



A REEVALUATION OF THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE SINDHUDESH MOVEMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON THE NATIONAL INTEGRATION OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Ethnic movements have occurred in practically all of Pakistan's provinces. National integration has appeared to be jeopardized by ethnic movements. On the basis of ethnic nationalism, East Pakistan became Bangladesh in 1971. This deadly trajectory could not have been stopped by the country's breakup. In the 1970s, secessionist movements grew stronger. One of these national identities that exacerbated Pakistan's feeling of vulnerability was Sindhudesh, a separate homeland for the Sindh people. The Sindhudesh concept is investigated in this paper, with a special focus on its origins and subsequent growth. It also looks at the movement's impact on Pakistan's national unity and, in the end, assesses the movement's fate. The sentiment of alienation (Muhajir relocation in Sindh and the construction of one unit), as well as the examples of other ethnic movements (Bengali nationalism), inspired the Sindhudesh movement immensely, according to the article. The advent of the PPP is also said to have harmed Sindhudesh's power and advancement, although Benazir Bhutto's death has given the cause a new lease on life. While Sindhudesh has had an impact on national integration, it is still active today. The essay suggests that the CPEC, NFC consensus, proper water allocation, and sharing in Sindhis both in the center and in the province will consolidate the federation and alleviate ethnic tensions.

Key words: Sindhudesh, Pakistani Federation, PPP, National Integration, and Bhutto's.

Overview

Ethnic movements have emerged in every corner of Pakistan, whether in KPK, Baluchistan, Sindh, or Punjab, calling for more rights. Pakistan had been fragmented as a result of the ethnic movement, which had had catastrophic implications. Bengalis from what is now Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan, were the first to demand a separate state based on language. The establishment of Bangladesh did not prevent ethnic nationalist activities in Pakistan; in the 1960s and early 1970s, Sindhis launched an ethnic movement, jeopardizing Pakistan's national integration goals. Pakistan's partition in 1971 did nothing to change this fatal pattern.

During the 1970s and 1980s, there was a surge in dissident activity. Sindhudesh, a separate country for Sindhi people, was one of these ethnic developments that was purely semantic but exacerbated Pakistan's sense of insecurity. The rise of ethnic movements, particularly Sindhudesh, posed a danger to Pakistan's unity. Three main goals are being pursued in this study. It begins by looking at the Sindhudesh movement's historical beginnings and evolution besides to understand how Sindhudesh has been changing over times. Second, it examines the impact of the Sindhudesh movement on Pakistan's national cohesion, and finally, it investigates the current state of Sindhudesh.

This article examines the following broad research questions: How Sindhudesh movement progressed based throughout the history of Pakistan? Does the rise of Sindhudesh movement threaten the integrity of Pakistan? And What is its current situation? The article emphasises that the feeling of marginalization (Muhajir settlement in Sindh, and formation of one unit) and experiences of other ethnic movement (Bengali nationalism) made the people of Sindh to demand Sindhudesh. It is further hypothesised the establishment of the PPP hampered Sindhudesh's power and growth, but Benazir Bhutto's death has given the movement new life. Sindhudesh has harmed national integration, although it is still active today. In fact, it has put Pakistan's national integration at risk. While the analysis reveals numerous parallels between the Sindhi movement and similar ethnic movements in Pakistan like Bengali nationalism, there are also differences.

A Review of Existing Knowledge

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) won general elections in 1970 with top lead. After Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto ruling, Ethno- Nationalism movement could not get public support. After Constitution of Pakistan 1973, provinces became independent, but Sindh nationalist raised voice for separate status of Sindh. As per Constitution of Pakistan, it is clear that Pakistani is one Nation beside of Ethnic and Religious differences. G M. Syed took it as decline in his status and started movement for separation of Sindh. Sindhi Nationalist initiated movement named Sindhudesh in leadership of G.M Syed. (Sultan Khan and Muhammad Mushtaq, 2017)

Ethno- Nationalist had influence in politics of Sindh after Pakistan independence. Sindhi Nationalist did not get success to have a huge participation from public to join their voice, but students from rural areas and some groups of youth. Founder of Sindhi Nationalist (G.M. Syed) was defeated badly in general elections of 1970. After that some politician of Sindh started movement for separation of Sindh, it was basically for protection of their political repute. This movement was named as "Sindhudesh". (Mubriz, 2017)

