis are supporting these terrorists, anti-state elements just because of their worship of the person and being blind folded in love of the so called fake leadership.

Pakistani populace let these corrupts to rule them and no doubt they have chosen the life style that they are living today which is indeed not to be called as peaceful and literate society. Many of Karachiites still talk big, show potency for the growth of this country but when it comes to elect the right one, there comes the time when the worst of inside enemy comes out by electing these terrorists.

The afore-mentioned revelations were not new about MQM or Altaf Hussain but the interesting thing was, nobody including Mustafa Kamal ever told the whole truth; everyone was just trying to pick for himself as much as he could from the dying terrorist loot.

**On 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016;** PSP's Anees Khan Advocate launched another diatribe against MQM saying that his party would not accept anyone working against Pakistan.

Addressing a press conference from London, Anees said Mustafa Kamal and Anees Qaimkhani deserved tribute for speaking out against anti-state elements. Flanked by other PSP leaders including Raza Haroon, he said:

*"We want to stop those who are working at the behest of our enemies; he is in London to raise voice against elements destabilising Pakistan. There was a time when slaughtering in Karachi was a routine matter and people killed each other in the name of ethnicity – but now that sub-culture is dying."*

Mustafa Kamal, who won broad support as Mayor of Karachi from 2005 to 2010, levelled blistering criticism at Altaf Hussain's strong-arm tactics. Kamal left Pakistan in 2013 over reported differences with Altaf Hussain, and lived in Dubai since then.

**On 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016;** since 119 days into its being, the PSP had not officially announced designations for its members to run administrative and disciplinary management; most of the senior leaders of PSP were dissidents of MQM. On that day the names mentioned earlier were allocated office portfolios in a formal way. Mustafa Kamal vowed PSP would emerge out to be one of the biggest parties of the country in 2018 elections in Karachi.

**On 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** a day after Farooq Sattar announced complete disconnect with MQM London and its Chief Altaf Hussain, MQM's lawmaker Syed Asif Hasnain joined the Pak Sar-zameen Party [PSP]. Syed Asif said:

*"From today, I'll have no connection with the MQM. I resign from my seat [as well]. I have left MQM's mandate because I want to work for Pakistan not against it."*

Hasnain represented the MQM in the National Assembly – had won his seat from NA-255 Karachi in the 2013 general elections. He then urged other MQM leaders and members to leave their party and join the PSP. **"Don't be afraid of anyone. Join the PSP and support Mustafa Kamal,"** he contended.

Syed Asif was detained following raids on MQM's offices after Altaf's anti-Pakistan speech on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016. Farooq Sattar in an interview confirmed Syed Asif was not in contact with the party since then. Commenting on Altaf's decision to let Farooq Sattar run the MQM, Kamal said:

***"As long as he [Altaf Hussain] is alive, he will not let anyone else lead his party. He killed whoever was capable of doing so. He killed Azeem Tariq. He killed Imran Farooq."***

**On 30<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** dozens of local MQM leaders from Multan, South Punjab, joined PSP including Zonal Organizer MQM South Punjab Shafique Bhatti, district President MQM Rao Tahir and Zonal Incharge Rai Tahir along with workers from different cities of the South Punjab areas.

On this occasion, PSP Vice Chairman Iftikhar Randhawa appreciated the newcomers in the PSP and observed that MQM and Altaf Hussain were not

separate identities but it was one name of the same thing. Farooq Sattar had no importance in MQM and he was trying to save Altaf and MQM both.

Randhawa alleged that Farooq Sattar used to take instructions from Altaf Hussain. That was another fact that Sattar had categorically told the nation that they had parted their ways from Altaf Hussain and the London MQM. He lauded Rangers for restoring peace in Karachi. To a query, he stated that Rangers were conducting operation against the agents of RAWs, India's state spy agency.

**On 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016:** a supporter of the PSP was killed in Orangi Town area of Karachi during night times. Despite a ban on pillion riding in place, the killers were wearing *burqas* when they carried out the attack. The victim, Kashif Sagheer, 28, was shot dead in Sector-12C of Orangi Town, in Abbasi Shaheed Hospital he succumbed to his injuries; he had suffered multiple bullet wounds to his chest.

Pakistan Bazaar SHO Imtiaz Mir said Sagheer, who worked at a private firm, was sitting outside his house when four men riding two motorcycles, two of them wearing *burkas*, opened fire at him. The attackers had used 9mm pistols and eight spent bullet shells were found at the crime scene.

### **MUSTAFA KAMAL vs GOVERNOR:**

**On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** in a scathing attack, PSP head Mustafa Kamal called for the federal government to place Ishratul Ebad on exit-control list [ECL], claiming Sindh Governor was a criminal. Mustafa Kamal told the media persons:

*"This is my request and demand that this man is a criminal. This man caused a lot of damage to this country over the past 13 years.*

*He has played with people's lives and ruined many generations, I demand Ebad be arrested immediately and his name put on ECL.*

*The business community in Karachi calls Ishratul Ebad as **Rishwatul Ebad.**"*

Just within moments, all TV channels in Pakistan were displaying and repeating the said sayings or allegations in their bulletins as breaking news. Terming the governor "*Rishwat [bribe] ul Ebad'*", the PSP chief claimed:

*"Ebad oxygenates all evil forces including Altaf; and the firing at Mangi's house was carried out on the behest of the MQM founder.*

Earlier that day, Mangi's brother was reportedly injured from firing when a group of four unidentified persons tried to kidnap him from his house in *Gulistan-e-Jauhar*. Mangi left the MQM to join Mustafa Kamal's party in April 2016. The lawmaker was elected from Sindh Assembly's PS-127 constituency in the 2013 general elections, and was also a former member of the MQM Rabita Committee.

Mustafa Kamal also alleged that Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan was in contact with and assisting MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and Dr Farooq Sattar. He went on to call the governor '*rishwat-ul-Ebad*', alleging that Khan would never miss any chance of taking bribes in cases such as land grabbing.

The PSP leader alleged that Governor Ebad was one of the leaders present in a meeting in Dubai where it was allegedly revealed that MQM was being funded by Indian spy agency, RAW; the MQM chief had threatened people to '*silence*' them because of which no one was willing to vote for the party. The attacks from PSP Chairperson Mustafa Kamal continued even next day.

That day's media talk was organised to condemn the aforementioned firing incident outside Mangi's residence in *Gulistan-e-Johar* Block 2. *Gulistan-e-Jauhar* SHO Ch Shahid said that the police initiated investigations but no case was registered in that context. The PSP chairperson put the blame of the '**attempted kidnapping' on the MQM Chief** and included Ebad and Dr Farooq Sattar in his criticism.

Mustafa Kamal also lashed out at Farooq Sattar for claiming the top slot in MQM-Pakistan and insisted that he was still in touch with the party leadership in London; this 'camouflage' was being supported by Governor Ebad. Kamal also alleged that the governor called MQM chief and felicitated him in the money laundering case by the Scotland Yard.

Governor Dr Ishratul Ebad reacted to the allegations in a talk with news channels and asserted that Mustafa Kamal should have backed his claims with evidence; that the allegations were baseless - neither was he in contact with the MQM chief nor with any other leader of the party. Ebad clarified that he left the MQM in 2002 when he was sworn in as the Sindh governor for the first time.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** Governor Sindh Dr Ishratul Ebad lashed out at Mustafa Kamal claiming he was **'extremely dishonourable and unfaithful man.'**

Addressing the media in Karachi, Governor Ebad said those who perpetrated the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 carnage in Karachi would be brought to justice at all costs, saying the government was working on measures for sustainable peace in the metropolis. Ebad added that:

*"We will publicly hang all those responsible for the May 12 tragedy in Karachi regardless of their party affiliation. Over 40 people, including lawyers, were killed in Karachi on the arrival of former CJP Iftikhar Chaudhry to address the Sindh High Court Bar Association on May 12, 2007.*

Ebad also said that Karachi had been purged of crime since an operation kicked off in September 2013, as those responsible for target killings, extortion, kidnapping for ransom were duly arrested and prosecuted. Government was taking measures for sustainable peace in the city and working to eradicate the remaining 25 to 30pc of criminal activities. Ebad further reiterated:

*"We have decided to nab those who burnt innocent people to death and later embezzled money released as compensation for the loss of the victims [he was referring to Qaimkhani of the PSP].*

*The law enforcement agencies have been given clear instructions to bring to task anyone whose name had been abolished from the report of the Joint Investigation Team [JIT]. This will be done to ensure that lives of the innocent remain safe.*

*....that investigations were also ongoing to find out about the culprits involved in dumping the biggest cache of arms in Karachi's history. The arms were bought to engage in a fight with the army, Rangers or other LEAs.*

[He was referring to the arms seizure episode of **5<sup>th</sup> October 2016** in Azizabad Karachi; details given on earlier pages.]

*We have come to know that some people on important political positions were involved in dumping the arms; we have identified*

*those selling and financing the arms and we will give them exemplary punishment to ensure nothing of this sort happens in future.*

*....that authorities will also bring to justice those involved in an ethnic cleansing in Karachi from 2008 to November 2011. We are on the hunt for those who attacked Awami National Party [ANP] leader Bashir Jan, too."*

The blame game between the two former MQM leaders was going worse day by day.

### **GOVERNOR SINDH EBAD SENT HOME:**

**On 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016;** after 14 years in office, Governor Sindh Dr Ishratul Ebad was sent home; he was replaced by a former chief justice of Pakistan, Justice Saeeduz Zaman Siddiqui. Siddiqui was among the aspiring candidates for the post of president in 2003 and 2008 from the PML[N] side but both times miserably failed for that achievement. While taking oath for the new assignment, he said:

*"I believe that maintaining peace in Karachi is the joint responsibility of both the provincial government and the governor.*

*After taking oath he will review the issues of funds and powers so as to put the matter of local government in order.*

*We also need to look into the political divisions in city so as to utilise political segments in order to resolve problems of the people."*

It remained fact that Dr Ebad was removed due to 'recent controversies', mostly trumpeted by Mustafa Kamal of the PSP. Next day, Justice Siddiqui took oath of his office and straightaway proceeded to the hospital as his health was continuously deteriorating since some days.

### **[Dr Ishratul Ebad:**

*Ishratul Ebad began his political career as a worker of the All Pakistan Mohajir Students Organisation [APMSO] when he was studying in Karachi's Dow Medical College. He contested the general elections in 1990 on a provincial assembly constituency as a candidate of the MQM-backed Haq Parast group and became a minister in the Jam Sadiq Ali cabinet.*

*Ebad went underground to avoid arrest after an army operation was launched against the MQM in June 1992 and surfaced a year later in London, where he obtained political asylum. While he was very close to Altaf Hussain, he maintained a low profile in the MQM until 2002 when he became the acting convener of the MQM's co-ordination committee after Altaf Hussain removed the then convener Dr Imran Farooq from the post.*

*During the later years, however, Dr Ebad and Altaf Hussain had to share a mercurial relationship in some years, with the former having to make at least three trips to London to remove the displeasure of the his Chief.*

*Ebad became Sindh's youngest governor on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2002 in the military regime of Gen Musharraf.]*

Dr Ebad's critics within the MQM say that a certain international power as well as 'men in uniform' came to Dr Ebad's rescue when Mr Hussain tried to remove him from the post of governor in June 2011. They pressurized Mr Hussain to the extent that after three weeks he himself asked Dr Ebad to return to Karachi and resume his responsibilities. But after that incident the MQM leadership no longer considered him loyal to the party.

However, Dr Ebad's admirers — and there was no dearth of them within the MQM — gave him the credit for steering the party out of several political crises, particularly the one after the **12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 mayhem** in the metropolis when no party was willing to even talk to the MQM.

The situation started changing in 2011. In the past 12 years, Dr Ebad faced the wrath of MQM Chief many times and at least on three different occasions the latter asked him to resign and return to London. But each time either his resignation was rejected or the powers who mattered persuaded Mr Hussain to retain him as governor.

The group of MQM's soft birds held that although the MQM Chief strongly opposed former CJP Iftikhar M Chaudhry, the latter did not take any action against the MQM even after annulling the much-reviled NRO just because of Dr Ebad. A former office-bearer of the MQM opined that:

*"Dr Ebad is an asset for the MQM as he is acceptable to entire Pakistan. He is a tested and trusted leader and the current leadership should use his national and international contacts for the party's benefit."*

Until 2011, MQM leaders close to the Chief Altaf Hussain considered Dr Ebad **'a man of crisis'** who could always be relied upon to come up to the expectations of the MQM Chief; but in later years 'not any more'. The Chief privately accused Dr Ebad of betraying the party, indulging in corruption for himself and submitting to the PPP for personal gains.

**On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013;** Sindh Governor Dr Ebad survived another crisis that threatened to bring to an end his over 10-year-long stint when he flew back to Karachi in the early hours and lost no time in thanking President Asif Zardari and MQM Chief Altaf Hussain for putting their trust in him.

In Pakistan, while a governor holds office 'during the pleasure of the president' under the 1973 constitution, MQM parliamentarians and officials used to seize the first opportunity to affirm their allegiance to Altaf Hussain. Dr Ebad flew to the UAE a week after the MQM parted ways with the PPP-led coalition in Sindh over the restoration of the 1979 local government system and stayed in Dubai.

