

## VIOLENCE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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***Abstract:** The concept of violence has been embedded in the history of mankind since the very inception of settled life on earth. This article traces the history of violence in human history from ancient ages till date. Going through the ancient ages, middle ages, the article covers till modern ages as a background of violence in subcontinent in general and in Pakistan in particular. The article then goes on to describe the history of violence in Pakistan since its creation and delineate the same in the present-day Pakistan by explaining the political, religious, and sectarian violence in Baluchistan, Sindh, and Tribal areas of Pakistan.*

**Key Words:** Violence, Talibanization, Pakistan, violence in subcontinent, Ahmadis, Baluchistan, MQM

### Introduction

Violence is present in the very scheme of cosmos. Probably, there has been no age or civilization without violence. Man is a social being for its multiple needs. He has to interact with his fellow beings. He is also power hungry. Since ages, man is passing through an evolutionary process and is facing violence. Genocide, wars, murder, battle, inter-state conflicts, beheading, amputation, blinding, and tribal feuds all were outcome of evolutionary process. Some of the religious rituals were incomplete without human sacrifices and violent punishments. History is full of violent savagery and barbarism.

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## **Violence in Ancient Era**

According to the Holy Quran and Islamic interpretation, Abel and Cain were sons of Adam. But somehow, Cain developed jealousy and feelings of anger and contempt towards his brother (Abel) and then killed him. It is regarded as the first act of violence. That is how violence started its voyage on earth. Violence remained almost a part and parcel of every age and society since then.

Violent wars between the city-states weakened the Sumerian rule in Mesopotamian civilization. Internal rebellions and frequent attacks of foreign forces caused bloodshed and unrest there. Violence in the Sumerian Civilization is reflected in the fact that “Sumerian city-states were constantly waging wars with one another.”<sup>1</sup> Later on, Semitic King of the Akkad Sargon united the whole of Mesopotamia, but after his death, his empire “witnessed frequent attacks by barbarians coming from the desert regions.”<sup>2</sup>

The evidence of use of weapons like axes, spears, daggers, stone-maces, slings, swords, bows, and arrows by the inhabitants of the Indus Civilization reflect that violence was present in the Indus Civilization as well. The city of Harappa was built like a citadel to check foreign aggression and violence. Vedic Civilization too was not without violent occurrences. The Aryans faced violent opposition from the local population – Dravidians. In Rig-Veda, a book of Hindus, destruction and violence perpetrated by Aryans has been described. They fought wars with the local population for a long time and destroyed many towns and ports.

Violence was a distinct aspect of Greek Civilization as well. In 1200 BC, the whole of the city of Troy was demolished and razed to the ground. Homer, the famous Greek poet, has also described the destruction of this city in his epic poem, Iliad. He “pictures the war as caused by the abduction of a beautiful Greek woman”<sup>3</sup> – Helen.

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<sup>1</sup> B. V. Rao, *World History* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited, 2004), 32.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Albert Hyma, *Ancient History* (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 1940), 62.

“Agamemnon mustered a force of men and ships from all Greece to sail against Troy to avenge the abduction of Helen, wife of his brother Menelaus of Sparta, and the Troy was eventually sacked after a long-drawn-out siege.”<sup>4</sup>

Traces of violence are also found in Chinese Civilization. In Chou and Shin Dynasties, there are various references of wars and violence. Shi-Huang-Ti, a great warrior of Shin Dynasty, abolished feudalism by waging wars against the powerful feudal lords. The erection of Great Wall of China was envisaged to protect the locals from the attacks of foreigners.

Violence was also a part and parcel of Roman society. The wars between the Carthage and Rome are known as Punic Wars. The last Punic War was fought in 146 BC, and it caused total destruction of Carthage. One can note the presence of violence in Roman society as games and sources of entertainment were full of violence. The Romans enjoyed violent shows like gladiatorial combat where men fought to their death. The spectacle was viewed by a large gathering including kings and queens. It had the expressions of violence, bloodlust, and cruelty. Besides gladiatorial fights, criminals, rebels, and prisoners were punished in public gatherings there. They were thrown before a hungry lion. Julius Caesar’s assassination in 44 BC by Brutus turned Rome into a battle field. Warlords and violent gangs became active and fought each other to seize power. Eventually, situation became adverse as everything was subject to violence and disarray.