JSM and SDLA was led by ShafiBurfat was banned in 2013 due to allegations of making militant groups, damaging railways tracks and electricity lines and bank robbery. (Huma, 2015) There was no separate identity for Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi or Pathan in independence of Pakistan, and there is no history of Sindhudesh movement. Pakistan came into being based on two nations theory which describes difference in religion and views of Muslim and Hindu. But some people tried to raise ethnic and linguistic issues. (Panhwar, 2019) Pakistan faced challenges of National Integration after its independence. G.M. Syed wanted separation of Sindh and disputes among provinces. To separation of Sindh, he tried to create ethnic conflict between provinces and tried to damage unity in Pakistan. (Khan, 2002)

In the 1970s, with Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Sindhi founder Z.A. Bhutto as Prime Minister, Sindhi nationalists' leaders sought to amend laws to strengthen Sindhis' potentiality and identity lead to an autonomous or separate "Sindhudesh" ("Land of the Sindhis"). This movement was declined by a mixture of suppression and concessions by the federal government. The PPP was considered national party, rather than Sindhi, banned by former president General Zia ul-Haq after he took rule in a year 1977 military coup, and he did not provide a space for separatism. Although Sindh has always possessed for a viable independent state and also some nationalist sentiments demanded to this day. Sindhi's Mohajirs had their own movement for separate autonomist from the 1980s until the 2000s. This was deep rooted in that community's loss of pre-eminence in Sindh provincial politics, industry and bureaucracy, its lack of meaningful depiction in the army, and its loss of migration following identity, among other factors. (Kronstadt, 2015)

Thousands of Sindhis residential across country held a protest to demand a free “Sindhudesh” or separate homeland for Sindhis people. The movement was started by the GM Syed (Sindhi Political Leader), who gave a direction to Sindhis nationalism. GM Syed founded Jeay Sindh Mahaz (JSM) in 1972 and gave the new idea of “Sindhudesh”. Hundreds of protesters demanded for separate Sindh under the umbrella of Jeay Sindh QoumiMahaz, nationalist political party in Sindh demanding a separate state called “Sindhudesh. JSQM political party was founded in 1995 after the death of GM Syed (prominent Sindhi political). Protesters noted that the Sindh is a separate identity and independent nation forcefully occupied by Punjab citizens. They also alleged that land their resources and land were being exploited and violation of human rights are rampant. (World, 2019). The language issue is one of the major controversies between Sindhis and Muhajir. This controversy actually started in early 1970. Pakistan People Party during rule did not play a vital role to mitigate such language conflict with citizens of Singh province. P further alienated the Muhajirs from To redress the grievances of Muhajirs, Bhutto's government passed a bill in 1972 in Sindh Assembly uplifting the status of the Sindhi language in the Sindh province (Haq, 1995)

Research Methodology

Methodologically, it is an analytical and descriptive research using both primary and secondary sources. Furthermore, it is a mix method research. Where necessary we present tables and graphs to explain the phenomena. However, predominantly, this study employs qualitative research methods as appropriate. The data used for this research is collected using openly available sources in the form of media comments, articles, books, think tank documents/reports, to make empirical analysis. Similarly, primary data for the study have been drawn from government archives, Autobiographies (i.e. documents produced by the movement’s leaders), and effortlessly accessible interviews. Understanding the conflict dynamics in Sindh is a timely and important exercise for Pakistani policymakers and Pakistan observers in the United States and international community for several reasons

Sindh's population demographics

Sindhudesh literally means a separate state for the people for the Sindhis language speakers. The demand for Sindhudesh has varied over time: it has ranged from demanding more political, economic, social rights to outright separation from the federation of Pakistan. Precisely, movement for the people of Sindh started by G.M Syed in late 19060s, but in the early years of 1979s, Syed established movement officially.

In the 1998 census, the population of Sindh was 30,439,893 inhabitants. But according to the 2017 census, the population of Sindh has grown to 47,886,051 out of a total of 207,774,520 inhabitants of Pakistan. It makes Sindh second largest province after Punjab. (Punjab Government, 2017) Sizable and continuous relocation to the area has brought about an ethnically blended populace. Regarding monetary assets, Sindh is the most extravagant territory in Pakistan. Karachi occupies two national seaports from where more than 90 percent of Pakistan's universal exchange starts. Sindh contributes over 67% of national income. Sindh has encountered impressive urbanization since freedom in 1947, which has brought about the unstable development of urban centres like Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur. (Ahmed & Mahmood, 2012)

