

Report
**Pakistani Parliamentary
Delegation
Study Tour to India**
November 17-22, 2008

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Preface

The Parliamentary Study Tour of Pakistani Members of the National Assembly to India was undertaken by PILDAT so as to provide an opportunity to them to learn from and share best practices of the legislative and democratic tools that streamline Indian Parliamentary democracy. The study tour was undertaken from November 17-22, 2008.

Special thanks are due for the close cooperation extended by the Indian High Commission Islamabad and the Indian Ministry of External Affairs in facilitating the process of obtaining visas and of facilitating various official meetings of the delegation in India. PILDAT and the Delegation of MPs would also like to thank individuals and organisations that took time out to meet with the Pakistani delegation and discuss various issues of mutual interest.

The Pakistan High Commission extended its full cooperation and support to the delegation throughout the 5-day study tour organised by PILDAT. PILDAT is particularly grateful to H.E. Mr. Shahid Malik and his entire team, especially Mr. Fazal Abbas Maken, Minister (Trade), for their cooperation, courtesy and support extended at every step of the study visit.

PILDAT would also like to acknowledge the financial support provided by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Pakistan for undertaking the study trip and the FES-India Office for its support with logistical arrangements in Delhi.

PILDAT has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the contents of this report and does not accept responsibility for any omission and error as it is not deliberate. Any opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily shared by PILDAT or the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Islamabad
December 2008

Objectives of the Study Tour

The objectives of the Study Tour are to provide Pakistani legislators with an opportunity to learn from the tools, techniques and best practices of the Indian legislative and democratic system. Since both countries-India and Pakistan-exist as post-colonial developing polities that inherited the British Parliamentary system of governance, PILDAT feels that an exchange of ideas and practises will help enhance the understanding on both sides but also provide an opportunity to MPs on both sides to enter into dialogues and discussions on issues that confront them.

The study tour programme, designed in the light of the above objectives, provides the opportunity for the delegation to discuss the tools, techniques and technologies which support the legislative process, understand the Indian electoral system and the role and performance of Indian electoral institution, exchange of ideas with young Indian MPs and with academics and institutions facilitating and reviewing political & legislative agenda in India. In addition, together with local policy institutions in India, PILDAT has arranged to hold roundtable discussions on issues such as the federal structure in India.

This study tour, together with the dialogue and discussions that will take place in Pakistan upon completion of the tour, will contribute to a better understanding of Pakistani MPs about the Indian political and democratic process and principles, practices, laws and structures that underpin a functioning democracy in India.

Introductory Booklet

An Introductory Booklet was prepared by PILDAT containing information about the Study Tour, i.e., objectives, programme etc. The booklet also contained profiles of all the delegates. It was distributed amongst the delegates as well as all the people the delegates held meetings with and interacted with in India.

List of Pakistan Delegation

The list has been arranged alphabetically on first name basis from serial number 03-08.

No.	Names	Party
1.	Ms. Farzana Raja , MNA Federal Minister/Chairperson, Benazir Income Support Programme, Women, Punjab	Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarian (PPPP)
2.	Dr. Aytullah Durrani , MNA (NA-268, Kalat-cum-Mastung Haidri, Balochistan) Minister for State for Industries & Production	PPPP
3.	Ms. Anusha Rehman , MNA Women, Punjab	Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)
4.	Mr. Bilal Yasin , MNA NA-120, Lahore-III, Punjab	PML-N
5.	Mr. Muhammad Baleegh-ur-Rehman , MNA NA-185 Bahawalpur-III, Punjab	PML-N
6.	Mr. Muhammad Moazam Ali Khan Jatoi , MNA NA-179 Muzaffargarh-IV, Punjab	PPPP
7.	Mr. Nauman Islam Shaikh , MNA NA-198, Sukkur-I, Sindh	PPPP
8.	Ms. Nosheen Saeed , MNA Women, Punjab	Pakistan Muslim League (PML)
9.	Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob Executive Director, PILDAT	
10.	Ms. Aasiya Riaz Joint Director, PILDAT	

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Briefing on Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training, India

The study tour programme began with a welcome and briefing by the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies (BPST) at the Indian Parliament. Shri K. Vijaykrishnan, Joint Secretary Lok Sabha Secretariat welcomed the delegation alongside other officials of the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and explained in detail the work of the BPST.