Dr Ebad was seen reluctant to contact MQM Secretariat in London, but even then the MQM — in an attempt to quash rumours about differences between Dr Ebad and Mr Hussain — issued a statement on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013 and made it clear that Dr Ebad had *'proceeded to Dubai because of an ailment'*. Dr Ebad ended his illness within no time when Mr Hussain advised him to take back his resignation *"and resume his responsibilities for peace and stability in Sindh"*.

Speaking to journalists at the arrival lounge of Jinnah International Terminal Karachi, Dr Ebad insisted that the resignation was his own decision that he reviewed only after having consultation with President Zardari, Altaf Hussain and Interior Minister Rahman Malik who all agreed on the role he could play in maintaining peace and stability in Sindh as the general elections drew near.

Dr Ebad's that resignation of 2013 as governor followed by its withdrawal to resume office was not the first such event in his more than a decade-long time in office, as told earlier, in June 2011 he tendered his resignation hours after the MQM pulled out of the ruling coalition in the province and the centre in protest against the postponement of elections on two Karachi seats of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir [AJK] Legislative Assembly.

Till ending 2014, Dr Ebad had proved that he was a survivor by being Sindh governor for the past 12 years. No predecessor of him had such a long stint in that thorny office, though during this period he had to thwart several attempts of his own party to get him replaced.

Since then he remained in Governor House no matter which party formed a government at the centre and, crucially, whether the MQM was part of it. Neither former president Asif Zardari nor incumbent Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif felt the need to replace him with their party loyalists when they came to power in the 2008 and 2013 general elections, respectively.

**On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** MQM officially asked Dr Ebad to resign from his post after ***"failing to take appropriate measures to safeguard the party's political character."*** Addressing a press conference, MQM leader Farooq Sattar laid out a list of grievances with the governor, primarily revolving around his inaction at a time when the ***"MQM was being politically victimised."*** Dr Sattar held that:

*".....he [Dr Ebad] was aware of our workers' disappearances and target killing, and the treatment being meted out to those affiliated with MQM. We tried to make him pay attention to these incidents but unfortunately he was unsuccessful in putting a stop to them.*

*.....the operation in Karachi was initiated at the MQM's request but the operation seemed to have changed its direction but the governor remained silent."*

Referring to the Rangers' raid at Nine Zero on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015, Dr Farooq Sattar held that no other political party's offices were raided; it appeared to be aimed at damaging MQM's political clout. The killers of MQM workers were roaming free; they were not arrested... nor did anyone release any confessional statements, nor were there any media trials, and no JITs formed to question them. But Dr Ebad, despite repeated reminders, was not able to fulfil his responsibilities.

Dr Farooq Sattar roared that *'.....if Ishratul Ebad sympathises with the masses, he should tender his resignation for not being able to do his job.'*

Three weeks earlier, MQM Chief Altaf Hussain had declared that the Sindh Governor Ishratul Ebad was no longer affiliated with MQM; speaking to a private television channel via telephone from London, the MQM chief had directed party activists against expecting any cooperation from the governor, who he referred to as a ***"representative of the establishment"***, media statements dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 are referred.

Publicly disowning Dr Ebad, MQM Chief lamented in that TV address:

*"My house Nine Zero was raided. My sister's house was raided. But the governor never took any notice and did not even condemn it.*

*Ishratul Ebad has no political or ideological association with the MQM. He is not a member of the party ... [he] represents the establishment and the federal government."*

Dr Ebad was in power since fourteen years as the governor Sindh; its jurisdiction included Karachi, with its various competing stakeholders. Yet, he managed to pull along despite several challenges to his authority, last one from former Karachi mayor Mustafa Kamal of the PSP. Kamal's latest outburst, calling Ebad **'a criminal, who played with people's lives and ruined generations'**, brought forward many of the long-standing allegations that had been haunting the governor for years, including his involvement in various acts of violence and extortion.

Governor Ebad, typically known for keeping a low profile and being a soft-spoken person, roused to hit back, making several appearances on TV channels to counter-attack. He was known as level-headed mediator, who has been able to build bridges and smoothen frequent phases of friction between the MQM and the PPP and PML[N] governments, as well as the MQM and the military establishment over the years. Arguably, the truth remained somewhere in between.

In October 2015; Dr Ebad made statements that **'he bade farewell to the MQM way back in 2002, when he was sworn in as governor'**.

*[...but the on-ground situation was quite different.*

*While the constitutional office of the governor requires complete impartiality, Dr Ebad had never concealed the fact that he was an MQM nominee.*

*It was Dr Ebad who during his early days as governor orchestrated an operation against the Muttahida's nemesis, the MQM-Haqiqi, in 2003 to clear what were then described as 'no-go areas'.*

*The MQM-H's HQ, Baitul-Hamza in Landhi, was demolished and the entire leadership was arrested during his first two years in office.*

*For about 10 years, he exercised full control over not only his party's political affairs but also the administration of Karachi and Hyderabad. All ministers belonging to the MQM reported to him.*

*Dr Ebad presided over late-night meetings with MQM leadership at Governor House with such regularity that some political parties accused him of having turned the palatial official residence into an MQM sector office.]*

That the said rift between Mustafa Kamal and Dr Ebad was perhaps a reflection of old squabbles – with bigger players looming in the shadows – but it was, more importantly a reflection of how times were changing; though the MQM’s constituency in Karachi remained as such. In the tussle for influence over Pakistan’s commercial hub, Karachi, new players and contenders had made their roaring entries.

In the new chaotic city of Karachi, Dr Ebad was still not openly confronting Altaf Hussain, the way his former colleagues, such as Mustafa Kamal and Dr Farooq Sattar, had done. However, Dr Ebad did not share any popular support amongst the people at the same moment; his style of politics did not make him a populist leader – as he had always enjoyed close ties with the establishment.

Ebad’s ouster from the Governor House Sindh was an indication that even the aforementioned opportunity of reconciling with the establishment was lost to MQM.

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### **MQM CHIEF DITCHED PAKISTAN**

#### **ALTAF DOOMED HIS OWN STATE:**

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016:** Muttahida Qaumi Movement [MQM] Chief Altaf Hussain's attacking speech was an utter disappointment. The general populace were convinced that state institutions would use the speech as a justification for setting up hi-treason proceedings against him and like-minded MQM activists.

Parts of the speech that went viral on social media just few minutes after the violence broke out in the city's south districts showed that while addressing the MQM workers protesting outside the Karachi Press Club against "*alleged enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of workers*", Hussain not only raised slogans against Pakistan but also called the country "***a cancer for the entire world***". The words were:

***"Pakistan is cancer for the entire world; Pakistan is headache for the entire world. Pakistan is the epicentre of terrorism for the entire world. Who says long live Pakistan; it's down with Pakistan – 'Pakistan Murdabad [dead]'."***

The London-based MQM chief then turned to the party workers for different questions about their next 'move' after leaving the hunger strike camp, suggesting that something violent should be shown to the Pak Army, Rangers and the PPP government.

***"So you are moving to ARY and Samaa [TV offices] from here...right?"*** he asked to receive, from the crowd, a unanimous and loud reply in the affirmative.

***"So you go to Samaa and ARY today and then refresh [yourself] tomorrow for the Rangers place. And tomorrow***

***we would lock down the Sindh government building which is called Sindh Secretariat."***

The directives charged the crowd, prompting women workers whose voices could be heard over microphone raising pro-Altaf slogans: ***"Bhai ka ho ik ishara, hazir hazir lahu hamara*** [*on directives from Altaf Hussain, we can shed our blood*]."

As shown by the news channels and footage shared on social media, the final move before the violence occurred when the workers were directly interacting with Altaf Hussain over telephone; a new phenomenon the city was being seen into.

***"Bhai, we just need your nod and nothing else,"*** a woman worker was heard asking the MQM leader before receiving this from him: ***"Bismillah, Bismillah, Bismillah."***

Within seconds of Mr Hussain's reply, the protesters stood up and chanted slogans in his and party's favour and left the camp. Then different voices of women emerged informing their leader over phone attached with microphone about their move. One of the voices said:

*"Bhai we are moving from here to ARY and Samaa and don't you worry that we would get justice on our own".*

It was on record that two TV anchors, Sami Ibrahim of ARY News and Kamran Shahid of the Express TV took the two veteran politicians, Lord Nazir Ahmed from UK and Irum Azeem Farooqui [a woman lawmaker of the MQM, who went to Twitter and announced quitting her party and the membership of the Sindh Assembly *after Altaf Hussain's said speech*] from the US who both condemned the strategic planned move of India and the MQM to disintegrate Pakistan by anyone by any way.

It was interesting to note that in his 15<sup>th</sup> August 2016's speech at Delhi Fort, the Indian Prime Minister Mr Modi had mentioned it specially that:

*'Pakistan is asking for Kashmir but we'll break Pakistan to have more chunks with us...'*

Exactly after a week, MQM's Hussain launched that public address of 22<sup>nd</sup> August trying to give shape to the *'holy words'* of Indian PM Modi.

**Let us travel into the recent past for a while.**

Years ago, **the BBC** dated **12<sup>th</sup> July 2013** had said:

*"The most powerful party in Pakistan's largest city Karachi, is run from the quiet London suburb of Edgware. But the MQM's reputation is far from peaceful - its activists on the ground are key players in Karachi's constant political strife.*

*MQM's party leader Altaf Hussain, who lives in self-imposed exile in London, is largely unknown in the UK, but in Pakistan he is famous for addressing mass rallies in Karachi by a conference telephone connected to loud speakers.*

*For years there have been claims that the MQM has been involved in violence - and for years the UK authorities have turned a blind eye.*

*But BBC Newsnight understands that now police in London are investigating the MQM for possible money-laundering and complaints alleging that Mr Hussain has used his base in the UK to incite violence in Pakistan."*

Owen Bennett-Jones, the author of **Target Britain** writes in '**the guardian**' of **29<sup>th</sup> July 2013**:

'Anxiety about the MQM is not restricted to Pakistan. One member of the British House of Lords who has been openly critical of the MQM recently said: **"If I went to Karachi now, I would be killed."** Another peer has similar worries: **"This is one issue I don't ask questions on. I have my child to worry about."**

For more than 20 years, Altaf Hussain has operated from the north London suburb of Edgware, beyond the reach of Pakistani prosecutors. He is almost completely unknown in the UK: his four-million-plus devoted supporters live thousands of miles away.

Pakistani president Gen Musharraf implemented his National Reconciliation Order [NRO], granting most of the country's senior politicians an amnesty. One of the biggest beneficiaries was Hussain, against 72 cases were dropped, including 31 allegations of murder. The MQM rejected all the murder charges lodged against Hussain. He had said in March 1984:

**"When everyone else had a province, the Mohajirs should have one too."**

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In 2007, Imran Khan paid a visit to the Metropolitan police in London to hand over, he claimed, evidence of Hussain's wrongdoing. *Apparently unimpressed with the quality of that evidence, the police did not bring any charges and Khan let the issue drop.* But in May this year [2013] when PTI's Zahra Shahid Hussain, was shot down outside her home, Imran Khan openly accused the MQM of her murder.

At his [Altaf Hussain's] birthday party in 2009, he regaled his guests with a remark aimed at Pakistan's rich landowners and businessmen:

*"You've made big allegations against the MQM. If you make those allegations to my face one more time you'll be taking down your measurements and we'll prepare your body bags."*

Because he is in London, Hussain addresses rallies in Karachi over the telephone. Crowds gather to listen to his voice through loudspeakers. In one such speech he had this message for TV anchors:

*"If you don't stop the lies and false allegations that damage our party's reputation, then don't blame me, Altaf Hussain, or the MQM if you get killed by any of my millions of supporters."*

Most of his threats have been aimed at people in Pakistan but at least one was directed at the UK journalist Azhar Javaid who asked a question once too often. At a press conference in September 2011 Hussain warned Javaid that his **"body bag was ready"**.

In December 2012, Hussain had ranted:

*"If your father won't give us freedom just listen to this sentence carefully: then we will tear open your father's abdomen. To get our freedom we will not only tear it out of your father's abdomen but yours as well."*

On two occasions British judges have found that the MQM is a violent organisation. In 2010 a Karachi-based police officer sought asylum in the UK claiming the MQM was threatening to kill him in revenge for his having registered a case against one of its members. The judge, Lord Bannatyne, granted asylum and in his judgment accepted that:

*".....the MQM has killed over 200 police officers who stood up to them in Karachi".*

The figure is often cited by the Karachi police themselves, and refers to those officers who were closely involved in Benazir Bhutto's anti-MQM crackdown in 1995, Operation Clean-up. Many of the police officers responsible have subsequently been murdered.

When asked about the allegations, MQM issued the following statement to **'the Guardian'**:

*"We'd also like to point out here that it is the MQM that has been the worst victim of violence in recent history of the country. The Taliban and other jihadi elements killed scores of MQM members."*

In 2013, the British police were running another MQM-related inquiry. It concerns the September 2010 murder of a senior MQM member, Imran Farooq, who was stabbed to death outside his flat in Green Lane, Edgware. The Counter Terrorism Command has launched a massive and sustained investigation into Farooq's death.

In December 2012 they [the British Police] raided the MQM's Edgware offices where they found substantial thousands of documents. Since most of the material was in Urdu and some, from MQM lawyers, was subject to client privilege, assessing it was extremely time-consuming - with 12 officers working on the case full-time and a whole range of specialists available to carry out specific tasks when needed.