The growth of Hindu empires in India also witnessed violence and bloodshed. Ashoka (273–236 BC) became king after bloody fights. He killed “all his 99 brothers and succeeded to the throne. He was known for his extreme cruelty, he earned the nick name Chandashoka.”<sup>5</sup> Later on, he fought the bloodiest battle, the Kalinga war, to gain control over the kingdom of Kalinga. Ashoka was quite ambitious to rule Kalinga. This war caused havoc to the people of Kalinga.

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<sup>4</sup> I. E. S. Edwards, *The Cambridge Ancient History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 2:342.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

Kalinga was conquered by His Sacred and Gracious Majesty when he had been consecrated eight years (261 BC). 150,000 persons were thence carried away captive, 100,000 were there slain, and many times that number died.<sup>6</sup>

Cannibalism (humans eating other human beings) was a violent and inhuman practice of the primitive age. In some of pre-modern societies of America, Africa, Pacific Islands, and the West Indies, cannibalism was a known practice. In Greek civilizations, the human sacrifices for the pleasure of gods and goddesses were regular practice. In short, violence in the form of entertainment, superstitious nature of man, bounded-labour (slavery), war expeditions, genocide, torture and mutilation as regular punishments, political victimization, political assassinations, rapes during war, and homicide existed in history.

In the ancient age, violence took place when the concept of private property gained roots. The powerful people made loot and plunder of the poor. They caused bloodshed to gain control over the properties of the others. The ruling elite got the simple masses engaged in wars just to safeguard their economic interests and to maintain their private properties. Sometimes these tenants had to borrow from their landowners to meet their needs. Whenever the debt could not be paid by someone, he or his family members would be enslaved to work in lieu of debt. Resultantly, the conflicts between the tenants and their feudal lords started. "In 18 BC, the first revolt of farmers against the landowners occurred. Thousands of farmers entered the cities and killed thousands of landowners and government servants."<sup>7</sup>

Before the invention of modern transportation, most of the business transactions between various nations of the world were done through ships. Often, these ships were intercepted by pirates, and they robbed valuables and even lives in extreme cases.

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<sup>6</sup> Vincent Arthur Smith, *The Oxford History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 119.

<sup>7</sup> Ali Abbas Jalapuri, *Tareekh Ka Naya More* (Lahore: Takhliqaat, 2010), 22.

Bahamas, the Windward Channel, the West African Coast, the Waters of Madagascar, and the American colonies were the key areas where pirates were more active. In case of resentment, the whole merchants boarded on the ship were slaughtered. Such type of violence continues to exist even today; for instance, in Somali postal areas.

The history of America reveals that their society too was not without violence. It witnessed mass-killing, homicide, and other forms of violence. This is obvious from the excavations found there. Clubs, spears, and arrows were the tools of violence for the Native Americans in the prehistoric era. The tribes also existed in the American society which was also violent and barbaric. Later on the red Indians, Native Americans, waged violent struggle against the British masters, and thus, they sought freedom. “In an excavation near Missouri River, at least 486 victims of mass killing including men, women, and children were recovered.”<sup>8</sup> The inter-village warfare and intertribal rivalries often resulted into killing of people on large scale.

### **Violence in Middle Ages**

Violence remained an integral part of the Middle Ages as well. Crusades were its big example. These were a series of wars fought between the Muslims and Christians, lasted for almost two centuries and caused a lot of suffering. This series of crusades was occurred mainly from 1095 to 1291. These military expeditions by the Christians of Europe were started in order to conquer the holy places of Jerusalem. The religious leaders of Christians spread the religious frenzy throughout the Europe. They were headed towards Middle East and waged wars against the Muslims. The crusades were eight in numbers. All these crusades unleashed a lot of violence including the lives which were perished at a large scale. In the First Crusade (1096–99):

A mob of 10,000 men, women, and children led by Peter the Hermit (a monk) and Walter the Penniless

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<sup>8</sup> Philip L.Walker, “Bioarchaeological Perspective on the History of Violence,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001): 11.