The Bureau, which was established in 1976 as a division of the Lok Sabha Secretariat, works under the overall control and supervision of Secretary-General, Lok Sabha. Its main purpose is to provide training services of parliamentary institutions, processes and procedures to the Legislators and officials.

The Bureau's activities include holding of Orientation Programmes and Seminars for Members of Parliament and State Legislatures, Training and Refresher courses for officers of the Secretariats of Parliament and State Legislatures, Appreciation Courses for Senior and Middle Level Officers of the Government of India including Defence Services and Public Sector Undertakings and probationers of All India and Central Services. The Bureau also conducts two international training programmes for foreign parliamentary officials known as the 'Parliamentary Internship Programme' and 'International Training Programme in Legislative Drafting'.

The Bureau is housed in the Parliament Library Building inside the Indian Parliament estate. Its special focus is on training the new MPs after each election while holding seminars of interest to members. These seminars and Guest Lectures, a new addition to the Bureau's work, mainly invite the national and international luminaries from various disciplines to share their knowledge and concepts with the Indian MPs.

The orientation programmes for MPs are a two to three days duration courses and involve eminent parliamentarians, including Cabinet Ministers, seasoned parliamentary officials and other experts to brief MPs on various aspects of parliamentary practice and procedure. The orientation and other seminars of BPST are aimed at promoting a deeper appreciation of the constitutional role and position of the Parliament and the State Legislatures as representative institutions, familiarising the Members more closely with the parliamentary traditions and etiquette and help them in making the best and most effective use of the precious time

for more informed and fruitful discussions.

The Bureau also organises computer awareness programmes for Indian MPs to assist them in discharging effectively their duties such as constituency management functions, office automation activities and personal information management, etc. Computer awareness programmes are also organised for officials of Lok Sabha as well as the personal staff of the Members.

One feature of significant interest to Pakistani MPs was that the BPST organises courses in Parliamentary Processes and Procedures for middle and senior level officials of the Government of India including the Indian defence services and officers the rank of Colonel and Brigadier are part of these training courses also.

Briefing by Shri Suresh P. Prabhu, MP Former Union Minister

As part of the overall briefing to Pakistani MPs about the Indian Parliament, Mr. Suresh P. Prabhu, MP and Former Union Minister also met with the Pakistani delegation and briefed them. Giving an overview of the Indian Parliament he said that the number of women MPs in the Indian Parliament was on the lower side and there were only 48 women MPs in the Lok Sabha of 545 members. He briefed Pakistani delegation that a bill was pending in the Parliament to increase women's representation levels.

Talking about the public access to Parliament he said that Lok Sabha has its own television channel, Lok Sabha TV, which is the only such channel in the world which is manned and run by the Indian Parliament.

He said that Indian MPs are given an allowance to hire assistants but no such service is provided to them. MPs are, however, given latest computers, laptops, internet access and email facility, etc.

Briefing on Parliamentary Rules of Procedures Shri P.D.T. Achary

Secretary General, Lok Sabha

Shri P.D.T. Achary welcomed the Pakistani Parliamentary Delegation. Sharing Indian Parliamentary Rules & Procedures with the Pakistan delegation, Mr. Achary said that in India, the executive is drawn out of the Parliament, as in the UK. He said that the powers of all three institutions are

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delineated in the Indian Constitution, which is the basic and supreme law of the land. Elaborating on the structure of government, he said there are 545 members of the Lok Sabha elected through direct elections for five years.

India is a union of states and not a federation. The Rajya Sabha is the Upper House of Parliament. There are 245 members in the Rajya Sabha distributed amongst different states and union territories of India. Members of the Rajya Sabha are not elected by the people directly but indirectly by the Legislative Assemblies of the various States. Members of Rajya Sabha are elected for six year terms. The Rajya Sabha is a permanent body, not subject to dissolution, and that one-third of its members retire every two years. Every State is allotted a certain number of members. Minimum age requirement for membership to Rajya Sabha is 30 years. Twelve (12) of Rajya Sabha members are nominated by the President from persons who have earned distinction in the fields of literature, art, science and social service. However, the nominated members can not participate in the election of President. Lok Sabha has 2 nominated members.