In its statement to **the Guardian**, the MQM said:

*"..... Altaf Hussain has not been arrested nor charged with any criminal offence. The police are treating Mr Hussain as one of a large number of potential witnesses in their investigation and not as a suspect."*

Police raids of 2012 had turned up with £150,000 at the party's Edgware's offices and with £250,000 at Hussain's house in Mill Hill. The British Police said they were making significant progress in the Imran Farooq murder case. This remained one of the most active elements of the British Police's work. The question was: where does all the money seized in the raids and that used to buy the MQM's extensive UK property portfolio come from?

Altaf Hussain arrived in London in February 1992 and just three years later, the then PM Benazir Bhutto was asking for London's help while saying:

*"I think the British government has a moral responsibility to restrain Altaf Hussain and say you cannot use our soil for violence."*

In 2002 he was issued with a UK passport. Off the record, British officials admit that the process by which he obtained nationality was flawed – a decision in January 1999 to grant him indefinite leave to remain in the UK was made as a result of a **"clerical error"**. Despite repeated questions, the Home Office has refused to disclose what that error was.

What was the clerical error? The fact remains that once No: 10 Downing Street received a letter from Altaf Hussain, and that how the UK and the MQM have tried to conceal the true nature of their relationship. Written just two weeks after 9/11, in it Hussain said that:

*".....if the UK wanted hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Karachi denouncing terrorism he could lay that on with just five days' notice.*

*He could also organise human intelligence on the Taliban and could set up a network of fake aid workers in Afghanistan to back up Western intelligence gathering efforts there."*

Disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act established that the letter was in fact authentic. Faced with that information, the British Foreign Office admitted it had received the letter.

As Hussain suggested in the letter, British interest in the MQM was largely driven by the perception that the party offered a defence against *jihadis*. But there was more to it than that. On the British turf other secret games were being played by the foreigners:

*'Karachi is one of the few places left on earth in which the Americans let Britain take the lead. The US Consulate in Karachi no longer runs active intelligence gathering operations in the city. The British still do.*

*When it comes to claiming a place at the top table of international security politics – London's relationship with the MQM is a remaining toehold.'*

And there's something else. The UK's Foreign & Commonwealth Office [FCO]'s most important currency is influence. Successive Pakistani governments included Altaf Hussain's parliamentary bloc in various coalition gov-

ernments. From the FCO's point of view, it's a great source of access. Right on their doorstep, in London, they have a man with ministers in the Pakistani government.

For its part the UK government insists there is nothing unusual about its contacts with MQM and that its meetings with MQM officials are: **"a normal part of diplomatic activity around the world"**.

A key British official was asked about the MQM and asked why the UK government, so keen to declare its commitment to human rights, seemed so willing to deal with the party despite officials privately saying that it used to deploy violence to achieve its goals. She said:

***"There is one thing I can assure you of – it's not a conspiracy."***

A year later, **the BBC** dated **3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014** expressed the same opinion;

*"MQM party leader Altaf Hussain is one of Pakistan's longest - serving and most powerful and divisive politicians.*

*Mr Hussain lives in self - exile in London, and has run his party from a non-descript office block in the northern suburb of Edgware since 1992. He addresses mass rallies in the southern city of Karachi by a conference telephone connected to loudspeakers.*

*His online critics, however, have accused him of being the leader of a "terrorist organisation and a land grabber" who is responsible for much of the ubiquitous violence and corruption that in recent years has blighted his stronghold in Karachi.*

*He is accused of no fewer than 30 murders in the city, allegations he strongly denies along with all the other criminal charges against him.*

*Following different attacks that injured him and killed his brothers and nephews, Mr Hussain requested political asylum in the UK in 1992, later gaining British citizenship.*

*It describes itself as a modern, secular and middle-class party that offers the best chance of opposing the rise of the Taliban in Pakistan's largest city.*

*But his critics - accuse him of cementing his power base through increasingly violent tactics. The list of alleged crimes includes running extortion rackets, demanding protection money, carrying out targeted killings and generally menacing the Karachi population."*

#### **CAUSE OF ALTAF BHAI'S BOIL:**

*On 30<sup>th</sup> July 2016; probably the most recent cause of disturbance for MQM Chief appeared when Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] of Karachi declared that the MQM Chief Altaf Hussain and others proclaimed offenders [once again] were wanted in a 1997 triple murder case. Minhaj Qazi alias Asad, with his accomplices was booked in the murder of the then MD of the KESC [later renamed K-Electric] Shahid Hamid, his driver, and a guard in the Defence Housing Authority in 1997.*

Police had submitted an investigation report in which they charge-sheeted Qazi as one of the alleged shooters saying that he and Saulat Mirza with their two accomplices had fired at the KESC MD's car with Kalashnikovs. They also named Altaf Hussain, party convener Nadeem Nusrat, London-based MQM leader Sohail Zaidi and two workers — Rashid Akhtar and Athar Hussain — as absconders in the supplementary charge sheet.

Subsequently, the court twice issued non-bailable warrants for the arrest of the absconders, but could not be executed. The court had ordered to start proceedings against the absconding accused under Sections 87 & 88 CrPC (proclamation for persons absconding and attachment of their property). On IO's recommendations, the ATC-V judge Jawaid Alam bifurcated their case and kept it dormant till their arrest.

*[An ATC had already sentenced MQM worker Saulat Ali Khan, better known as Saulat Mirza, to death in 1999 in this case and he was executed in Machh jail in Balochistan in May 2015.]*

Referring to '**the News**' dated **4<sup>th</sup> June 2014**; the Scotland Yard Police [London] confirmed that a 60-year-old man had been arrested on suspicion of money-laundering but did not name Altaf Hussain. **GEO TV** was the channel to break the news of Altaf's arrest exclusively but every thing was seen in doldrums and suspicion.

**GEO TV** also was the channel to film the North London property of Altaf Hussain being searched by around three dozen detectives from the Specialist Operations Unit. The operation began at 5:30am and all members of

the household were asked to leave the property and Altaf Hussain was arrested. Initially, the MQM denied the news of the arrest and issued several denials and later on issued a detailed press release in that regard. The Metropolitan Police confirmed that:

*"We would like to inform that Mr Hussain has been very ill for past several days and only yesterday (Monday) the MQM central coordination committee discussed his health situation and contacted his personal doctor.*

*The doctor visited the residence of Mr Hussain and examined him. He advised to shift him to the hospital. He also consulted various specialist consultants and it was decided that today i.e. Tuesday in the morning Mr Hussain will be admitted to a London hospital where he will undergo treatment for the next few days."*

However, it was not the first time that Altaf Hussain had gone off beam; see an article appearing in **'the News'** dated **5<sup>th</sup> August 2015** by Malik M Ashraf titled as **The leader appears to be out of control:**

*"The London based MQM supremo Altaf Hussain addressing an annual convention of the party **demanded separate province for Mohajirs** and during his discourse also asked the party workers to stage protest demonstrations before UN, White House and NATO HQ and ask them to send NATO troops to Karachi.*

*He [Altaf Hussain] also characterised India as a coward country saying had it some honour it would not have let further bloodshed of Mohajirs on Pakistani soil. He also made disparaging remarks about the Army and security institutions."*

Earlier, the MQM Secretariat in London also sent a letter to the UN Secretary General alleging that its workers were being mistreated during the current security operation being conducted in Karachi and law enforcement agencies were unlawfully detaining their workers. It particularly mentioned the raid on MQM headquarters on the night of 17<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and the arrest of a member of the *Rabita Committee*.

This was not [even then] the first time that Altaf has indulged in denigrating the state institutions, security establishment and the Rangers. The reaction had however become more pronounced since the initiation of the targeted operation in Karachi after the JIT report on Baldia Town fire incident, the revelations made by the criminals arrested from and around Nine

Zero, recovery of weapons from the MQM HQ and the confessions made by Saulat Mirza.

One could estimate the contents of his speech, the unmistakable inference drawn from it was that it had exposed the sinister designs of Altaf for the creation of a separate province for *Mohajirs*, a permeating perception among the people and security establishment of Pakistan since long, strengthened and reinforced by the culture of militancy promoted by the MQM in a systematic way. His invitation for intervention by foreign forces in Pakistan and expecting India to protect *Mohajirs* clearly pointed to treason and declaration of war against the state.

The media held that Altaf Hussain had crossed all the limits. Almost all the political forces in the country had severely condemned Altaf's tirade against the state institutions and his act of treason. No doubt, MQM as a political entity was an irrefutable reality and no one could think of depriving it of its political right to participate in the national politics.

The interior minister had rightly said that the party was a patriotic political outfit and loyalty of the supporters of the MQM to Pakistan was beyond any reproach; but he singled out MQM Chief and his London Secretariat for their anti-Pakistan stance. Thus it was a right time for MQM to revisit the contours of its political creed, come out of the denial mode regarding many alleged crimes of target killings and extortion which was pointed out by the Supreme Court in its decision of October 2011.

The targeted operation in Karachi was being carried out indiscriminately by the Rangers only against the criminals irrespective of their political affiliations and not against the MQM only. The Rangers had taken action against the criminals belonging to the PPP, ANP, *Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat* [ASWJ] and others as well.

The PPP had also expressed resentment over Rangers' raids on Civic Centre and the Karachi Building Authority which prompted Zardari to vent his frustration through an outburst against the security agencies. However, sanity soon returned and Zardari had no other option than to retract and through under the table negotiations he, however, managed to come back to Pakistan in ending year 2016.

**MQM's APPARENT U-TURN:**

The MQM dominated Sindh's urban politics for quite some time. It built a reputation on many counts including its ethnic politics, frequent shutting down the city, *bori-band* bags, *bhatta* mafia, target killings, traffic blockades with containers and, most of all, the telephonic addresses from across the borders. But one incident of 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016 suddenly turned the tables on the party, and its exiled leadership. It started at the Karachi Press Club, and ended in a brazen attack by its workers on media offices.

This attack, instigated by the exiled leader, was nothing new but this time, the reaction was different. Altaf Hussain's anti-Pakistan address followed by high-pitched drama, in which the key player, MQM's top tier leader in Pakistan, Dr Farooq Sattar started defending his London-based leadership in press conference, explaining his characteristic tirade as a result of mental strain; then his shifting of gears – would be remembered in the history of the country for very long time.

It was **23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016**; Altaf Hussain was still MQM's supreme leader and the deputy convener Farooq Sattar, in whose name the party was registered in Election Commission of Pakistan, could not change his position, much less announce disassociation with Altaf Hussain.

*[In the MQM constitution, Altaf Hussain has the supreme powers; in its last chapter Altaf Hussain is recognised as Quaid. It says Altaf Hussain can form and break any body. MQM is bound to get its policy decisions endorsed by Altaf Hussain. Hence, no leader, be it the deputy convener, can take party decisions.]*

In the press conference, the way Dr Farooq Sattar conveyed that the party decisions would be done at Karachi, and NOT in London, was termed as fake gesture. Dr Farooq was party's deputy convener while convener Nadeem Nusrat was in London. MQM Supreme Council had also not endorsed Dr Farooq's statements.

About 20 hours later, yet in another defence, Dr Farooq Sattar divorced MQM Karachi from MQM London, took over leadership of the local chapter, and disclaimed any utterance by the London leader. In yesteryears, such a radical move from any party leader would have been blasphemous; such was the capricious nature of politics. Apparently what Dr Farooq Sattar said signalled the end of the Altaf Hussain era in local politics.

Many political pundits refused to accept Dr Farooq Sattar's defence plea. Incidentally, the above drama was unfolded just a day before the election of the Karachi's mayor – which eventually led to an imprisoned MQM leader, Waseem Akhtar, being the new mayor of Karachi. Things were confused

in the city. By design or incidence, the MQM was seen split between two cities, two leaders, and two sets of followers – if not ideology.

On the same day of **23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016**, MQM Chief Altaf Hussain apologised to Chief of Army Staff Gen Raheel Sharif and Director General [DG] Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akber for his vitriolic speech a day earlier in which he referred to Pakistan as **"a cancer for the entire world"**. MQM spokesperson Wasay Jalil shared on Twitter:

***"From the depth of heart, I beg pardon from my remarks against Pakistan, the establishment including Gen Raheel Sharif and DG Rangers.***

***I was under severe mental stress over extra-judicial arrests and precarious condition of my workers sitting at the hunger strike camp."***

MQM supreme also urged the authorities:

***"..... to end all steps taken against MQM.***

***Being a Pakistani, I assure the Pakistani people, establishment, army, ISI, all higher authorities and leaders that I will never use such words again.***

***For God's sake, don't cut MQM from the national mainstream."***

Altaf Hussain also regretted the violence against media houses, ARY, Samaa and GEO which were attacked in the aftermath of his speech and asked for the release of MQM leaders who were later arrested. MQM leader Syed Ali Raza Abidi had hinted in a Tweet that the people who resorted to violence were not party activists but no one believed him.

However, **on the same day of 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016**, Altaf Hussain allegedly appreciated his followers' gathering in Chicago [USA] who repeated the slogans of **'Pakistan Murdabad'** and had promised on oath that **'they would take part in any move initiated by Altaf Bhai to break Pakistan'**.