Similarly, various ethnicities reside in Sindh which makes it complex province in the federation of Pakistan. Sindh has received migrants both from inside and outside of Pakistan. A majority of migrants, called muhajir, came from India after the partition. They settled in Karachi and Hyderabad. The major indigenous dialects in Sindh are Sindhi, Seraiki, and Balochi. With the passage of various semantic grouping from India after 1947, different

dialects have come to be spoken in the urban zones. Of these, the most widely recognized is Urdu, trailed by Punjabi, Gujarati, and Rajasthani. The Sindhis have been indigenous. The other main ethnic groups in Sindh are Punjabis and Baluchi's. These people have moved to Sindh for economic and political opportunities. (Ahmed & Mahmood, 2012)

Sindh is the most ethnically different of Pakistan's four regions, due both to the universal movement of people into the territory during, and after the partition in 1947. As stated above Punjabis, Pathans, and Baloch have additionally settled in huge numbers in Sindh's urban territories. They have been pulled in by financial chances, both the business bait of Karachi. Numerous Punjabis and Balochis have moved to Sindh looking for work. In any case, Sindh, as different pieces of Pakistan, is evolving. An area truly known for its dynamic governmental issues, decent variety, energetic common society, and Sufism is progressively compromised by rough fanaticism, wrongdoing, and episodes of patriot or nonconformist savagery. (Ahmed & Mahmood, 2012)

Movement of Sindhudesh: A Brief History

In this section we trace the historical roots of Sindhi nationalism in the context of Pakistani politics. We also discuss Sindhi nationalism during and after the British, but mainly after the rise of Pakistan. In addition, we also talk about Sindhudesh and its various facets. There is not much difference between Pakistan emergence and birth of ethnic movement mainly because Pakistan was barely a year old when the ethnic and separatist movement emerged mainly in the former East-Pakistan. Though the Bengali Muslim were at the forefront to establish Pakistan, but once Pakistan had been secured, they insisted on their Bengali nationalism and demanded that Bengali should be the national language. Similarly, they insisted on their Bengali identity. Ultimately It culminated in the birth of a separate state called Bangladesh in 1971.

The birth of Sindhi nationalism also had historical roots. Although Sindhudesh was born after the birth of Pakistan, Sindhi had also shown struggle against the British. For example, during the British Raj, Sindh demanded the separation of Sindh from the Mumbai presidency. Once Pakistan was established, there were certain Sindhis leaders who feared marginalization in the Pakistani federation. They believed that Sindh would be subordinate to the federal or central government dominated by General Punjabi and the elite. Farhan Siddiqi argues that they soon realized that Muhajir, of higher education but who speaks Urdu, dominated them in Sindh, while the Punjabi Generals and the bureaucracy of that province would rule them. (Siddiqi 2010)

Bengali Nationalism, the Sindhudesh Movement, and G.M. Syed

The ethnic situation in Sindh province imitates / relates to the ethnic situation in Bengal or in eastern Pakistan. Like Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman, Sindhi nationalist GM Syed also demanded a separate state for the people of Sindh. Like Sheikh, Syed played a central role in bringing Sindhis closer and making them demand rights. The Sindhis rights movement began in 1967 by Syed and Pir Ali Muhammad Rashid in response to the announcement of Urdu as a national language, the formation of a unit and the settlement of large numbers of muhajir in Sindh province.

In the post-Pakistan dismemberment in 1971, Syed gave impetus to Sindhis nationalism and laid the groundwork for JST in 1972 by simultaneously presenting the idea of Sindhudesh for people who speak the Sindhis language. (SohailSolangi, 2014) Therefore, it clearly suggests that the movement that began in the late 1960s on the basis of a unit was cemented with language. Once these problems arose and Sindhis under Syed's leadership faced a dilemma,

Syed made efforts to take Sindhis to a platform. The platform was provided by the common language spoken by the people of Sindh.

Therefore, a common ancestry, language and culture caused the people of Sindh to seek their own land called Sindhudesh. As the theory of ethnicity of primordialism establishes that ethnicity is fixed, does not change, the common Sindhi ethnic group based on language did not change, it caused the people of Sindh to approach based on their common recognition that was fixed and constant: Sindhis language. Similar to the theory of constructivist ethnicity, he affirms that people's experience makes them dream together. Then, the Sindhis approached and understood that they were being martialized by the state and the Urdu-speaking people approached. G.M. Syed, considered by many to be the father of Sindhi nationalism, commented that "Sindhudesh was born with the birth of Mother Earth. Our attachment is also as old and old as that." (Syed 1974, p.3) Therefore, the narrative based on a language that Syed considers essential, mainly because it provided them with a forum for ethnic identity.