Explaining the functions of the Rajya Sabha with regards to state subjects, he said that if 2/3rd members of the Rajya Sabha pass a resolution, the Parliament can legislate on state subjects, but such a law can only remain for 1 year. Compared to Pakistan where members of the Senate have to belong to a province from where they are elected, in India, a voter anywhere in the country can be elected as a member of the Rajya Sabha. All states in India have different membership which is not equal and is based on population of the state. The Vice-President of India is the ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha. He is elected by the members of an electoral college consisting of members of both Houses of Parliament. Rajya Sabha also elects one of its members to be the Deputy Chairman.

Focussing on Lok Sabha, Mr. Achary said that according to the Indian Constitution, not more than 6 months can elapse between the last day of the a session and the 1st day of the next session. He added that whereas the Pakistani National Assembly has been meeting for 130 days per year, the Lok Sabha has averaged 85 to 90 days, without counting week-ends and days in between two sitting days as work days. He said that there has been a demand by MPs that the number of sittings should be increased to 110. He explained that parliamentary committees meet on a more regular basis and a large part of parliamentary business is conducted in these meetings. The Quorum requirement for the Lok Sabha is ten (10) per cent of the house, whereas for the National

Assembly of Pakistan, it is 20 per cent of the house, he added.

The Indian Parliament has had a bill before it to reserve 1/3rd seats for women but that has been pending for quite some time. The Indian Parliament has 3 sessions during a year. The Budget session begins in the 3rd week of February and goes up to May. In the interregnum, the Parliament divides into 24 mini Parliaments or Departmentally Related Standing Committees (DRSC) to examine demands for grants for each government department. After a thorough scrutiny, a report is presented on each Ministry and the Parliament passes the budget.

When in session, Lok Sabha holds its sittings usually from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M. and from 2 P.M. to 6 P.M. On some days the sittings are continuously held without observing lunch break and are also extended beyond 6 P.M. depending upon the business before the House. Lok Sabha does not ordinarily sit on Saturdays and Sundays and other closed holidays. During the budget session, the house normally adjourns after 7 – 8 pm.

Mr. Achary said that the subjects over which Parliament can legislate are contained under the Union List in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Union subjects are those important subjects which for reasons of convenience, efficiency and security are administered on all-India basis. The principal Union subjects are Defence, Foreign Affairs, Railways, Transport and Communications, Currency and Coinage, Banking, Customs and Excise Duties. There are numerous other subjects on which both Parliament and State Legislatures can legislate.

Mr. Achary said that the Rajya Sabha has special powers to declare that it is necessary and expedient in the national interest that Parliament may make laws with respect to a matter in the State List or to create by law one or more all-India services common to the Union and the States. On the other hand, the money sanction can only come from the Lok Sabha while the Prime Minister and the Cabinet are also accountable to the Lok Sabha, he said. The Rajya Sabha can only keep budget for 14 days but if it does not return that, the budget is deemed to be passed. No Confidence motions also come in the Lok Sabha.

The first hour of every sitting of Lok Sabha is the Question hour. After the Question Hour, the House takes up miscellaneous items of work before proceeding to the main business of the day. The last Two and Half hours of sitting on

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every Friday are generally allotted for transaction of private members' business. While private members' bills are taken up on one Friday, private members' resolutions are taken up on the succeeding Friday, explained Mr. Achary.

The Lok Sabha uses has electronic voting system to save time. The two Indicator Boards installed in the wall on either side of the Speaker's Chair in the Chamber display the results of voting. The Lok Sabha proceedings and debates are prepared in Hindi version, the English version and the Original version. Only the Hindi and the English versions are printed while the Original version, in cyclostyled form, is kept in the Parliament Library for record and reference.

Explaining the anti-defection law, Mr. Achary said that the law applies when a member leaves a party, as in Pakistan. Violation of whip in Pakistan only applies to motions for the election of the Prime Minister, no confidence motions and a motion of a money bill, where as in India it is not confined to these aspects. He explained that in the Merger Provision, if two thirds of the members want to join another party than they will be exempt from the provisions of the anti defection law. If a member defects, he or she can lose the seat but only if a fellow MP invokes the defection law. A lot of members have lost their seats due to this previously. However, there is a condonation rule as well and only parties can condone their MPs.