(a knight) marched towards Jerusalem. As they were ill-equipped and without money, they suffered untold miseries. Many of them perished on their way, and the rest were slaughtered by the Turks.<sup>9</sup>

In the Third Crusade (1189–97), there occurred a fierce fighting between the Muslims and the Christians. Emperor Salahuddin inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Christians. However, the biggest damage to human beings, particularly children, was meted out in the Fifth Crusade, fought in 1217 – Children’s Crusade. “About 30,000 children led by German Youth, by the name Nicholas, marched towards the Holy Land. They perished on their way due to hunger or disease.”<sup>10</sup>

The entire period of crusades during the Middle ages was the clear manifestation of the religious hostility between the Christians of Europe and the Muslims of the Middle East. For a quite considerable time, this part of the world faced huge bulk of violence in shape of wars on small and large scale. The main force behind these wars was religion, which aroused the feelings of antagonism from both the sides, which ultimately caused damage to life at huge canvas.

One of the violent practices popular in the Catholic and Protestant lands was burning at the stake. Three methods were used in this regard where prisoners were hung on the stake either through chains or iron hoops till their death. In the second method, a prisoner was tied with a stake and a pile of wood was burnt around him. This pile was so high that the man growling with pain and suffering could not be viewed by the spectators gathered around. In the last method, the victim was tied to a ladder above the fire. Then the ladder was put into the fire to burn the victim alive. Burning at stake was punishment as well as warning for the criminals. It remained in practice in many European countries till the eighteenth century. The horrendous act of burning humans alive was popular in Germany. It served as means of punishing people involved in crimes and thus to set example for others.

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<sup>9</sup> Rao, *World History*, 152.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

Catherine Wheel was another symbol of violence of the Middle Ages particularly in Germany. It was practiced in the memory of Saint Catherine of Alexandria – a figure of fourth century. Violence through Catherine Wheel was indeed a horrible spectacle. The victim's limbs were crushed, and the remains were subjected to the wheel. The horrible incident was viewed publicly as a spectacle. It was taken as the most popular event of that time. Such torture and violence remained in vogue throughout the squares of the Europe up to 1750. People from all walks of life watched it with great enjoyment and fascination.

Headhunting was yet another violent practice of medieval era. It remained in practice in some of the continents in particular. In this practice, head of a person was removed from his body and was preserved. In Balkan wars, many a people were beheaded. People living in tribes followed this practice. Chief of a tribe was the symbol of power and supremacy for the tribe. In wars, the cutting off the head of the chief of a tribe meant the defeat of that tribe. The victorious tribe expressed its victory after having the head of the opponent chief. The principle criterion in judging the courage and manhood was in taking the head of the rivals. The young ones were not allowed even to marry if they failed to secure their first head.

The ninjas, the assailants, combatants, and spies undertook a lot of violence. This practice was quite popular in Japan, where the unseen Ninjas engaged in violent practices. Usually violence through ninjas was an activity of darkness. They made access to the places where even the trained personnel could not even think of going. Their modus operandi was deception. Ninjas were the born violence breeders. They used deadly weapons causing maximum harm to the people.

### **Violence in Modern Era**

The twentieth century has been regarded as the most violent century in the modern era. It experienced two world wars. Humanity suffered death and destruction on a large scale. World War I is the act of violence in the twentieth century, where three continents were involved. It was the first act of total war. The countries used all their

resources in shape of population and economic resources. However, its main burden was felt by Europe.

About ten million lives were lost and twenty million people must have been wounded. There was large scale damage to civilian property. The war cost the people \$200 billion. A large variety of deadly weapons such as incendiary bombs, grenades, and poison-gas were used. Tanks, submarines, and aircrafts were also used.<sup>11</sup>

World War II is another story of destruction:

Nazi degradation sank to a level seldom experienced by man in all his time on earth. Millions of decent, innocent men and women were driven into forced labor, millions were tortured in the concentration camps, and millions more still (including nearly six million Jews) were massacred in cold blood or deliberately starved to death and their remains burned.<sup>12</sup>

World War II ended with the defeat of Germany, Italy, and Japan.

*Almost 40 million people were killed: well over half of them were Russians, six million were Poles, four million Germans, two million Chinese and two million Japanese. Britain and USA got off comparatively lightly. Another 21 million people had been uprooted from their homes: some had been taken to Germany to work as slave laborers, some had been put into concentration camps, and some had been forced to flee from invading armies. The victorious powers were left with the problem of how*

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 366.

<sup>12</sup> Norman Lowe, *Modern World History* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997), 101.

to repatriate them (arrange for them to return home)... The most notorious was the Holocaust – *the deliberate murder in extermination camps of over 5 million Jews and hundreds of thousands of non-Jews, mainly in Poland and Russia.*<sup>13</sup>

The dropping of atomic bombs on Japanese cities – Hiroshima and Nagasaki – by America opened new chapters of human miseries in WWII. This caused innumerable deaths to the civilians in shape of flash and flame burns, radiation sickness, and some of the other injuries. It was the first example of drop of atomic bombs to date, which shocked the entire world with its dire consequences.