While the demand for a separate province was made by the Sindhi nationalists, the main political parties, for example, PPP tried to secure the rights of the Sindhi people through the constitution and approval of the statues. Through several stages, even during military rules, the political governments of Sindh Province fought for safe rights for the people of Sindh. (Harris Khalique 2018) In their attempt to guarantee rights, they faced resistance from both the establishment and the Muhajir. However, when facing marginalization, the intellectual Sindhi took the path of galvanizing the Sindhi under the Sindhudesh flag. G. M. Syed in his autobiography stated that the Sindhi language is equal to Sanskrit. (Syed 1974, p.34)

Syed's efforts gave fruitful results when the young Sindhis gathered around him. Syed began his political struggle by establishing the national Sindh alliance (SNA). He successfully brought together many different ideological groups under the umbrella of Sindhudesh, but the Sindhis nationalists could not win a single seat in the elections of 1988, 1990 and 1993, since the Sindh political scene was dominated by another political party but National: The People's Party of Pakistan founded by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1967. But the failure did not prevent Syed from demanding a separate homeland for the people of Sindh in his work: *A Nations in Chains*. It does not mean that the Sindhi were against the manufacture of Pakistan. The people of Sindh always played an important role in it. Khan reports that when Syed Ahmaed Bareilvi announced jihad against the British, the people of Sindh supported him. In addition, he believed that during the war of independence, the Sindhis were never short of fighting the British. (Khan 2002)

Sindh province played an important role in making the British understand that Muslims could not be subjugated for a long period of time. In 1938, under the leadership of the Shaikh Abdul Majeed Sindhi assembly, he declared: "The entire Muslim League of India must design a constitution scheme under which Muslims can achieve total independence." (Khan 2002). Even GM Syed before the partition favoured the independence of Pakistan. He agreed with Quadi that Mohenjo-Daro was never part of India. However, this did not mean that Sindhi politicians were in favours of the ML's demand for Pakistan. Ayesha Jalal has argued that one of the most influential ML politicians, Ghulam Hussain, was "an outspoken enemy of the Lahore resolution [later called Pakistan Resolution]" and "all against Pakistan." (Ayesha Jalal 1992, p. 110)

The Rise of Sindhi Nationalism Under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Syed's charisma could not improve the language based Sindhis ethnicity as a simple movement. The movement could not achieve many milestones. Although Bhutto himself was a Sindhis, he was labelled an establishment puppet by G M Syed. Bhutto organized a

conference in Karachi and invited a prominent Sindhis writer. (NadeemParacha, 2015) Through these forums, Bhutto tried to revive Sufism in Sindh and tried to align the Sindhis as peaceful and followers of the Sufis. Paracha believes that Bhutto actually tried to inculcate the Pakistani identity and narrative. (Paracha, 2015)

In addition, Bhutto made a constant effort to guarantee Sindhi rights. He annulled a unit and became the first Sindhis leader to be popularly elected. Bhutto could not restore Sindh as a means of instruction mainly because the Urdu-speaking muhajirs resisted him strictly. He improved the Sindhudesh movement even more. For example, in 1972 a bill was presented at the Sindh assembly to declare Sindhis a means of instruction along with Urdu, but the bill could not receive consent due mainly to the Muhajirs who speak Urdu. Therefore, the Sindhis gathered and demanded more vigorously from the Sindhis to become a means of instruction at least in Sindh, but they could not obtain it. On this basis, Sindhudesh progressed at least in people's minds. In addition, during the Bhutto regime, the leader of Sindhudesh, Syed, and his supporter remained in an inactive situation, since in the 1977 elections they failed to win any seats in the national parliament.

Sindhudesh Movement During and After Military Rule

During the military regime many Sindhi lost their lives, but they were from PPP. Syed party did not even protest on the sham hanging of ZA Bhutto. During Zia regime, Sindhudesh weakened though not due to the efforts of the military regime, rather cracks started to emerge within the Sindhis ranks. The differences were such rigorous that Syed party broken into various factions. (Solangi 2014) Nevertheless, nationalist survived Zia onslaught on the ethnic nationalism. The Zia death an emergence of MQM in Sindh resurfaced Sindhudesh on the Political scene. The emergence of MQM gave it significant role in Sindh and federal government. Benazir led PPP government sought MQM support to form government which was seen by nationalist parties with great pain. They came out openly to oppose MQM.