Most committees in the Indian Parliament are joint committees with members from both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. In the Indian Parliament, the strength of parties in the Parliament determines how many chairs of committees will go to which party. Ministers can not be part of committee while the committees are not authorised to call the minister but only the highest civil service official for a hearing. The quorum of committee is 33 per cent.

Explaining the method of constitutional amendments, Mr. Achary said that in India there are three types of constitutional amendments: those which can be passed by a simple majority; those that can be passed by 2/3 of those present and one half of the total strength of the house; and those that have to be passed in accordance to the second requirement as well as ratification by half of the state legislatures. Highlighting the differences further, he added that in Pakistan, the President "shall" assent within 30 days or return the bill for reconsideration, whereas in India the word used is "may", which means that he can hold assent. In this case, he explained, the President can withhold assent indefinitely.

Automation in the Parliament was done in 1982. The secretariats maintain a Parlis database with cataloguing. Questions and Answers are put into that database for easier access and tracking subject-wise. There is a computer cell in the Parliament since 1997. All members are given computers. It is their choice whether to opt for desk tops or for laptops. In addition, members are also given INR. 1500 per month for DSL charges. In addition, there is a high-speed DSL connection and Wi-fi connection in the Parliament too. Members and staff are trained on the use of IT as well. The Parliament Questions and Answers are also available on Parliamentary website in addition to members' attendance and their voting records.

Meeting with Ms. Margaret Alva Former MP; Advisor Bureau of Parliamentary Studies & Training

Ms. Margaret Alva, former MP and Advisor to Bureau of Parliamentary Studies & Training also met with and interacted with the Pakistani Parliamentary delegation. She too underscored the need of increasing women representation in the Indian Parliament and said that though political parties agreed outside the Parliament on the pending bill to increase women's representation, they were not willing to move on the bill. She fondly reminisced about her visit to Pakistan and believed that better parliament-to-parliament interaction was needed between India and Pakistan to improve relations. She also talked about her meeting with late Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto and expressed that the whole of South Asia was robbed of a great and charismatic leader through the tragic killing of Mohtarma Bhutto.

Tour of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha; Tour of the Indian Parliamentary Museum

The Pakistani delegation was given a detailed tour of the Indian Parliament and its various facilities. The delegation also visited a got briefed on the recently opened Museum of the Indian Parliament that chronicles the struggle of Indian independence and the Parliamentary history of India.

Meeting with the Honourable Speaker of the Lok Sabha

The delegation called upon the Honourable Speaker Lok Sabha Mr. Somnath Chatterjee. The Indian Speaker

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conveyed what he termed as his warmest message of friendship to the people of Pakistan and said India always looked up to Pakistan for friendship. He congratulated the people of Pakistan on restoration of democracy in the country. Talking about the role of Bureau of Parliamentary Studies, Mr. Chatterjee said that the BPST will be happy to provide services to Pakistan and Pakistan Parliament if needed. He briefed the delegation about the committee system and a number of friendship groups working in the Indian Parliament.

Pakistani delegation conveyed the message of friendship to the Lok Sabha Speaker and said that better interaction at the Parliamentary level should be encouraged on both sides to allow for resolution of long-standing issues between the two neighbours.

Briefing on Electoral System of India

In order to brief Pakistani delegation in detail about the working of the Indian Electoral System, PILDAT especially arranged an exclusive briefing by Mr. T. S. Krishnamurthy, Former Chief Election Commissioner, India. Mr. Krishnamurthy briefed the Pakistani delegation about the Indian electoral system and its key features and highlights. A very informative session as MPs from Pakistan interacted with Mr. Krishnamurthy on a comparison of electoral laws and practices of both India and Pakistan and discussed in detail various aspects of the Indian electoral system.

Mr. Krishnamurthy gave a detailed explanation of the Election System in India and discussed the evolution of the Election Commission into the institution it is today and how it has helped to strengthen Indian democracy. He emphasized the importance of an independent Election Commission and explained how the Indian Election Commission asserted its constitutional rights and achieved this status. He also briefed the participants about the role of technology in the elections. Excerpts from Mr. Krishnamurthy's paper are given below:

Mr. T. S. Krishnamurthy Former Chief Election Commissioner, India

Mr. Krishnamurthy said that the role of the ECI is to organise, control and supervise elections in India. Originally, the constitution said that there will be a Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and as many commissioners as the President appoints. However, he said that in his view the sense of constitution was that there should be at least two commissioners. At the time of elections, it is the duty of the ECI to do everything. Election petitions in India can only be filed and heard after the election is over and not during the election. The CEC runs as a mini government during elections; it gets whatever it needs and asks for.