The Pakistan media went surprised over the two different statements of the same day from a leader of such stature. ARY and Express TV anchors conducted special live programs on 24<sup>th</sup> August, displayed the videos from America, and exposed the American leadership of the MQM declaring them *'liars of the first order'*.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** MQM's senior leader Dr Farooq Sattar formally announced that there would be a complete disconnect with Altaf Hussain from that moment. Vocal Dr Sattar, during a press conference in Karachi, clearly told the media:

***"There will be now a complete disconnect with Altaf Hussain. We have no links with Altaf Hussain. It should be clear to all now.***

***If even after this announcement TV talk shows keep speculating on this matter, the leaders from MQM Pakistan will not go to TV programs."***

His statement came after speculations were made that the MQM Chief would keep leading the party from his London Secretariat. Dr Farooq Sattar added that the party [MQM in Pakistan] had completely de-linked MQM of the London secretariat. ***"No one has the right to question our sincerity now."***

Dr lamented that the offices of MQM were being raided and demolished despite their act of distancing themselves from the 'former' Chief. Naming some of the offices of the party, Dr Sattar said these were built on legal land and that they had literacy centres in them.

However, Babar Ghauri not only refuted the said allegation but also placed his sentiments on his twitter account. ***MQM Senator Babar Ghauri said on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016 that he had not apologized to anyone for saying Pakistan Zindabad.***

Speaking to the media, Babar Ghauri said that he had tendered an apology not for saying *Pakistan Zindabad* but for violating the party discipline. He said that his ***'Pakistan Zindabad tweet'*** would remain available on his Twitter account; it was never deleted despite pressure from a meeting of the party in the United States. Mr Ghauri had also tweeted:

**Babar Khan Ghauri @BabarKGhauri**

***"Note that I had never retracted my Pakistan Zindabad tweet. Let it be clear to the media and fellow citizens that I stand by what I said."***

PM Nawaz Sharif, though expressed his explicit determination that Altaf Hussain would not be condoned for his anti-Pakistan slogans but from inside he felt having a light breath because for some days the media's attention remained diverted to Altaf Hussain's issue instead of discussing ways and means to pull the PM down on charges of Pana-Leaks corruption.

[Participants of a high-level meeting presided over by PM Nawaz Sharif said that '...no compromise to be made on country's solidarity, dignity; action against miscreants to be expedited *that those who speak ill of Pakistan will have to pay for it and their apology will not be accepted.*

Without naming the MQM, it was stated that '*someone living in a foreign country would not be allowed to destroy peace in Karachi.*']

Two criminal cases were registered against the MQM in Lahore and another two in Karachi. The Pakistan Justice Party [PJP] submitted an application at Lahore's Anarkali police station against MQM Chief and other party members, including Dr Farooq Sattar, Dr Aamir Liaquat Hussain, Amir Khan and Kh Izharul Hassan. The PJP's application accused them of treason and violating the law and constitution by chanting anti-Pakistan slogans, incitement to violence, spreading chaos, attacking TV channels, burning vehicles, and spreading terror.

A similar application was filed in Rawalpindi at Civil Lines police station by Advocate Raja Mohammed Rizwan Charagh.

#### **ARY TV & SAMAA TV ATTACKED:**

Two media houses, ARY TV and Samaa TV, were ransacked as activists chanting pro-MQM slogans went wild and crazy **on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016** after listening to the provocative speech of their leader Altaf Hussain and resorted to a violent protest, firing and arson that left one person dead and a dozen others wounded. The army chief Gen Raheel Sharif condemned it and issued directives for immediate arrest of culprits.

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A police mobile van and a motorbike were torched while several other vehicles were damaged amid the wave of violence that turned the Saddar area into a battle ground between law enforcers and protesters. The protesters opened fire besides hurling stones at police and cameramen of three TV channels. Police fired teargas shells to disperse the mob besides resorting to a baton-charge.

A number of MQM workers, including women, marched towards Zainab Market from the press club and surrounded the Madina City Mall, which housed the ARY TV and Neo TV offices.

The police tried to stop the unruly mob and save the people but they attacked the police. *Women and children were leading the protest, followed by some 'criminal elements' who opened fire on police.* The mob injured security guards at the offices of the TV channels, particularly ARY, who put up resistance, and hurled stones at policemen and staff.

The violent episode continued for around 45 minutes. Traffic got suspended on the busy roads of Saddar; Zainab Market and other adjoining markets were immediately shut after the violence erupted.

The protesters returned to the hunger strike camp at the KPC again and hurled stones at the club building and used abusive language against media persons. However, the Rangers and police rushed to the spot and arrested around 10 workers of the MQM. The hospital record showed that one dead body of Arif Saeed, and 11 injured persons including two police officers, three TV channel cameramen and two women were destined there.

Dr Sattar demanded that MQM HQ Nine-Zero be opened and urged that *'detainment of their female workers be stopped once and for all'*. A visibly angered Kh Izharul Hassan questioned that if women were ever arrested in the country's history and remanded in police custody, referring to the arrest of party workers allegedly responsible for attacking media offices on 22<sup>nd</sup> August in Karachi after the party supremo's speech. Hassan added:

*"I request Maryam Nawaz to recall that your father was also taken into custody but your family's women were not sent behind the bars. I appeal you to please get our women freed.*

*Asefa Zardari to take notice of the issue as her mother, Benazir Bhutto, was also jailed extra-judicially."*

But perhaps, the law was helpless because the arrested women of the MQM were seen, identified and displayed on TV channels world over and alive while the media offices were being ran-sacked that day. Some of the media news pointed out that MQM's former minister Babar Ghauri had also raised shout of 'Pakistan – MurdaAbad' during Altaf Hussain's address to his workers in the States.

After that, the Sindh Rangers launched a full-scale crackdown against the MQM activists in Karachi, arresting its senior leaders — Dr Farooq Sattar, Kh Izhar-ul-Hasan and Aamir Liaquat Hussain and raided the party's Nine Zero HQ and its Khurshid Begum Complex, which were in control of the MQM women activists.

Meanwhile, in their brief response to Altaf Hussain's speech that resulted in attacks on media houses, the British police said: ***"We are aware of media reports concerning an attack on a media house in Karachi. This is a matter for Karachi law enforcement."***

The Pakistan-based leadership of the MQM party distanced itself from his comments and decided to strip him of organisational powers for an indefinite period. Altaf Hussain has been running the organisational affairs of MQM over phone from the confines of his London residence and the International Secretariat for a long time, although he never held any office in the MQM.

While three leaders of the MQM — MNA Kanwar Naveed Jameel, Shahid Pasha and Qamar Mansoor — were arrested and remanded in police custody by an Anti-Terrorism Court, the stance adopted by Dr Sattar, Kh Izhar-ul-Hasan and Aamir Khan lent credence to reports that the establishment still wanted to implement the '***minus-one formula***' in the MQM.

Sindh Governor Dr Ishratul Ebad remained busy the whole night between 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> August persuading all decision makers to allow the MQM to carry on its political activities. Mr Hussain's apology had also come following Dr Ebad's nightlong efforts, it was believed.

Two cases were registered in Karachi, at Artillery *Maidan* police station in District South while one each with the SITE Super Highway and Steel Town police stations. Apart from Altaf Hussain, over a dozen MQM leaders, including Dr Amir Liaquat Hussain, Dr Farooq Sattar, Kh Izharul Hasan, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Qamar Mansoor, Shahid Pasha and Kanwar Naveed Jamil, were nominated in the FIRs as facilitators. About 150 workers of the party who were present at the hunger strike camp were also mentioned in case FIRs. IGP Sindh Allah Dino Khowaja added that:

*"One case pertains to treason for his [Altaf Hussain's] anti-state speech and the other pertains to the incidents following his speech which saw media houses attacked by MQM activists."*

Though Dr Amir Liaquat Hussain denied being nominated in any case, SITE Super Highway's FIR had his name in it as facilitator. On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016; while talking in ARY's live TV show with Kashif Abbasi, Aamir Liaquat said in a very disturbed tone:

***"I am not part of MQM from today and I am leaving the party. I am also quitting Pakistani politics. Pakistan is everything for me, whatever I am today it is all because of Pakistan."***

***"If Altaf can't control his emotions and tongue he should also leave the politics and write books."***

Indian daily '***The Hindu***' dated **24<sup>th</sup> August 2016** added a script from the recent history of MQM while saying that He [Altaf Hussain] continued to run the MQM from his London office, often addressing his supporters in Karachi through telephones, and at times giving inflammatory speeches. In one of such addresses, he told his critics:

*"If you don't stop the lies and false allegations that damage our party's reputation, then don't blame me, Altaf Hussain, or the MQM if you get killed by any of my millions of supporters."*

The newspaper [***the Hindu***] quoted other similar acts by referring the same to a 2004 report by the US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services. The paper also cited a 2009 US diplomatic assessment:

*"In the mid-1990s, the MQM(A) was heavily involved in the widespread political violence that wrecked Pakistan's southern Sindh province, particularly Karachi."*

*MQM has 10,000 active armed members [in Karachi] and as many as 25,000 armed fighters in reserve. In 2006, the Federal Court of Canada declared the MQM as a terrorist organisation."*

*..... When the then President Pervez Musharraf offered amnesty to the country's senior politicians in 2007 as part of his reconciliation plan, Mr Hussain was one of the biggest beneficiaries. The authorities dropped 72 cases against him."*

**On 25<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** Dr Farooq Sattar, Deputy Convener of the MQM, reiterated that he was the party head in the country and those sitting in London had accepted the decisions made in Pakistan; for the first time a decision made in Karachi was imposed on those in London, and confusion apparently ended after Altaf Hussain's statement against Pakistan.

Dr Farooq Sattar was referring to a later statement issued by Altaf Hussain where he handed over all the powers to run the party to the Rabita Committee. Dr re-assured that:

*"The MQM is working for politics in Pakistan. All of its decisions will be made in Pakistan; and that they would not give a chance or platform to Altaf to address the party workers."*

On party's official website, the MQM's London Chief had also accepted the decision announced by Dr Farooq Sattar. The statement, as quoted by **BBC Urdu**, said:

*"I respect the decision the MQM leaders have taken in their press conference. As the founder of the party, I hand over the powers to make decisions and organising the party to the Rabita Committee.*

*..... and that Altaf Hussain will pay attention to his health as directed by the Rabita Committee."*

The party's website was blocked in Pakistan.

The Karachi city administration continued its crackdown on the MQM Chief's speech against Pakistan and demolished various sector offices of the party and removed pictures of the party chief. Pictures and bill-boards from city areas of Hyderabad and Mirpur Khas were also removed by the respective administrators.

The name of the **Mukkah Chowk** in Karachi was restored to its original and official name as Liaquat Chowk. The DC Central issued a notification in this regard. The Mukkah Chowk was inaugurated in 1991 and it was renovated during the period of Mustafa Kamal when he was the City Mayor.

In another development, the government decided to demolish all the unit and sector offices of the MQM which were set up or built on the government land; most offices of the MQM were established in public parks or public sports grounds. Till the end of the day [**26<sup>th</sup> August 2016**], 190 MQM's sector offices were sealed while nine illegally built offices were de-

molished. The flag at the residence of Altaf Hussain was removed and pictures and portraits of the MQM chief were also removed from all the MQM offices.

Three police contingents were deployed at the Nine Zero and around Azizabad. The media department of the MQM was also closed down. Before the attack on media houses, there were barriers around Nine Zero and no one was allowed to enter without permission but after Dr Farooq Sattar's press conference, there was no barrier. People were not asked as to where they were going; even the media people were not checked.

It seemed as if the majority of the MQM workers had left the city or gone into hiding due to fear. Many people were found asking questions like who kept the actual command of the party i.e. Dr Farooq Sattar in Pakistan or Altaf Hussain in London.

The Pak Sarzameen Party [PSP] also launched their trials to cash in the spoils caused by such rupture; as an in-house change in the MQM could be distinguished. The split was going to have an impact on Sindh's politics. *Mohajir* community was worried fare in that transition. Time was needed for their adjustment in new roles vis a vis the new political reality, the new face of the MQM, and a new set of challenges.

BUT why such hue & cry on that 22<sup>nd</sup> August speech; had he not threatened the media before, cursed judges and taunted army Generals? His former associates, including Mustafa Kamal and Saulat Mirza, had shared accounts of MQM's reliance on violence and terror as well as links with Indian intelligence – it was all on papers in black & white.

Article 5 of Pakistan's Constitution declares "**loyalty to the state**" to be the basic duty of every citizen, and that, "**obedience to the constitution and law is the inviolable obligation of every citizen...**" Altaf Hussain, wishing Pakistan ill and inciting supporters to violence, only confirmed the suspicions of many patriot Pakistanis belonging to all other political and religious parties.

Then there was visible change in Karachi – hats off to the Pak-Army and its Rangers. Altaf Hussain lost physical control of Karachi manifested in his inability to shut it down at whim. He also lost control over public narrative around the MQM, previously in place due to the media's fear of Altaf together with a vocal MQM political wing skilfully projecting the familiar narrative of *Mohajir* persecution, inequality and restricted access to the state services.