### **Violence in the Subcontinent**

War, conflicts, and violence have been a permanent feature of the political landscape of the subcontinent. Primarily, violence existed in the ethnic, religious, and communal form.

Standard accounts of the 1947 communal violence in the Punjab concentrate on the ‘summer madness’ of mid-August. They also focus on the disorder in the British administered areas rather than in the surrounding princely states. This angle of approach situates the massacres in a moment of transition between empire and nation state when the machinery of government was in the process of being dismantled and even the boundary demarcation was uncertain. Violence is thus linked with state collapse. Yet it occurred equally as deadly in the Sikh and Muslim princely states of the Punjab where administrative structures remained intact.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 113; italics added.

<sup>14</sup> Ian Talbot, *The Deadly Embrace* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2.

The prosperity of the subcontinent tempted invaders like Alexander, Zaheerud Din Babar, Nadir Shah, Mahmud Ghaznavi, British, and other foreign nations which obviously caused violence.

Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi (971–1030) made almost seventeen attacks on India. The wealth of India was of great attraction for him. He attacked India almost every year and during these attacks a lot of killing and bloodshed was to be seen. His last fierce attack was on Somnath temple (1025), in which thousands of lives perished.

The guards of the temple offered desperate resistance to the Muslims till they were overwhelmed by the stubborn courage and superior skill of Mahmud. About 50,000 defenders are said to have lost their lives in their grim struggle. The Sultan made a triumphal entry into the temple, desecrated to idol by breaking it into pieces and took possession of the immense wealth it contained.<sup>15</sup>

Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur (1483–530) came from Frghana, Central Asia. He managed to establish Mughal Empire in the subcontinent after fighting a fierce battle of Panipat in 1526 in which he inflicted a crushing defeat to Ibrahim Lodhi. The battle of Panipat was horrible in which countless human lives were destroyed. Babur had to face external as well as internal hostilities in order to establish his grip on India.

After his demise, his son, Humayun could not handle affairs and lost his control over India. Sher Shah Suri (1486–545) proved himself to be the greatest rival of the Mughal Empire. In 1539, the battle of Chausa saw the violent clash between the armies of Sher Shah and Humayun. After the loss of many soldiers, Humayun was forced to leave India, and the thrown of Delhi fell to Sher Shah. He embraced death during a gunpowder explosion in 1545.

Akbar the Great (1542–1605) rose to power in 1556. In the beginning of his rule, he had to face not only the hostility of his near

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<sup>15</sup> Sailendra Nath Sen, *Ancient History of Bangladesh, India, & Pakistan* (New Delhi: Vanguard, 1998), 304.

ones but also the aggression of the outsiders. He fought many battles to consolidate his rule. The second battle of Panipat between Akbar and Hemu was the fiercest one in which many soldiers laid down their lives. After the death of Akbar, Jahangir (1569–1627) became king of India. Soon, he had to face the uprising of Prince Khusru. Jahangir successfully quelled this rebellion.

In 1627, Jahangir died and left two sons behind Shahjahan and Munawar. Accession to the Mughal throne became disputed. A hostile contest occurred between the two brothers. Shahjahan ordered execution of all his male relatives so that no one could claim the throne except him. Indeed it was an extra ordinary act of violence.

Aurangzeb (1658–1707) was crowned to Mughal kingdom. During his reign, he quelled many revolts. The threat of Marathas was of great concern for Aurangzeb, and he led many army expeditions against them. Later on, wars over succession to thrown between his sons weakened the strength of the Mughals in Hindustan.

Nadir Shah (1698–1747) became emperor of Iran in 1736. After overcoming locals in Iran, he undertook attacks on India. After the death of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire had become weak due to the continuous wars of successions. In 1739, Nadir Shah captured Delhi and ousted Mughals. He ordered mass killing in Delhi.