The roles and powers of the three Election Commissioners were equal. He emphasised that the Commission needs to be unanimous in order to function effectively. He said it was crucial for all the three Election Commissioners to work together in consultation and consensus with each other. He asserted that the strength of the Commission depends on this solidarity between the three Commissioners. The Election Commissioners are appointed by the President. They have tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. They enjoy the same status and receive salary and perks as available to Judges of the Supreme

Court of India. The Chief Election Commissioner can be removed from office only through impeachment by Parliament.

Tracing the history of the ECI, Mr. Krishnamurthy said that Mr. T. N. Seshan, the celebrated CEC of India moved the politics of India. Political Parties in the 1980s had agreed on a Code of Conduct. Under Mr. Seshan, the ECI took out that code of conduct and said to parties that we hold the parties to that. Since then the ECI has strived to provide a level-playing field. The incumbents have their advantages but there are strict rules such as government cars can not be used for campaigning; the Prime Minister can use the car or the plane but not the party. He said that it is the strength of the Indian democracy that the ECI has been able to effectively implement such practises. This has only been possible because of the rule of law in India, he said.

The CEC enjoys the same powers and immunity as do the judges of the Supreme Court. Initially, the parties in power and the opposition were against the independent and tough stance of Mr. Seshan and a group of 110 MPs wanted to move an impeachment motion, but Mr. Narsimha Rao had to take it back. It was during the time of Mr. Seshan that 3 commissioners, two in addition to the CEC were appointed by the government. Mr. Seshan contested this decision but the Supreme Court ruled 5-0 in favour of three commissioners.

The CEC and commissioners are appointed by the Prime Minister of the day. Talking about the qualification of the CEC, he said that the job of CEC requires an administrator with a judicial mind. In India, all the CECs and commissioners from the Indian Civil service because they have experience of administration. The ECI has a polling staff of 500,00,000 and this kind of administration can only be handled by the executive, not by a judge, he specified.

At the time of elections, the ECI insures that officials belonging to the district and posted to that district are moved from there. Similarly, any one who has been in such a post for over 4 years has to go as well. The ECI sets the date of elections and chooses a suitable date in its discretion within the last 6 months of the Parliament. The CEC may hold consultations on this but the final authority rests with the ECI.

Talking about the electronic voting, he said that the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) have revolutionised Indian elections. The EVM was for the first time introduced

in 1997. Since then it has gradually been applied and the latest election completely used the EVMs. He said that the machine was made entirely in India with the exception of the chip, which was imported. He added that initially the machines were tested in a few constituencies but they were used in all constituencies and polling booths in the 2004 general elections. The machine, he said, is extremely user friendly and has party symbols as well as names. He said that the Election Commission has been able to satisfy all the political parties about the effectiveness and accuracy of the Electronic Voting Machine.

Candidates often spend far more on elections than what is allowed by election laws in India. Election laws now required candidates to submit their criminal records with the Commissions.

The most important thing in elections is a clean, accurate and honest electoral roll. The ECI is responsible for an up-to-date electoral roll. The ECI updates electoral rolls every year in November up to December. All election officials (300 people in the ECI) work on this including a Chief Electoral Officer at the local level with 15-20 people. Every collector is also a district administration officer and there is a direct chain with the ECI. The Electronic voting card plus other identities are used for this purpose. Voters list is made available on the ECI website. Any party can buy a copy as well and it is made available constituency-wise on CDs as well. The ECI sends a lot of people to check that there are no anomalies in the list. Sample checking and other methods are also employed in this regard. The ECI sends people down to the village level as well to ensure accuracy and an up-to-date list.

There is a separate Delimitation Commission in India that is appointed by the Parliament. The ECI sits on it and a retired Supreme Court judge chairs it. The ECI also does not hold local level elections and there is a state Election Commissioner for that. After the 1971 delimitation, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, through a constitutional amendment, froze all delimitation for 30 years. After 30 years, in 2000, the Parliament decided to keep it frozen. Within the states, the balancing of constituency sizes is carried out.