Till few years back, fear was so palpable that criticism of Altaf Hussain was unthinkable; steadily the situation had gone quite different. But where was the law to take serious note of inciting violence; perhaps the state had allowed him to do so. After ceding absolute control of Karachi to the MQM, the state had to throw all its weight for Maj Gen Bilal Akbar, the Rangers' Chief in Karachi, to wrestle it back from Altaf Hussain.

The '**Times of India**' dated **25<sup>th</sup> August 2016** wrote;

*'In a new audio clip, Hussain while addressing an event in the US via telephone from London said, "**If the US and Israel help, I will go myself to fight Daesh (an acronym for Islamic State group), al-Qaida, Taliban and the Inter - Services Intelligence and Pakistan army who created them.**"*

*After the new audio surfaced, Hussain's posters were taken down from party strongholds and sector offices and also from streets and by lanes in Karachi in the past 24 hours.*

*The MQM supremo while addressing "Hindus" allegedly said, "**We could not recognize the British conspiracy [to divide the subcontinent] and we became part of it**".'*

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016's speech was in fact a desperate reaction to power slipping through Altaf Hussain's fingers. The other side of the picture was that sane *Mohajirs* distanced themselves from him or someone who would speak, act or behave like him. Altaf Hussain was a sign of terror but during 2015-16, his ability to inflict violence dissipated - so the fear he had instilled in people also vanished.

**[Barrister Farogh Naseem, a senator of the MQM from Karachi, was seen more angry in a TV live show at ARY News on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2016 where he had come with his own and many other's resignations.]**

Already there were moves in propagation, like evolution of Pak Sar-zameen Party [PSP] headed by Mustafa Kamal, who had felt themselves duty bound to 'save' *Mohajirs* from Altaf Hussain whose leadership was known as the saviour of *Mohajirs* from alleged tyranny of the *Punjabis and Sindhis*. But then the canvas changed. Altaf's MQM denied the *Punjabis* their due share in Karachi's business and trade – later persecuted them so they had to shift their capital to Indonesia, Bangladesh, Dubai and somewhere else.

It remains a fact that Altaf Hussain had put together an amazing political and administrative machine in MQM: endowing well-spoken, self-made folks with political recognition and responsibility but vesting administrative power and financial control in another tier represented by sector commanders [*whose authority trumped that of the political wing*] with both tiers reporting directly to him; maintaining direct contact with the mass support base.

The real challenge for the state was to re-order the politics of Karachi but the philosophy of creating a King's party was also seen in play. The state had tried such attitudes and beliefs multiple times before and failed. Some forces were trying to balance their scores with **'traitors'**.

It was bad to see it as an opportunity to run tutorials on patriotism. Rangers' personnel pulling Dr Farooq Sattar away in public view was an unseemly sight; ***men in police uniform tearing down Altaf's posters were unnecessary and unwanted too.***

**Babar Sattar** in **'the News'** dated **27<sup>th</sup> August 2016** pointed out that:

*"Is it for anyone but the Mohajirs to decide who speaks for them? The problem with Altaf was that crime and violence became so entwined with his politics that the two were inseparable. The problem was the means he chose to pursue his politics. It is those means that the state must target, not the politics.*

*And that isn't something the state has done. The militant wings and extortion mafias of Karachi will not go away so long as the state continues to treat allegiance to the law as optional.*

*Saulat Mirza's confessional statement being streamed out of his death cell perfectly synchronised with the timing of the Karachi Operation or Waseem Athtar being arrested right before his election as mayor for involvement in a crime from 2007 doesn't strengthen public faith in the writ of law but rather makes it look like a tool in the hands of the powerful."*

Public faith in rule of law and its ability to dispense justice was not seen strengthened – the requirement was that the masterminds and perpetrators of tragedies such as the **Baldia Factory** arson were convicted in public trials expeditiously.

**MQM: THE BREACH WITHIN:**

Federal Minister for Information, Pervaiz Rashid said **on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2016** that Altaf Hussain was not a citizen of Pakistan but of Britain and that it was time to get rid of him. The minister told that the government had forwarded a reference to the United Kingdom for taking stern action against Altaf for inciting people to violence and attack media houses in Karachi.

But this exercise had been carried out many times and the UK government had never taken it seriously. The reason has already been discussed in the above paragraphs – an essay of **'the Guardian' dated 29<sup>th</sup> July 2013** is referred again.

The federal minister simply tried to cover the issue whereas the facts were otherwise. Here a live talk show at **Prime TV**, titled as **'G for Garida'** dated **25<sup>th</sup> August 2016** is referred in which the guest speaker Dr Tahirul Qadri told the nation that:

*"... The people of Pakistan should know that MQM's Altaf Hussain has uttered, against Pakistan, the same words which were passed on to him from Islamabad.*

*It was because the PM Nawaz Sharif was entangled in Panama Leaks issue and he could not see any way out. Across the borders, it was 47<sup>th</sup> day of curfew in Occupied Kashmir where 89 deaths [till then] were being agitated.*

*The Indian PM Modi has passed on the message to the PM to do something – so that episode of 22<sup>nd</sup> August surfaced through Altaf Hussain."*

Dr Qadri had categorically stated PML[N] government's strategy in the live TV talk that:

- *No action would be taken against the MQM party or any of its members here in Pakistan.*
- *No concrete action would be taken against Altaf Hussain or any of his colleagues except release of sentimental statements as an eye-wash.*
- *The MQM would not be banned at all – the theatre would continue as before.*
- *No case or reference under 'hi-treason' would be moved by the government against any of Altaf's assistants here in Pakistan.*

Each word of Dr Qadri's prophecy proved true. MQM Pakistan or Dr Farooq Sattar did not utter a single word against Altaf Hussain in his press conference and the matter was sent to the media anchors of all TV channels for live discussions – nothing beyond.

The decision announced by Dr Farooq Sattar in his press conference of 23<sup>rd</sup> August [*that now onwards, the MQM's decisions would be made in Pakistan only and no dictation from London would be taken*] was also agreed by Altaf Hussain, as detailed earlier, in the larger interest of Mohajir community who was the major stakeholder in the whole game of changing horses.

Dr Farooq Sattar on next day placed that approval of MQM [London] Chief Altaf Hussain before the media people describing it ***'that MQM London has formally surrendered all powers to them.'***

However, uncertainty continued to prevail in the ranks and files about the future role of the London-based leadership because Dr Farooq Sattar was known as docile leader since years. The whole MQM leadership in Pakistan held a unanimous view that their acceptability to the masses, or the *Muhajir* community, would largely depend on Altaf Hussain's future actions.

In the meantime a statement by MQM [London] leader Wasay Jalil appeared that Altaf Hussain would continue to endorse decisions of the Coordination Committee and that the MQM [London] Chief himself decided to hand over all powers to Karachi's MQM leadership. The statement from London said:

*"I respect the views expressed by senior MQM [Pakistan] leader Dr Sattar and others at their press conference and hand over all decision-making and organisational matters to the coordination committee. I will pay special attention to my health on the advice of the coordination committee."*

Many MQM members in Karachi were sceptical of Dr Sattar's success. Most mid-order MQM activists held that perhaps ***"London MQM will not allow us to function in a beneficial way,"*** they were murmuring in reference to the Chief Altaf Hussain's stronghold over the party since decades.

Such views were echoed by sane MQM lawmakers with concluding remarks that ***"...we don't see ourselves and many other like-minded people in the MQM if the London [office] tries to influence our decisions."***

The fact remains that Altaf Hussain already knew that something was cooking up in the Karachi MQM and a rebellion was in the offing. The tainted language he often used against senior leaders was aimed at forcing them to either become inactive or to switch their loyalty to the party led by former Karachi Mayor Mustafa Kamal. But citing the example of Mr Kamal's failure to gain wide public support against Altaf Hussain, one member opined that:

*"Monday's speech provides everyone an opportunity to stand against him [Altaf Hussain] while staying in the MQM as you cannot find even one activist in Pakistan who defends his speech, however, we all know the moment we leave MQM we will become a traitor in the eyes of Muhajirs.*

*Though the party stands registered in the name of Dr Farooq Sattar since 2013 — but that doesn't mean there is any dearth of his [Altaf Hussain's] loyalists here or across the globe."*

It was only a matter of time before Altaf Hussain could start complaining to his followers that the Karachi's lot betrayed him and they should rise up against them. It neither was a smooth sailing for Dr Farooq Sattar nor was there any way out.

In **27<sup>th</sup> August 2016's press conference**, DR Farooq Sattar called the London-based leader neither bhai nor Quaid as a deliberate snub. Ending four days of ambiguity over its relationship with Altaf Hussain, the MQM led by Dr Sattar completely dissociated itself from the London-based supremo and asked the establishment not to doubt their intentions and to allow them freely resume their political activities.

***[It was a complete departure from his 23<sup>d</sup> August's press conference in which he just disowned the MQM chief's anti-Pakistan remarks — and not him — and repeatedly referred to him as Altaf bhai and MQM Quaid.]***

MQM's Waseem Akhtar, on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016, won the Karachi mayor election from prison and the party also won three of Karachi's six districts as well as top municipal offices in Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and some other towns in Sindh.

In a parallel move, over the past four days a renewed crackdown against the party had been launched with authorities sealing over 200 MQM offices, picking up some lawmakers and dozens of activists, including women, and demolishing at least 20 offices in Karachi. The Nine-Zero headquarters,

which was sealed on the night between Aug 22 and 23, was not opened even after the mayoral election.

About ten MQM offices were demolished because the same were constructed on state lands and public parks through illegal grabbing. The MQM's rival, the Pak Sarzameen Party [PSP], also termed the crackdown and demolition of offices 'unfortunate' and regretted that the PML[N] government had so far taken no concrete step against the person who delivered the anti-Pakistan speech and left the whole nation roasted.

With every talk show host subjecting Dr Sattar to strong criticism for not condemning and disowning Altaf Hussain, the MQM leadership in Pakistan finally realised that their mere disowning the statement was not enough, as it was the desire of the MQM's educated community that they completely detach themselves from the London-based leader.

Finally on 27th August 2016, Dr Sattar categorically disowned Altaf Hussain and urged his detractors to believe his words and stop doubting his intentions. During the earlier four days, MQM's local leader had announced leaving the party but that day the whole MQM left its London secretariat. Without naming Pak Sarzameen Party, he said

*".....certain quarters had earlier created another MQM. Now tickers are being run regarding the arrest of terrorists of the MQM London secretariat. This shows that they are creating one more MQM.*

*.... that an unannounced ban on MQM's political activities be lifted forthwith and party offices, including the Nine-Zero HQ, be unsealed."*

On the same day of 27<sup>th</sup> August 2016; PSP Chairman Mustafa Kamal asked the establishment and the federal and provincial governments as to why they did not take any concrete step against the person who made the anti-Pakistan speech. In his opinion, the arrest of MQM workers and demolition of their offices would further a sense of deprivation among *Mohajirs* and provide anti-state elements another chance to call themselves as victim.

Mustafa Kamal urged that the federal and provincial governments take meaningful steps; abolish the quota system and provide jobs to *Mohajirs* so that no one in future could exploit the sense of deprivation in the Urdu-speaking community. Adding that the MQM and Altaf Hussain were not two separate entities and Dr Sattar was not capable of replacing his London-based leader.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016;** DG Rangers Maj Gen Bilal Akbar told that the 22<sup>nd</sup> August attack on media houses was planned and executed by the MQM and six of their party-men had confessed to their crime. The DG said while talking to media during his visit to Jinnah Hospital:

*"The members of MQM's unit and sector offices carried out the attack on the directives of the party's **Rabita Committee** and **Central Executive Committee** [- and not only **Altaf Hussain alone**].*

*The six arrested miscreants have revealed that they brought batons and knives and organised the attackers on the directives given. Those are being handed over to police for further investigation and subsequent trial, while we will continue to carry out raids to nab the remaining miscreants."*

*Two officials working in banks near the Karachi Press Club, belonging to the MQM labour division, provided refuge to the miscreants prior to attack. One of them, Javaid Shaukat has been arrested while the other, Khurram Khan is still at large and raids are being conducted to arrest him."*

On the same day of 29<sup>th</sup> August 2016, the authorities made decision to form a Joint Investigation Team [JIT] to probe the 22<sup>nd</sup> August violence in the metropolis. The decision was taken due to the anti-terrorism clauses applied in the case pertaining to the violence. The JIT comprised officials from different agencies. Till then 45 people including three women had been arrested in connection with the violence.

**On 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016;** another blow came to the MQM party and its cause when the Supreme Court [SC] of Pakistan permitted to bring an amendment in a plea seeking to hold MQM's appointed Mayor Waseem Akhtar from dealing with government affairs after he was sworn in a day before.

A two-member bench of the apex court presided over by Justice Dost Muhammad Khan, heard Shahid Ghouri's plea which was filed with the Supreme Court's Karachi Registry a day before. Ghouri had filed the petition under Article 184(3) of the Constitution.

During the hearing, J Dost M Khan voiced concerns of the judicial panel stating how could Waseem Akhtar handle government affairs from inside the jail? He observed that **"....a mayor needs to take care of important matters and thus cannot perform his duties effectively from inside a prison."**

The petitioner stated that a criminal could not assume the charge as the mayor of the city as he was involved in different crimes, including violence that erupted in the streets of Karachi on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007. He requested the court to permit bringing an amendment to the petition to stop Waseem Akhtar from dealing with government affairs after he was sworn in on 30<sup>th</sup> August. The Supreme Court granted his request.