During the course of six hours in one day, 22 March 1739, something like 20,000 to 30,000 Indian men, women, and children were slaughtered by the Persian troops in the city. All across the city, gunshots were heard, explosions were set off, shops were looted and houses were set on fire. Clouds and plumes of fire and smoke were soon in every part of the city. Persian troops stood outside the burning buildings and then slaughtered the Indians as they made their way out, trying to escape from the fire, smoke and flames. Men were chased down and killed. Women were assaulted, raped, and abducted... Children had their bellies ripped open whilst babies were torn from their mother's arms, swung by their ankles and had

their heads smashed against walls. The screams of those being killed, chilled everyone who heard them.<sup>16</sup>

The Marathas exploited the weakness of the Mughals and gained power in subcontinent. In 1758, Maratha conquered Punjab. In 1760, Marathas secured possession of Dehli. Ahmad Shah assembled the Hindustani chiefs and convinced them against growing power of the Marathas. He fought the third battle of Panipat (1761) against Marathas. This battle proved to be the epic center of violence and bloodshed. "The number of Hindus slaughtered was thought to approach 200,000. Thousands of prisoners were destroyed."<sup>17</sup>

The British entered the subcontinent as traders and gradually deprived the Muslims of their rule. In 1857, the Muslims fought War of Independence against the British to regain their lost grandeur and glory. The British masters termed this war as mutiny. Since the Muslims were on forefront in this war, so they bore the major brunt of it. The imperial masters tried to crush the Muslims at every leve, l. It was also a beginning of dark days for the Muslims because they were victims of economic, political, and social levels by their foreign masters.

The rift between the Hindus and the Muslims remained the potential cause of violence in the subcontinent. Naturally, it was difficult for both the Hindus and the Muslims to live peacefully as there were religious, economic, social, and political difference between the two. The hostility between the two caused irreparable losses ranging from the economic ones to the toll of human beings. As Hindus were in majority so they applied every tactic to crush the Muslims in every sphere of life.

The partition of Bengal 1905 was a purely administrative problem but the Hindus perceived it a political loss which caused

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<sup>16</sup> "Nadir Shah's invasion of India," *Wikipedia*, last modified July 07, 2012, accessed September 19, 2012, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nadir\\_Shah's\\_invasion\\_of\\_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nadir_Shah's_invasion_of_India).

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *History of India*, 440.

violence among the Hindus and the Muslims. The Hindu started Swadashi Movement against the government, and some infuriated Hindus tried to hit the train when Viceroy was on tour to Bengal. There were clashes between Hindus and Muslims which caused loss of life and property.

On April 13, 1919 the famous massacre of Jallianwala Bagh occurred. It was one of the biggest violent incidents in the history of India. The imperial masters wanted to suppress Indians. A public meeting was held by the Indians in Jallianwala Bagh. Sir Michael O' Dwyer, the military general, reached the place of gathering and ordered his troops to fire on the unarmed gathering.

The audience was caught beneath the hail of bullets, all of them frantically trying to escape from the quiet meeting place which had suddenly become a screaming hell. The firing continued for almost fifteen minutes which left 379 people dead on the spot and more than 1200 injured.<sup>18</sup>

The brutality of the British towards the Indians is obvious from this act. It was such a bleak incident that even Sir Winston Churchill criticized it in the following words:

This is an episode which appears to me to be without precedent or parallel in the modern history of the British Empire. It is an extraordinary event, a monstrous event, an event which stands in singular and sinister isolation.<sup>19</sup>

Mappila Revolt was another story of violence in the subcontinent. It took place in 1921 in the Malabar District of Madras. Hindu feudal lords tried to suppress the Muslims. The Muslims were mostly of Arabs origin. During the course of Khilafat Movement, revolt and riots broke out in that area.

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<sup>18</sup> Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi: Karachi University Press, 2000), 147.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

The administration put down the revolt extremely ruthlessly resulting in heavy loss of life and property. According to one estimate as many as 2339 Mappilas were killed, 1652 wounded, and 5955 were arrested during these riots.<sup>20</sup>

The atrocities of Congress Ministries from 1937–39 depict another episode of violence in the history of subcontinent. Hindus applied every tact to inflict injuries to the Muslims. The riots and clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims were order of the day. The schemes like Vidya Mandar Scheme, Wardha Scheme, and Banday Matram anthem were organized attempts of Hindus to frustrate the Muslims. The doors of education and government service were closed to the Muslims. During this phase, a lot of violence was meted on the political scene of India.

The British divided the subcontinent into two independent states. The partition further antagonized the relationship between the Muslims and the Hindus, which led to violence on large scale. Many areas of Punjab and Bengal in particular and other parts of the subcontinent in general experienced the bloody violence, where about one million people perished.