Sindh and Other Pakistani Ethnic Movements

Sindhudesh is not very different from other movements in Pakistan, mainly because the dynamics of these ethnic movements are the same. The Sindhi movements are also the product of marginalization at the hands of the state, but then the language caused the people of Sindh to approach to begin an ethnic movement. If language were not a factor, the people of Sindh, KPK or Baluchistan would have approached to join their demand, but this is not the case, they have established their ethnic movement separately, mainly they are closer depending on the language. Bengali nationalism emerged based on language. Baluchistan's movements are also based on complaints against the state, but then language played an important role in bringing them together on a platform that sometimes demands Baluchistan separately and sometimes more rights.

However, there is a big difference between Sindhudesh and other ethnic movements in Pakistan, that is, Sindh is a strategically significant province of Pakistan, and Sindhudesh is based in Sindh. Karachi, an important city in Sindh, is the gateway to Pakistan. Trade takes place from the ports of Karachi; The naval headquarters of Pakistan is also located in Sindh Karachi. So, it makes the importance of these movements. If Sindh was cut, Pakistan will lose its gateway. In addition, due to the presence of ports, Sindh wins and contributes to the highest income of the national kitten. Given the above factors, Pakistan is not in a position to allow Sindhudesh to establish itself. These are the factors that make these ethnic movements different from Saraiki, Balochi, Potohari and Pashtuns.

The Movement of Sindhudesh in All of Its Forms

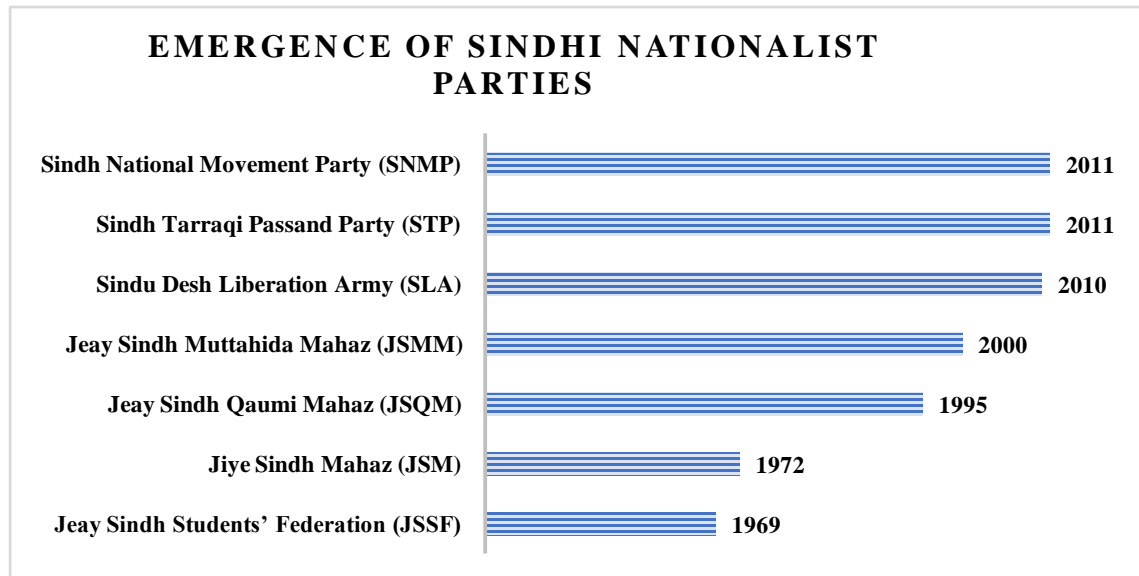


Figure 3: Emergence of Sindhi Nationalist Parties or Federation between 1969 and 2011

As the figure 3 suggests that Sindhudesh has been found in several ways, all these movements have been working for the rights of Sindhis. Some of them are extreme in their ideology, some of them are moderate in their approach. For example, SLA is motivated by Baluchistan Liberation Army and seeks separation, but it also has a terrorist agenda. Though JSQM does not has terrorist agenda, it religiously seeks independence. Its leaders are in Germany and have sought political asylum. Similarly, JSMM also believes in armed struggle. (SohailSolangi, 2014). STP though started with the ideology od seeking Sindhis rights with armed struggle however over the years it has gone moderate. (Solangi 2014)