Waseem Akhtar was arrested a month earlier after a court refused extension in interim bail in an alleged terror case of year 2007- astonishing it was that Pakistan's judicial hierarchy kept on sleeping over the case for nine years and suddenly got awakened when a 'culprit' had sworn in as the Mayor of the city.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016;** the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously adopted resolution against MQM founder Altaf Hussain. The resolution was submitted by Federal Minister Birjees Tahir on behalf the government and opposition. It condemned anti-Pakistan remarks by MQM founder Altaf Hussain and the violence that took place in Karachi on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

The resolution demanded action as per the law and constitution against those responsible for anti-Pakistan slogans. Speaking in the NA, MQM Pakistan leader **Dr Farooq Sattar said 'they fully support the said joint resolution'** of the government and the opposition, however, Sattar said he wanted to present their resolution before it. He said August 22 was not the worst day for the entire national but also for MQM.

#### **WHY ONLY MQM POINTED AT:**

...But all other political stakeholders were equally blood-stained in Karachi.

Within two weeks of Altaf Hussain's objectionable speech of 22<sup>nd</sup> August, the Mohajir community was seen divided in factions; one of the mayors of Karachi named himself the new leader of the MQM. The other dynamic young mayor had already formed a new political party whose only selling point was that **'it is not the MQM'**.

Since at least October 1999, the MQM had been the active partner of military regime under Gen Musharraf but then the same MQM was facing the wrath of the Rangers – a part of the same military establishment.

In the later scenario when some one asked the other fellow to do a word association test for the MQM and the likely responses were "target killing", "extortion", "land grabbing" etc. And the MQM was assigned all those vices and more. But here's the thing: so was every other political party. Just as, if the MQM patronised criminal gangs as a way to maintain its hold on political power, so did most other politicians in rural Sindh and Punjab.

The link between power, violence and land is as old as the story of the Subcontinent. The difference between other politicians and those of the MQM was that old feudal and traditional violence was an accepted fabric of society because it had been passed down from generations – and usually stayed within the same families – while the violence of the MQM was seen to have the added explosive ingredient of nationalism – *Mohajir* nationalism in the said case.

Rana Sanaullah's politics under PML[N] banner since 2008 in Punjab while openly harbouring extremists like Malik Ishaq [*since killed in July 2015*] is case in reference.

Jam Sadiq Ali, a former Chief Minister of Sindh, was found in the 1990s to be involved with dacoits from rural Sindh who had kidnapped Japanese visitors - but it did not lead to calls for banning the PPP and branding it a terrorist party.

Kal-Bhoshan, an established Indian RAW agent, was when caught from Sharif's industrial complex, no one called PML[N] to explain their patriot standards. While there were an indication of 300 more Indian workers in various units of Sharif's empire.

Nadir Hassan's essay in daily **'the News'** dated **4<sup>th</sup> September 2016** described the above game of double standards in the following way:

*"Depicting the MQM as uniquely violent be compared with other types of political violence in the country, which fall into many categories.*

*There is the use of police and other law-enforcement parties as an adjunct of the political party, something the MQM has been guilty of but again not uniquely so – after all the term 'encounter' was first devised in the Punjab of the 1980s when it was ruled by the PML[N].*

*The second type of violence which the MQM has been guilty of, and for which it is facing repercussions right now, was carried out at the behest of others, such as on May 12, 2007. For that type of violence to be eliminated, it is not just the MQM but those in the establishment who used and disposed of it on the basis of need – all concerned set-ups are required to be reformed.*

*The third kind of violence – and this is the kind for which the MQM and the political culture of Pakistan can be indicted – is that which is perpetrated by the party to exact revenge on rivals and enemies and extend its territorial influence. Examples of such violence would include target killings and the Baldia Town factory fire.*

*It is here that the new leadership of the [MQM] party needs to rein in its own worst instincts.”*

Giving the MQM space to breathe and actually trying to understand it rather than perpetuate convenient assumptions was the responsibility of the establishment. Positively using that space - was the duty of the MQM.

**Najam Sethi** articulated his editorial comments on and the analysis of the said situation by saying:

*"Altaf Hussain is incorrigible. He has got into the obnoxious habit of abusing and threatening anyone who dares cross him. He gets away with it because the MQM death squads that blindly answer to his will instil fear in everyone high or low.*

*No media dare expose him and no witness testifies against him because of the fear of violent reprisals. Indeed, no one within the party dare criticise, much less challenge Altaf for the same reason.*

*But his reign of terror is coming to an end. He has brought the MQM to the brink of disrepair and the country is united as never before in opposing Altaf Hussain's blackmailing and terror tactics.*

*Former COAS Gen Asif Nawaz was the first one in 1991-92 to tackle the MQM, compelling Altaf Hussain to flee to the UK. Then in 1994 **Benazir Bhutto** unleashed the Rangers under Gen Naseerullah Babar when she too couldn't stomach his blackmailing and murderous ways.*

**Nawaz Sharif** tried to do business with him but gave up in frustration and anger. However, **Gen Musharraf** undid the good work done by his immediate military predecessors and rehabilitated Altaf for politically expedient reasons.

Altaf Hussain's MQM used the space and clout of Gen Musharraf era to entrench itself in Karachi and Hyderabad by an indiscriminate use of armed might. The terrorist rank and file of MQM swelled and Altaf Hussain became Lord and Master in exile. All dissent in Pakistan and the UK was violently quashed. The PPP in Sindh became hostage to its armed might. The "Pearl of the East", Karachi, became an ungovernable nightmare.

The decline of Altaf Hussain's MQM was foretold some time ago owing to the unsustainable policies of its mentor. Just as **Azeem Tariq's** murder in 1993 set the stage for Altaf Hussain's rise to unchallenged power, the murder of **Imran Farooq** in London apparently became a millstone around Altaf Hussain's neck.

Imran Farooq's murder provided the British government an opportunity to open investigations into charges of murder, money laundering and incitement to violence against him, denting his "invincibility". In Pakistan, **the alliance with the PPP collapsed despite Asif Zardari's deal-making expertise.**

**PM Nawaz Sharif and COAS Gen Raheel Sharif** were the last nails in Altaf - MQM's coffin; the flight of dissenters from the rank and file of his MQM went open, blatant and conspicuous. First it was **Mustafa Kamal** and Co who fled to Dubai. Then a host of others bolted to South Africa or the USA or just slunk away into nooks and crannies in Pakistan. **Sindh Governor Ishrat ul Ebad was next to cut the umbilical chord.**

The return of Mustafa Kamal to lay foundations of a new mohajir party in Karachi [allegedly under the aegis of the military establishment again] marked a turning point in the fate of Altaf's MQM not because it posed a serious challenge to it through electoral polls as demonstrated by jailbird **Wasim Akhtar's** elevation to the Mayor-ship of Karachi, but because it signalled an end to the politics of fear in Karachi.

It was this desperation that had both provoked Altaf Hussain to cross the red line in Karachi vis a vis the military establishment but also, ironically enough, given **Farooq Sattar** and the Rabita Com-

*mittee the courage to stand up, however haltingly, to tell Altaf Hussain to give them space to breathe and survive."*

[**'The Friday Times'** dated **26<sup>th</sup> August 2016** is referred]

It was not the **'Minus-One Moment'** for Altaf Hussain but the process had taken immediate start and unambiguously. Farooq Sattar was found crying in the wilderness into which Altaf Hussain had shoved him and the *Rabita Committee*. He was pleading and begging Altaf Hussain to cut him some political space in Karachi, with the military establishment fuming at Altaf's outrageous **"anti-Pakistan"** and **"anti-Pak Army"** tirades.

**Najam Sethi** continued to comment that:

*"Altaf Hussain immediately retreated tactically as he had done so often in the past; it was a temporary acquittal. His apology was artificial, unnatural and meaningless; he was not at all serious to give up the reins of power to anyone in London or Karachi, not even if he was imprisoned in UK or repatriated to Pakistan."*

Thus Dr Farooq Sattar's whole show of embarrassment, so many media briefings in succession, was termed as his personal frustration and could not convince any one in the country.

The atmosphere was not clear; it contained all sort of impurities like dust and smoke but one could see the beginning of the end of Altaf Hussain's politics of alleged fear, blackmail and terror. The civil-military establishment of Pakistan had taken an irrevocable decision and the rank and file of the MQM were not inclined to risk life or limb for Altaf anymore even though they were still going to vote for *mohajir* politicians in other shapes.

## **Scenario 167**

### **MQM [PAKISTAN] LAUNCHED**

#### **MQM [ALTAF] vs MQM [SATTAR]:**

Before holding his first press conference during ending days of August 2016, Dr Farooq Sattar spoke to party leaders, lawmakers, including the London-based members of the coordination committee, and communicated his desire and decision to disown Altaf Hussain's statement and take over the MQM. He got support from everyone, including most members of the MQM International Secretariat.

Though not articulated in so high words, the message given by Dr Sattar along with Nasreen Jalil, Khawaja Izhar, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and other leaders at the press conference was loud and clear: Altaf Hussain was not to be allowed, at least for the time being, to address gatherings of his followers in the '*famous old style*'. Dr Sattar said at the press conference:

*"I want to assure the citizens of Pakistan that we won't allow anyone to repeat what was said on Aug 22. We will also ensure that no matter the health or mental condition in which our Quaid speaks, we won't let such a statement be repeated again.*

*Don't suspect my integrity as a Pakistani. I speak for the workers and supporters of the MQM who should not be suspected of having anti-Pakistan sentiments."*

However, being gentleman and mature politician, he stopped short of condemning Altaf Hussain, whom he frequently referred to as MQM Quaid and Altaf Bhai throughout his press conference and the whole nation felt it bitterly; Dr Sattar reiterated his stance with ultimate firmness time and again.

*['There was no justification for making anti-Pakistan statements irrespective of emotional or mental stresses.*

***Dr Sattar only confined himself to 'dissociation from the anti-Pakistani statement' NOT with the person who had made it.]***

Referring to Altaf Hussain's apology about raising anti-Pakistan slogans because he was under "***immense mental stress***", Dr Sattar said: "*If mental stress is at the core of Monday's statement, then we have decided to address the issue itself.*"

Dr Sattar categorically rejected the impression that he disowned Altaf Hussain's statement because of some 'dictation' - referring to his arrest by the Rangers and said:

*"We wanted to hold this press conference last night, but the way we were deprived of our democratic right is deplorable.*

*All I'm saying is that from now onwards, decisions will be made in Pakistan. This message is for the London office as well as for Pakistan office-bearers; something which the Quaid [Altaf Hussain] won't disagree with."*

Dr Sattar also apologised to the Karachi Union of Journalists, as well as the media houses that came under attack a day before, for whatever happened and said that **'he firmly believes that those involved in the incident were not MQM workers'**.

Later in the same evening, a gathering of elected union committee chairmen and vice chairmen of the MQM was held in **Community Hall in PIB Colony**, which was declared as the temporary headquarters of the MQM, where Dr Farooq Sattar vowed that MQM candidates for mayor and deputy mayor of Karachi, Hyderabad and Mirpurkhas would emerge victorious in Mayor's elections.

However, Dr Farooq Sattar's press conference was termed 'eyewash' by Pak Sarzameen Party Chairman Syed Mustafa Kamal. He asked about the guarantee that MQM Chief Altaf Hussain would not influence the decisions of the MQM [Pakistan]. **"Has a ban been imposed on phone calls of Altaf Hussain? Will Farooq Sattar not take the phone call when he [Altaf Hussain] calls him?"**

The damaging statement of Altaf Hussain continued to cast a shadow on the decades old and well founded MQM, as Dr Aamir Liaquat, who was present at the press conference, announced parting ways with the MQM on Kashif Abbasi's live TV program of ARY News, later in the same evening. In a choked voice and raising long live Pakistan slogans, Dr Aamir Liaquat Hussain said that:

*'.....after being arrested from his office on Monday night he felt himself all alone. He said there was a lot of confusion even in the mind of Dr Sattar.'*

In the same TV show, London-based MQM leader Wasay Jalil said:

**"Dr Farooq Sattar has said nothing unusual in his press conference. I am very clear, Altaf Bhai is my leader and he**

***will continue to endorse the decision of the Coordination Committee [of MQM Pakistan]."***

Daily the '**Dawn**' dated **24<sup>th</sup> August 2016** wrote:

*"It is worth remembering that it is not the first time that Mr Hussain has been practically sidelined by the Pakistan-based MQM leadership. In Dec 1992, Mr Hussain announced retirement from politics in favour of then MQM chairman Azeem Ahmed Tariq.*

*However, about three months later, he became active again, formed a coordination committee and appointed the late Ishtiaq Azhar its convener. The Nine-Zero HQ was then opened by Mr Azhar and later on Mr Tariq was assassinated in his Federal B Area home on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1993."*

**On 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016;** the leadership of the MQM in Pakistan removed the London-based coterie of MQM founder Altaf Hussain from the top decision-making forum of the party after Coordination Committee convener Nadeem Nusrat asserted that the much-reviled supremo Altaf Hussain was still the party's uncontested chief. No doubt it was an uncomfortable reminder from the MQM London Secretariat for the Karachi-based MQM leadership.

Dr Farooq Sattar, however, pushed the last nail of dissociation in the MQM London's coffin.