In Punjab, on the eve of independence, violence and terror were at rampage and created civil war like situation, where each community in majority killed the minority opponents. Refugees were attacked, trains carrying immigrants were burnt, and passengers boarded were massacred. Women were not only deprived of jewelry but also from chastity. In the Eastern Punjab, thousands of Sikhs were killed just within a week. The millions of people had to discard their belongings while fleeing away from death and destruction owing to the huge spread of violence. At the time of independence, violence is vivid from the following passage:

The Hindu and Sikh rulers of States played the most heinous and ignoble role in this horrible tragedy in the history of mankind. They fully co-operated with the Hindus and Sikhs in the ruthless slaughter of the

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 163–64.

Muslim refugees. In the Punjab, the State troops of Patiala, Kapurthala, Alwar, and Bharatpur joined with Hindus and Sikhs bands in the systematic extermination of the Muslim population. The State troops were employed in the massacre of Muslims with Hindus and Sikhs who were allowed to kill and mutilate Muslim men, women, and children. The States of Kapurthala and Patiala provided secret bases to raiding Sikhs and Hindus to operate from. Arms and ammunition were also provided by the State Governments to Sikhs and Hindus for killing the Muslims.<sup>21</sup>

After the partition, the unresolved issue of the accession of the princely states also created violence. India is committing aggression in Kashmir at vast level as she had occupied it against the wishes of the Kashmiris. Three deadly wars on the issue of Kashmir between India and Pakistan have taken place. This problem is still unresolved and Indian army is often found engaged in brutal acts of violence and harassment against the Kashmiris. Thousands of Kashmiris have been killed and abducted by Indian army so far. The unresolved issue of Kashmir is a continuous source of hostility between India and Pakistan, which has been a source of violence in the region.

Thus, history of the struggle for independent Pakistan is pregnant with violence. After the creation of Pakistan, this trend could not be reduced; rather it went on rise with the passage of time, which has created hosts of problems in almost every segment of Pakistani society.

### **Violence in Pakistan**

Soon after the inception of Pakistan, the internal conflicts began to appear on both sides of Pakistan – East and West Pakistan. Soon after the death of Quaid-e-Azam, large scale riots erupted in East Pakistan in 1950s. The narrow-minded people of East Pakistan

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<sup>21</sup> M. Ikram Rabbani, *A Comprehensive Book of Pakistan Studies* (Lahore: The Caravan Press, 2004), 206.

infuriated the students, and fairly a large number of them were killed by police firing. Constitutional, political, economic, and lingual reservations of Eastern wing against the West wing turned into a secessionist movement after the elections of 1970. In East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujeeb's party Awami League (AL) was in overwhelming majority; while in West Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was in majority. The situation became tensed as General Yahya Khan was reluctant to convene the meeting of National Assembly. A civil war like situation prevailed in East Pakistan as Mukti Bahini, with the help of India, became active in spreading riots throughout East Pakistan. At last, military operation was launched in March 1971, which ignited the bloody and violent civil war in the Eastern wing.

Mukti Bahini launched a guerilla movement and played havoc. They made non-Bengalis their target and killed them mercilessly even in their homes. They were so violent that they attacked army personnel; and in some cases, even perished their families. This was a kind of Guerilla war. Bloodshed and violence paved the way for the emergence of present-day Bangladesh. Thousands of people were massacred, and many took refuge in India. Thus, the emancipation of Bangladesh was possible at the cost of bloodshed at vast scale.

The turbulent history of Baluchistan also remained a potential cause of violence. The differences began to emerge soon after independence as Baloch leader Mir Ahmed Yar Khan refused to join Pakistan. This situation got further intensified; and as a consequence, most of the Baloch leaders (such as Prince Karim Khan, Naurez Khan, etc.) were arrested time and again. Army operations were also launched. These military operations and armed struggle of the Baloch people caused large scale violence in the province.

The provincial status was given to Baluchistan in 1970. The provincial autonomy has been its persistent problem. In 2005, the gang-rape of Dr. Shazia Khalid near Dera Bugti was an important factor in aggravating the situation in the province. It became a common practice by the Baloch tribes to blast Sui Gas installations and damaging the railway lines and electricity pylons. The clashes

between army and the militants were on rise. Military operation was launched in Kohlu in which dozens of people were killed. The killing of Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti in 2006, leader of Jamhoori Watan Party, triggered violence across the province. In this operation, many army commandos and the insurgents were killed. The army operations and the militants' armed struggle have caused indiscriminate killing of innocent people, including women and children.