But what is common among these parties is seeking rights for the Sindhis speaking people. Though the nationalist's parties in Sindh have been strong with regard to ideology but they have appeared weak in the organisations. QadirMagsi is of the view that

“Ideologically and politically the nationalist movement is strong but organisationally it has become weak. Sindhi nationalists will gain importance once they prove their strength through the vote.” (Solangi 2014)

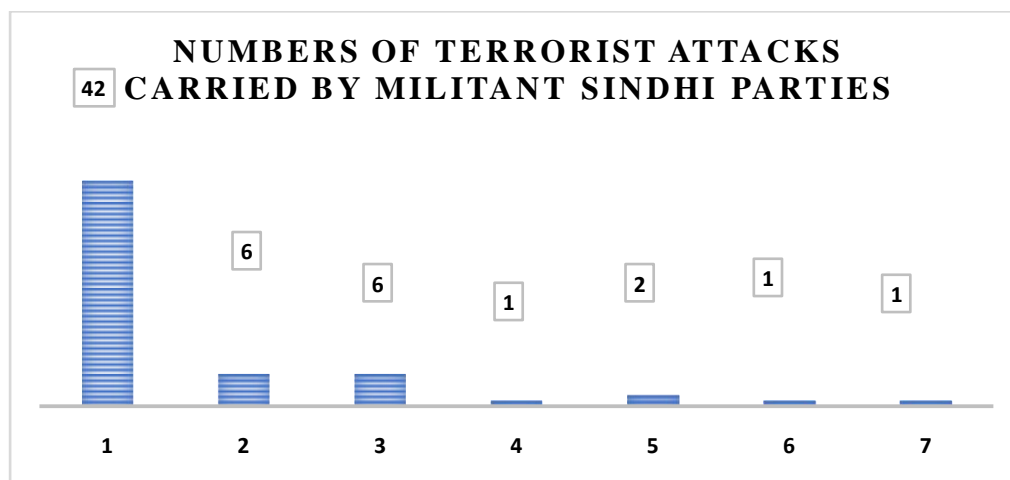


Figure 4: Terrorist acts carried by Sindhudesh parties between 2002 and 2018

Current Position and Conclusion

In this article we have discussed the importance of the Sindhi language and its impact on the emergence of the Sindhudesh ethnic movement in the southern province of Pakistan, Sindh. In this effort, we have tried to find an answer to the following questions: how the Sindhudesh movement emerged because of language and how it progresses, and its impact on the national integration of Pakistan and, finally, its status.

We discover that neither the Sindhis nationalist party nor the separatist party have been able to form or be part of the government either in Sindh or at the federal level. It basically suggests that the ethnic movement in Sindh has remained largely inactive. The multi-stage discussion explains that the Sindhudesh Sindhu nationalist movement struggles to survive. We have also seen that the people of Sindh, instead of supporting the Sindhudesh movement, voted for the People's Party of Pakistan during the period of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. Essentially it means that the people of Sindh are in favor of the law and the constitution that separates Sindh from Pakistan. The Popular Party of Pakistan has always supported the constitution and the law in Pakistan which essentially means that there is a preference for national integration of Pakistan.

However, we also discovered that after the death of Benazir Bhutto in 2007, the Sindhudesh have found a way to revive him. For example, in 2010, the Sindhudesh Liberation Army carried out a terrorist act in Hyderabad and destroyed the train tracks. Similarly, in 2012 members of Sindhi Qaumi Mahaz denounced the resolution of Pakistan. The year 2014 was worse in the province, mainly because Jeay Sindh Mutahida Mahaz called a strike that succeeded as the entire province was closed. And finally, the members of JSSM celebrated the 115th birthday of the founder of Sindhudesh, G.M Syed, and demanded that Sindh be separated from Pakistan.

It basically suggests that the Sindhis have rejected the call of separation from the nationalists. But more worrying has been JSSM's protest before the CPEC in more recent times. In conclusion, we are not sure how long Sindhis will continue to fight for its socio-economic and political rights but protests for the central interest of national security not only concern the state but all those who love to see Pakistan prosper. One of the television presenters in Sindh has said, "It's confusing most Sindhis are still PPP voters and followers of Syed Sain (G. M Syed). Most of them are still pluralistic and visit Sufi shrines like they always did. The problem is that the new generation of Sindhis have lost its bearings." (Paracha, 2015)

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