Nadeem Nusrat, who was since long recognised as the convener of the MQM Coordination Committee by the Pakistan-based leadership, said so at a programme held to celebrate the 63rd birthday of Altaf Hussain in London that no one could separate the *Mohajir* community from Mr Hussain as he was the one who gave them a separate identity. **"Altaf Hussain himself is the MQM,"** it was emphasized in roaring voices.

The MQM leader Nadeem Nusrat's speech — posted on the party website that had been blocked in Pakistan since Mr Hussain's 22<sup>nd</sup> August tirade — put the Dr Farooq Sattar-led MQM in Pakistan in an awkward position. Under MQM London's interpretation of the party constitution, Nadeem Nusrat was still working as the party convener.

The **MQM [Pakistan]** [Dr Farooq Sattar's MQM] issued a brief statement in the evening saying it had '**unanimously dissociated itself from London**' after the 22<sup>nd</sup> August incident and the statement issued from London

had no value for them and that the same could not be construed as its statement.

After issuing the statement, the MQM [Pakistan]'s Coordination Committee went into an emergency session at their temporary HQ in Karachi's PIB Colony. The meeting, presided over by Dr Farooq Sattar and attended by all members of the Coordination Committee in Pakistan, ***unanimously decided to remove four London-based members from the Committee***; London-based MQM convener Nadeem Nusrat and members Wasay Jalil, Mustafa Azizabadi and Qasim Ali Raza.

Wasay Jalil, Azizabadi and Raza were sacked because they again chanted "anti-Pakistan slogans" during the birthday celebrations of Altaf Hussain. Another member, Inbisat Mallick, was not expelled as he did not take part in any such activity. The meeting also decided that the basic membership of any member or office-bearer would be terminated if they were found involved in any act against the country's integrity and solidarity.

Three weeks earlier, Dr Sattar had announced at a press conference that ***an article in the MQM constitution giving utmost authority to Altaf Hussain had been omitted***, while another about the role of the MQM convener as party head had been substituted to allow senior deputy conveners of the Coordination Committee — he himself and Amir Khan — to act as party leader in the absence of Nadeem Nusrat in Pakistan.

Like Altaf Hussain, Nadeem Nusrat also remained silent since the 22<sup>nd</sup> August incident and the subsequent press conferences by Dr Sattar. But his latest assertion was being seen as an attempt against the backdrop of 'assumed' failure of the MQM [Pakistan] to get any relief despite doing everything to what a senior party leader said appease the establishment.

The MQM [London] leadership carefully reviewed the situation in Pakistan before sending that message to Dr Farooq Sattar and his team that they could not eliminate Altaf Hussain's role from the party at the stroke of a pen. They believed that the decision to expel them from the Coordination Committee would not stop them from running the MQM from its International Secretariat. Apparently, it all worked well but from inside all arteries and veins of the MQM [London]'s body were intensely bleeding.

**DR FAROOQ SATTAR COMES OPEN:**

**Verbatim** interview conducted by *Ali Arqam and Yousuf Sajjad* with MQM [Pakistan]'s Chief Dr Farooq Sattar, appeared in the monthly magazine 'Newsline' of **September 2016**:

**What prompted Altaf Hussain's sudden tirade against Pakistan and his exhortations to his supporters to embark on an orgy of violence and destruction that culminated in the sorry state the MQM is in now?**

*I would describe Mr Hussain's speech as seditious and as an act of suicide by the founder of the party. It put us in a state of shock, and the shock was followed by a state of depression and demoralisation – and that's an understatement. All of us from the party, voters and supporters, and Mohajirs in general, suddenly felt we had been put in the dock. People from across Pakistan were maligning us, talking of us as traitors, as people who had committed a huge crime.*

**What steps did you take to effect damage control?**

*I kept an eye on events as they unfolded, and tried to analyse the reaction from across Pakistan. I shared my findings with Kh Izharul Hassan, who had contacted me. We were on the same page. We knew we had to do something: a line had been drawn in London, and we had to draw a line here. This was an extraordinary situation and required an extraordinary response.*

*Then Khwaja Sohail Mansoor, one of the MQM MNAs, Deputy Mayor Arshad Vohra, and Sanjay Parwani approached me. I decided we should go to the Karachi Press Club and address the issue at hand. I thought we should make clear our personal reaction and the party reaction to what had transpired. At that point, we did not know whether the local Rabita Committee was with us or not.*

*I had already spoken to Shahzeb Khanzada, and Pervez Rashid, the Federal Minister for Information, told them how contrite we were because of what had happened, and categorically denounced Mr. Hussain's anti-Pakistan harangue, the subsequent violence, and the attack on TV channels. I also told them that we were taking charge of the party from now onwards, that we would run the party, make our own decisions and not take dictation from London.*

*The Rangers officials did not allow me to talk, even for two minutes. They took us into their custody and you must have seen*

*the way they were treating us. The Rangers held us for eight hours. During this time they sought our help to identify the people who were raising anti-state slogans and those involved in the violence who were caught on camera.*

**Why did you feel the need to speak to the Federal Information Minister?**

*I had a meeting with him on August 22, and he had listened to us and assured us that all issues would be resolved after our meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which was scheduled to be held on August 25.*

*After the August 22 incident I felt I should call him and tell him quite unequivocally that I was sorry because despite our political engagement with the centre and the province, and the government's assurances the same day, Mr. Hussain had gone haywire, and had lost control. His rant and behaviour was incomprehensible to us. I also told him that Mr. Hussain had transgressed all limits and was no longer acceptable; that we were going to do something about it.*

**You had faced problems arising from Altaf Hussain's statements for a long time, but rather than part ways with him then, you only went out and did damage control. Why did it take so long to finally call it a day with him?**

*We had been worried about the consequences of his statements before. It was felt that Mr Hussain's attitude and decision-making had become erratic. We were made fun of. But these things were discussed privately, not publicly.*

*Altaf Hussain was aware of this, and kept giving us assurances that he would not repeat this. But he did. And this time his ranting was against the state and constitution of Pakistan. So we knew we had to draw the line. If I had done so earlier, like Mustafa Kamal or Anis Qaimkhani had done, the workers' cadre would not have followed us. Now they will. The journalists and TV anchors carrying out informal surveys are finding that **while people are not in favour of Altaf's statements, they will still vote for the MQM.***

*Altaf Hussain remains the founder of the party, and will remain so in history and in our documents. But now that **he is speaking***

***against the integrity of Pakistan, he has become a liability.***  
*This is a win-win situation for us.*

*We can use his statements to extricate ourselves from the problematic position that the MQM has found itself in. Wisdom has prevailed among some of our colleagues in London as well, and they have agreed with our decisions – but we feel that the media anchors are trying to exacerbate the crisis by trying to create the impression that there are divisions in the party that are deeper than may actually exist.*

**The DG Rangers says everything that happened on August 22 was pre-planned. If that is so, how could you and members of the Karachi Rabita Committee have been unaware of this?**

*The Director General Rangers shared his viewpoint after initial investigation based on interviews with those arrested. But I have personally probed his allegation and am certain no one from the Rabita Committee was aware of any such plan.*

*When we were held by the Rangers, and they were showing us footage [of the crowd listening to Mr. Hussain's speech], none of the males present were responding to his slogans. Only two female voices could be heard echoing the slogans of 'Pakistan murdabad.' Most of the people conducting the havoc that followed were unknown to us. They could have been low-level workers, or those who were expelled from the party for in-disciplinary acts.*

*There have always been saboteurs, disgruntled party people, or those thrown out for taking undue advantage of the situation. But I believe whatever happened was not planned. It happened on the spur of the moment. Nonetheless, if it is established, if there is any evidence that there was a plan, and it is shared with us, we will denounce it and take disciplinary action against those involved.*

**What do you propose to do about the party leaders held for involvement in the August 22 [2016] mayhem?**

*Let me tell you, Kanwar Naveed Jamil, Shahid Pasha and Qamar Mansoor – none of the three were present there on August 22. Yet they were held the same evening and have been implicated in this case. Also, there is the issue of the arrests of our women workers. At least two of them – Rabia and her daughter – and our councillor*

*Quratul Ain, were not involved. They have not been identified in the video footage.*

*If the law-enforcement agencies overdo the operation they have embarked on, if they arrest innocent people, bulldoze offices that were entirely legal constructions on lawfully purchased land, this will be a violation of our constitutional rights. And this becomes more serious if you examine the timing of the action.*

*Why did the Rangers wait till now to demolish all these MQM offices? Couldn't they have waited till Waseem Akhtar took charge and then pointed out all the illegal buildings to him? We would have razed them ourselves. Now it looks like the law-enforcers are just out to exact revenge from the MQM.*

### **What are your long-term plans for the party?**

*We have had to opt for a multi-pronged strategy. To begin with, we have tried to bring the people out of their disillusionment and demoralisation, save the party, and conserve our 40-year-long political struggle. In the past, when someone parted ways with Mr. Hussain, he had to leave the party as well. But now, for the first time, we have decided to bring the party out of the shadow of Mr. Altaf Hussain.*

*We have disconnected from London, dissociated from Mr. Hussain, and unequivocally declared that henceforth no decisions will be ratified by him. By adopting this course of action, we are violating our own constitution, which insists that all important decisions must be ratified by Altaf Hussain. But we have done this to save the party from falling apart.*

*Also, we had to work to keep our support intact, especially in lieu of the local government elections for city mayor, deputy mayor, and chairmen of the District Municipal Corporations [DMC]. Elections were on August 24, and could not have been delayed. So it was remarkable that not a single vote of the party was wasted. Each and every vote was polled in favour of the party candidates.*

**Some people have raised the objection that those who have taken oaths of allegiance to Altaf Hussain, as per the party constitution, have lost the right to take oaths for elected institutions?**

*This is a political gimmick being used by our opponents, nothing else. There is no constitutional demand on those from the MQM to take an oath of allegiance to Altaf. This practice within the party was a mere tradition, an accepted norm, and it was done out of respect and love for the founder of the party.*

*And even if they took an oath, it was in December last year, before Altaf Hussain raised any anti-Pakistan slogan. But yes, after August 22, when he disrespected his own party's constitution, its political ideals and manifesto, and beyond that, the country's constitution, the entire party distanced from him and now there is no question of any allegiance to him.*

**Do you feel you have stolen Mustafa Kamal's thunder by doing exactly what he had made the very *raison d'être* of his new party – i.e. Distancing from Altaf Hussain?**

*Mustafa Kamal parted ways with the party, but in the beginning, he was only critical of Mr. Hussain. His behaviour towards most of us was not that hostile. He kept saying that Farooq Sattar was alright, the party was alright. But, then I did what he had done – in 2013 – i.e. separated from Altaf Hussain. And I did this the right way. I did not leave the party. Thereafter his behaviour towards us completely changed.*

*It seems he [Mustafa Kamal] thinks that Dr. Farooq Sattar has stolen his 'turban' – the initiative. So does that mean that Dr. Farooq Sattar is now bad? Judging by this, what reliability is there in respect of his decision-making ability? He will lose credibility if he continues like this. In fact this has already started happening. People are coming back to us. I have already announced that people like Asif Hasnain and others who left the party under pressure, may come back at any time. For them the doors are open.*

**They say politics is the art of the possible. So can Mustafa Kamal return to the party fold?**

*If you had asked me about Aamir Khan or Aafaq Ahmed in 1992, when they had deserted the party and had gone out on their own, I could not have imagined that Aamir Khan would one day come back, and be a part of the party. But there he is. So it's like that situation. Today, sitting here in 2016, I can't say whether Mustafa Kamal can return to the party. I don't know if he wants to come back or whether he would be accepted.*

**Families of the missing from your party, and those arrested, are apprehensive that the recent turn of events will deflect attention from the recovery efforts of their loved ones. Would you comment?**

*After all of this is over, we aim to reconnect and start from where we disconnected on August 22. The issue of enforced disappearances and the matter of extrajudicial killings has never lost focus. We have approached the federal government and the provincial government, and asked for meetings with the Prime Minister, the Interior Minister Ch Nisar, and the CM Sindh, in this respect.*

**On 15<sup>th</sup> October 2016;** the 'pro-Ataf' group of the MQM launched its ground team against Dr Farooq Sattar in a bid to reclaim the party reins. The newly formed 12-member 'interim' *Rabita Committee* comprised lesser known faces, except for former lawmakers Kunwar Yunus and Dr Nadeem Ehsan and London-based Wasay Jalil and Mustafa Azizabadi.

In their first press conference held in a tense environment at the Karachi Press Club, nine members of the committee announced to carry on the political struggle on the lines laid by MQM founder Altaf Hussain. Dr Hasan Zafar Arif, who worked at Karachi University's philosophy department during Altaf's youth days, addressed the press conference while reading from a script. He recalled the party's founding and subsequent split into factions.

Terming MQM [Pakistan] leaders as '*Farooq Sattar and company*', Dr Arif alleged that they had joined hands with the establishment – terming it 'not the first hard time for MQM':

*"In 1992, when slain MQM leader Azeem Tariq served as its chairperson, it was Sattar, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan who had suggested that if Altaf stepped down, the operation against the party would end.*

*....that despite the MQM Chief's stepping down as the party leader, the crackdown did not stop."*

When asked who had the right to use the party's name since MQM was registered under Dr Farooq Sattar's name, Dr Arif insisted that morally it was Altaf who could use the title of MQM Chief and head the party.