The ethnic conflicts existed in Sindh province even at the time of independence. Karachi is the biggest metropolis of Pakistan, and diverse communities are found here. In Karachi, there reside more than 50% Sindhi speaking people. There is a conflict between the Sindhi speaking people and the Urdu speaking Muhajirs. Moreover, G. M. Syed's movement for Sindhudesh has also worsened the situation. There are riots and protests related to language issue. The Muhajirs have reservations about their rights, as they are feared of the gradual rise of Sindhis. Muhajir Qaumi Party is struggling for the identity and economic strength of the Muhajirs. The MQM waged a mass campaign against their under representation in politics, bureaucracy, and industry. The influx of Pathans in Karachi during Afghan war in 1979 has also worsened the situation. Violent riots between Pathans and Muhajirs, and Muhajirs and Sindhis have become a routine. Army operation "Clean-up" was conducted in Karachi in 1992 to clear it from violence. The peace was restored, but it was temporarily.

In 1991, the MQM split into two groups. One group was led by Afaq Ahmed and other was by Amir Khan. After the military operation, Altaf Hussain, the leader of one group of MQM, preferred self-imposed exile to London. Temporarily, MQM- Haqiqi took control of the office of Altaf Hussain. The people of Karachi faced a warlike condition for about one month. MQM, in retaliation, killed hundreds of people including civilians and security personnel. The army quit the province leaving everything to the police and

paramilitary forces. “The civil strife in Karachi caused 1113 casualties in 1994 and 2095 in 1995.”<sup>22</sup>

Musharraf regime patronized MQM in Karachi. In the elections of February 2008, Pakistan People’s Party made government in the province, but it had to align MQM due to its considerable political importance. Attack on protesting lawyers, burning of Bolton Market, attack on the mass rally of Banazir Bhutto, suicide attacks on processions of Shia’s during Muharram were some major incidents of violence during the recent past. Now, Karachi is known as full of violent places.

Pakistan is no exception to religious violence. By religious violence, we mean violence on two fronts: one against the religious minorities like Ahmadis, Christians, and Hindus. Secondly, the violence exists in the form of sectarianism.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded a sect, popularly known as *Ahmadis* or *Qadiyanis* on March 23, 1889. According to an estimate, Ahmadis are approximately two million in number in Pakistan. Muslims do not like Ahmadis, as they have challenged the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (PBUH) – the integral part of the faith of the Muslims. After independence, the anti-Ahmadi stance of the Muslims became more violent. In 1953, the riots against Ahmadis were started first in Karachi. All Parties Muslim Convention demanded that Ahmadis should be declared non-Muslims. Punjab, particularly Lahore, became the center of riots where protest against the Ahmadis started. The law and order conditions became worse. Martial Law was enforced in Lahore in order to restore order in the city. After the intervention of Pakistan army, the situation became normal in Punjab.

Firing by police that day left 10 people dead and 74 injured, and there were 11 more casualties before the

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<sup>22</sup> Lionel Baixas, “Thematic Chronology of Mass Violence in Pakistan, 1947–2007,” *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence* (June 24, 2008): 6.

situation got stabilized. On the whole, more than 300 people died in the riots.<sup>23</sup>

The religious groups and parties again demanded to declare Ahmadis non-Muslim. Ultimately, the Prime Minister Zulifkar Ali Bhutto declared Ahmadis as non-Muslim in 1974 with a Constitutional amendment. The anti-Ahmadis violence stopped temporarily. Zia-ul-Haq banned Ahmadis from praying openly, calling Azan, or using any Islamic expression for themselves. They were not allowed to use any words or salutation from Quran. Killings, arson, and desecration of worship places of Ahmadis have not ended even now.

The September 11, 2001 attack on the United States has changed world politics. New concepts like Talibanization have evolved as a result. Talibanization in Pakistan is not a new phenomenon. Its seeds can be traced back to the Russian-Afghan war of 1979. America sought support from Pakistan against its rival Russia, which was granted. America fully supported Pakistan in shape of funding as well as in arms and ammunitions, which was used against Russian forces. A considerable number of people from Pakistan especially the students from Madrassas were trained to take part in this war. During this phase there were cordial relation among America, Pakistan, and Taliban. The Afghans with the support of Pakistan got victory and forced Russia to leave Afghanistan. After the disintegration of Russia in 1987, America became the sole super power of the world, and she turned her back to Taliban after materializing her objectives.