A large number of party workers were present at the conference while a bigger crowd was outside the venue. Chants of *Jiye Altaf* were raised at intervals too. Meanwhile, Rangers were allegedly barring people from entering the venue but when the crowd began to grow, they retreated – but later news proved that it was only a propaganda and disinformation spread by MQM-London faction.

#### **THE KARACHIITES TURNED ABOUT:**

On the one hand, Karachiites were quite satisfied with the radical reduction of militancy and crime as a result of the indiscriminate Karachi operation since started in September 2013. But, on the other hand, the same Karachiites were critical of the violations of law and fundamental rights committed by the same law-enforcement agencies [LEAs] by their regular use of torture and alleged extrajudicial killings; including showing displeasure for alleged targeting the MQM's activities.

Between the 1980s and 2013, the situation in Karachi could easily be described as a violent anarchy; mainly the result of a politicised and weak state, which had lost its writ on various counts. The period between 2007 and 2013 was especially brutal as Karachi was handed over by the political elites to secular militants [of People's *Amm* Committee, MQM and ANP] and religiously inspired militants of the LeJ, Shiites and Taliban etc leading to weak governance.

In very rare literature of effective governance, the only realistic, quick and short-term solution to societal anarchy was the state brutality; so was exercised in 2013's Karachi. The world was then laughing at Pakistan that being a nuclear state it couldn't even administer polio drops in its metropolis – numerous killings were on record.

Another point; the Karachiites approved that state brutality because in the public perception, it was considered a lesser evil as it led to a radical decrease in militancy and crime; notes on the political philosophy of Hobbes is referred for further reading.

In other words, there can be no legal justice or democracy without an effective iron hand of the state and there can be no effective state without monopoly over violence. But why were Karachiites not satisfied by the 'peace' established by state brutality; the intelligentsia held that basically such hue & cry and media roars were frequently managed by those few rogue politicians who had criminal minds in their heads but had taken shel-

ter of political parties like the PPP or MQM or ANP to deter the LEAs and want to continue with their malicious designs.

Even the high voices were true; there could be reasons for this:

- Firstly, Karachiites feared that the next extrajudicial killing or torture or unlawful disappearance might happen to himself or one of his loved ones.
- 
- Secondly, Karachiites understand that a city of around 22 million inhabitants could never be made peaceful in the long run by mere state brutality, whereas providing legal justice for Karachiites, both against societal and state injustice, was a time-tested solution.

The fact remains that no amount of state brutality or fundamental rights safeguards in law can solve the problems of violence and crime if there is large-scale economic and social inequality in a society like Karachi. In other words, the key causes of violence and crime in Karachi were political, economic and social inequality and deprivation of the majority of Karachiites – and still the same position prevails.

It is precisely for this reason that despite knowing about the large-scale corruption of PPP's political elite and the violent politics of the MQM, the people of Karachi would still vote for the same two parties in majority.

In the words of Faisal Siddiqi, referring to his essay in daily '**Dawn**' dated **5<sup>th</sup> July 2016**; it could be for two main reasons:

*"Firstly, as opposed to the elitist upper and middle-class nature of the bureaucratic, military and capitalist elites, these political parties also give representation to the non-elite in Karachi.*

*Secondly, the majority of Karachiites believe that they have no access to state resources, or have no ability to solve their inequality and deprivation problems except through the corrupt and violent representative politics of the PPP and the MQM.*

*Politics is used by the powerless to counter unjust laws, inequality and the elitist state."*

In fact, Karachiites needed new institutional governance reflecting the changing socio-economic realities in the city. The populace also expected having democratic governance in Karachi to negate the politicising of LEAs

– but who could come out with solution; all were without under-garments in that pool.

### **Broken Windows Theory:**

Referring to the monthly magazine '**Newsline**' of **September 2016**:

*[A well-tested 'Broken Windows Theory' - if petty street crime and minor civic offences like wall-chalking and graffiti, encroachments, traffic violations, tinted car windows, mobile-snatching, illegal car registration, illegal drugs and illicit guns sales are controlled, more serious crimes like armed robberies, rapes, murders, target-killing and, in fact, even terrorism, will see a decline.... that crime and criminals should be nipped in the bud.]*

**Romana Khan** in her **special report** cites case studies from New York City [NYC] and the Mexican city of Ciudad Juarez as live references. Both at one time infamous for dangerously high crime rates – but by employing the 'Broken Windows Theory' they achieved the optimal results in the fight against crime.

See Karachi; how it became a breeding ground for violence, before long these areas were identified as '**No Go Areas**' – all too familiar in [Karachi](#), even the police didn't venture into localities like Lyari, Katti Pahari etc.

In the early 1990s, NYC was considered extremely dangerous, with averaging five murders a day [1,800-2,200 murders a year between 1989 and 1993], 10,000 robberies and 130,000 auto thefts, among others. Snatching of bags, home break-ins, street muggings, even murder, were the norm, and the sense of insecurity was all-pervasive.

Karachi, meanwhile, averaged 10 murders a day [3,500-3,800 murders a year] and roughly around the same number of robberies & theft – i.e. 10,000 annually between 2011-2014, and the statistics is only slightly better, not changed much since then; hats off to the Rangers.

The New York experiment made it clear that local governance was the crux of crime control. The central idea behind that working was that '**disorder breeds crime**'. Neat, tidy and immaculate neighbourhoods go a long way in ensuring crime-free areas; governance and crime both need to be actively managed on a day-to-day basis - what required is vigilant oversight.

Unfortunately, there is neither strong nor bold leadership in Pakistan, nor good intentions, and no political will - without these, 'Broken Windows' remains beyond reach in Karachi.

**MQM Lost Karachi By-election:**

PPP's candidate emerged victorious in by-election in Karachi's PS-127 constituency held on **8<sup>th</sup> September 2016** but there were too many variables at work. However, the indication was there that the MQM's internal and external frictions had affected the party's performance in the constituency; the MQM candidate was runner-up in the race. The seat fell vacant after its representative jumped ship and joined Mustafa Kamal's PSP.

*[On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016; the MQM had re-captured both the constituencies of PS-106 and PS-117 of the Sindh Assembly in by-elections because the uproar and turmoil of Altaf Hussain of 22<sup>nd</sup> August was not yet displayed.*

*In PS-106, MQM's Mahfoozyar Khan bagged 18,137 votes to defeat his closest rival Sardar Abdul Samad of PPP who could manage only 960 votes while PTI's Nusrat Anwar could muster only 524 votes. Out of over 176,000 registered voters in the constituency, only 19,976 cast votes, with voter turnout recorded at 11pc.*

*In PS-117, MQM's rtd Maj Qamar Abbas emerged victorious with 10,738 out of total 14,235 votes cast. His closest rival Ali Raza of Tehreek-i-Islami secured 1,018 votes, PTI's Rifaqat Qamar managed to get 950 votes, followed by PPP's Javed Maqbool Butt (924) and JUI's Syed Naeem Shah (432).*

*With total 14,235 votes cast out of over 163,000 voters in the constituency, the voter turnout remained at the lowest at 9pc only. At least 79 votes were rejected on technical grounds.]*

PS-127 area is ethnically mixed and covers both rural and urban localities; both PPP and MQM candidates had, in past elections, clinched the seat. Turnout was abysmally low this time. In constituencies with over 200,000 registered voters, the votes cast in a number of polling stations struggled to go beyond two digits. It was likely that violence had a role to play in keeping voters away, as MQM and MQM-Haqiqi workers clashed on the polling day. Vehicles had also been set alight in different parts of Karachi in the run-up to the by-election.

It was premature to term the election loss as the beginning of the end of MQM dominance over Karachi's electoral politics. Even without the use of violence and questionable electoral practices — which the *Muttahida* has allegedly been blamed in past elections — the party fared well at the ballot box, as the results of a few by-elections, as well as the Sindh local bodies' polls, were pointing towards.

In the aftermath of Altaf Hussain's ***speech of 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016***, how much electoral clout the MQM retained in urban Sindh under Farooq Sattar's stewardship — it was not the time for that analysis. After all, much of the MQM's militant wing was either on the run or in custody, which had paved the way for fairer electoral contests; most media analysts opined.

Moreover, the MQM was facing challenges of varying degrees from the PSP and a resurgent Haqiqi. Most importantly, much was concerned with the MQM's internal dynamics, especially when the militant wing seemingly remained loyal to Altaf Hussain of MQM [London] but was seen in low profile.

Waseem Ahmed, MQM's candidate who had lost by-election to PPP's Murtaza Baloch in Karachi's above mentioned PS-127 by-election, later challenged the polling results in Sindh High Court [SHC]. In a petition, Waseem contended that systematic rigging was carried out in 51 polling stations of the constituency.

The MQM candidate sought from the court an order to bar issuance of notification regarding Murtaza's victory. In that election, the PPP candidate won the by-election, securing 21,187 votes, while the MQM's candidate was trailing behind with 15,553 votes. This seat of Sindh Assembly's constituency had fallen vacant after resignation of MQM's Member of the Sindh Assembly Ashfaq Mangi.

A total 487 polling booths in 134 polling stations had been set up to facilitate 207,467 registered voters.

### **MQM Leaders Charged:**

Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] accepted charge sheets **on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2016**; in four cases against Karachi Mayor Waseem Akhtar and 19 other suspects for their alleged involvement in the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 carnage in city.

The charge sheets said Waseem Akhtar, an MQM leader who was then adviser to the chief minister on home affairs, and 19 other men were involved

in 12<sup>th</sup> May violence that left more than 50 people, mostly activists of various political parties, dead.

As workers of different political parties, including the PPP, left for the Karachi airport to receive the then deposed CJP, Iftikhar M Chaudhry, who had flown in to address lawyers, shootings and arson attacks started in various parts of the city.

The metropolis witnessed chilling scenes as gunmen in groups opened straight fire on rival political activists, with law enforcers nowhere to be seen. The carnage continued throughout the day and the deposed chief justice had to return to Islamabad from the airport. The whole city was blocked with containers on most main roads. The charge sheets mentioned that the key accused, Aslam Kala, Akhtar and another were involved in the massacre. Seventeen accused were mentioned as absconders in the said four cases.

The administrative judge, while accepting the charge sheets, referred the cases to ATC-II for conducting the trial against the suspects, who had been charged with murder, attempt to murder, rioting, firing, arson attacks and ransacking property in the jurisdiction of Airport Police Station. An ally of the then military regime Gen Musharraf, the MQM was blamed for the violence in the city.

In two similar cases, the supplementary charge sheets were accepted by the administrative judge on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016 – the same day when Waseem Akhtar was elected as mayor of the city Karachi. As many as 56 other MQM activists and leaders, including MPA Muhammad Adnan and Kamran Farooqui, were also named as accused in the two cases related to the 12 May 2007's massacre. Brought to the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's [KMC] office to cast his vote on that day, Waseem Akhtar held that all the cases against him were politically motivated.

The AT Court was further informed that the government was approached to form a Joint Investigation Team [JIT] to probe the incidents. The city mayor had earlier been named in six cases regarding the same carnage too. He was also facing two cases pertaining to facilitating provocative speeches made by MQM founder Altaf Hussain. In the later cases, Waseem Akhtar's attorneys had claimed that he himself was not present at the time when the speeches were made from London.

Waseem Akhtar was also standing a separate trial over charges of facilitating the provision of medical treatment for criminals at PPP leader Dr Asim Hussain's hospital in Karachi as well as of providing shelter to them; Dr

Asim was the key accused in this case. Waseem Akhtar, another MQM leader Rauf Siddiqui, PPP leader Abdul Qadir Patel, PSP leader Anis Qaimkhani and Pasban Pakistan leader Usman Moazzam were also nominated in that 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 case, while Saleem Shehzad – a suspended member of the MQM – was declared an absconder.

The ATC also accepted a charge sheet against MQM MPA Shiraz Waheed for involvement in distributing CDs of a provocative speech made via telephone by the MQM Chief Altaf Hussain on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016; he was arrested from Landhi three days after the said speech.

#### ***SHC Banned Liquor Shops:***

The Sindh High Court [SHC], while disposing off two civil legal petitions **on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016**, ordered the Sindh government to shut all the liquor shops across the province; authorities were asked to cancel licence of all liquor shops operating in the province and issue fresh licenses after detailed scrutiny. The ruling observed that, in past, licences were issued without scrutiny and fulfilment of formalities.

Irfan Ali of Thatta district argued in his petition that a liquor shop had been operating near a school in his locality. He also mentioned that liquor was easily accessible to all, including Muslims and minors.

The second petitioner, Sheryar David, a resident of Karachi pointed out to the presence of 15 illegal wine shops in the city. During the hearing of the case, police also submitted a report, affirming the allegations that several liquor shops were operating in violation of rules.

Meanwhile, representatives of Hindu, Christian and Sikh communities appeared before the court, saying that '*consuming liquor, on occasions other than specific religious festivals, is prohibited in their respective religions*'.

Two days later, **on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016**, Chief Justice SHC Syed Sajjad Ali himself commented that:

*'Pakistan's Constitution allows only non-Muslim citizens to consume wine and that too on the occasion of their religious festivals, hence, there is no justification for liquor shops to remain open round the year.'*