After 9/11, America gained Pakistan's support against Taliban as frontline state on war on terror. Pakistan as per Hobson's choice supported the United States in the War on Terror. The stance of Pakistan against Taliban regime in Afghanistan and against the extremist elements within Pakistan resulted in the emancipation of anti-state elements. Thus, friends of the past became foes of Pakistan. The war within Afghanistan spread to the territories of Pakistan. Many of the Taliban, who escaped from Afghanistan, entered Pakistan and found Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Other

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 7.

Islamic radicals also joined them. These extremists started conducting terrorist's attacks upon the security forces of Pakistan to force it to withdraw the US support.

To combat the insurgents present within the tribal areas of Pakistan, army operations were launched. The army arrested people on large scale. The army and other security agencies made arbitrary arrests, secret and indefinite detentions, torture, unlawful executions, and even killings particularly in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Pakistan had to pay heavy cost on account of playing active role in the war on terror. Now Pakistan is burning in the fire of terrorism.

The siege of Lal Masjid Islamabad was an important incident in the context of violence in Pakistan. A violent confrontation between Islamic radicals and government of Pakistan took place in 2007. The government conducted 'Operation Sunrise' to contain the violent moves of the students of Lal Masjid and Jamia Hafsa. Lal Masjid and adjacent Jamia Hafsa madrassa were under the control of two brothers Moulana Abdul Aziz and Abdul Rashid Gazi. They demanded imposition of Shariah and challenged the government of Pakistan. The students of Lal Masjid were found involved "in violent demonstrations, destruction of property, kidnapping, arson, and arm clashes with authorities. The militants threw bombs on nearby building of Environment Ministry. They also attacked the Army and Rangers deployed to guard the building. Negotiations failed, and Pakistan army, through its Special Service Groups (SSG), besieged Lal Masjid. The conflict resulted in 154 deaths, and 50 militants were captured.

Al-Qaeda men and many of Jihadi outfits in Pakistan, such as Lashkar-e- Jhangvi, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen al-Alami, and Harkat-al-Jehad al-Islami, joined hands with Taliban. They conducted suicide attacks against the government functionaries, security personals, and civilians. This suicide bombing caused unprecedented loses to both life and property. Apparently, the targets of the suicide attacks were the high profile politicians, government representatives, and security agencies. The suicide attacks increased in numbers after the incident of Lal Masjid.

In May 2009, Pakistan army started operation against militants in Swat and Malakand. This operation was code named as

Operation Rah-e-Rast. Various weapons were used by the army which caused collateral damage to the civilian population as well.

Fazalullah, the Taliban leader in Swat, motivated people through FM broadcast against the government. Sufi Naik Muhammad criticized the policies of government through speeches and interviews. They openly supported Taliban in Pakistan. Keeping in view their stubborn stance against the government, the government of Pakistan declared war against Taliban.

The militants Taliban bombed schools and burnt CD shops. The provincial government tried to diffuse the attention by signing Nifaz-e-Adl Regulation in 2009 to restore peace in Swat. But it could not pacify the militant Taliban of Swat. In the wake of operation, thousands of people left Swat. Hundreds of militants were killed and wounded. The Swat operation left huge impact upon peace and order throughout Pakistan.

## **Conclusion**

The international political scene has changed dramatically after the incident of 9/11. Many notable Taliban leaders and al-Qaeda activists were found and killed in Pakistan, including their supreme commander Osama' bin Laden on May 2, 2011. Taliban considered Pakistan and its forces their enemy in the same way as they were taking the Americans. Main object of these violent practices was to pressurize the government of Pakistan. Thus the terrorist wave gradually took upward trend in Pakistan. The suicides bombers, motivated by some higher cause or ideology, killed themselves to cause maximum damage to their targets.

At present, every limb of the body of Pakistan is bleeding in the wake of violence. The violent culture in Pakistan is mounting day by day and has raised threats to the very existence of Pakistan. Talibanization or religious extremism is on rise. It can be the result of being the partner in war on terror. The political intolerance is also deteriorating the very fabric of Pakistan and is causing violence here.