Roundtable Discussion: Indian Federalism

A special roundtable discussion was organised for the delegation at the Institute of Social Sciences, (ISS), Delhi. The speakers at the roundtable presented an overview of Indian federalism, India's local government system, Indian mechanism of dealing with diversities in India and secular polity and Indian federalism. The presentations were followed by a Q&A/Discussion session with delegates. Below is an overview of key ingredients of the presentations at the roundtable discussion:

Indian Federalism: An Overview

Dr. Rekha Saxena, Associate Professor,
Centre for Federal Studies, Jamia Hamdard, Delhi

Presenting an overview of Indian federalism, Dr. Rehana Saxena said that contemporary Indian federal system has immediate antecedents in British Raj and first federal attempt was made in the Government of India Act of 1935 that introduced provincial autonomy on the basis of written constitution for the first time. Only provincial part could be implemented with elections held at that level in 1936 and ministries formed but the federal part could not become operational due to reluctance of princely states to join the federation.

Tracing the developments after Indian independence in 1947, she said that 1950 Constitution delineates reasons for a strong centre in India. Article 1 of the Constitution describes India as a "Union of States" and not a federation. Partition of the country, social and regional diversities and need for planned economic development with dominant role of the state as an imperative on account of delayed industrialization of India are cited as some of the key reasons for maintaining a strong centre.

Another key juncture in the Indian federalism trajectory is the reorganization of states. The ethno-linguistic demands in India led to the setting up of the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) which, in favour of multilingual states, practically conceded to such demands only where it was necessary. As a result of that, agitation intensified for unilingual states that resulted in reorganization of south India in 1950s, reorganization in western and northern India in 1960s and the North-east in the 1970s. The last three states of India created as late as in 2000.

Dr. Saxena said that due to the presence of a strong centre in

India, many characteristics of the system are un-federal. She said that the most commonly cited un-federal feature is Article 3 of the constitution that empowers the Parliament of India to reorganize the states by process of legislation (distinguished from constitutional amendment). This process only needs "consultation" not "concurrence" of the states thereby vesting unilateral powers in the Parliament.

However, the key features of the federal structure of India are that there is a bicameral Parliamentary federal government; executive is accountable to the elected legislatures. The union Parliament consists of two chambers: Lok Sabha which is directly elected through single member constituency based on plurality electoral system) and Rajya Sabha: partly indirectly elected by elected members of state assemblies, partly nominated). The head of the *federal state* is the *President of India* and the head of the *provincial state* is a *Governor*. The Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers of states with their respective cabinets are the real executive authorities at the union and state levels. There is an integrated hierarchy of federal judiciary appointed by the union executive and removable by the President. She said that a unique feature of the Indian federal system is the All-India Services which are presently three in number. A set of other important agencies in the federal system are the Election Commission of India (Article 324), a Comptroller and Auditor General of India (Article 148) and a union Finance Commission (Article 280).

The third tier of the Indian political system is the *local self governing institutions in rural and urban areas*. Intergovernmental relations are largely conducted at the level of the executives of the two orders of governments. She said that a striking feature of the Constitution of India is the emergency provisions: a national emergency due to foreign aggression or internal rebellion or both (Article 352); and emergency in a state in the event of the breakdown of the constitutional machinery (Article 356) or financial emergency in the union or a state (Article 360).

Another federally relevant aspect of the Indian constitution is the Amending formula (Article 368). There are three procedures of amendments: by simple majority in the two houses of the Parliament; by 2/3rd majority in the two houses of the Parliament; and 2/3rd majority in both the houses of the Parliament plus ratification by at least half of the state legislatures.

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Talking about the demarcation of jurisdictions legislative powers (Article 246), she said that there exist three lists, namely, union, state and concurrent that are relevant in this regard. She said that between 1950-2001, a total of 27 changes have been brought about by constitutional amendments to enlarge the executive, cultural and coercive powers of the union vis-à-vis states. The concurrent list has not lost any item; it has only gained while residuary powers are given to the Parliament under the Constitution. Parliament can legislate on subjects in state list provided 2-3 states mutually agree or Rajya Sabha passes a resolution by 2/3rds majority or to implement international treaties.

Formula of financial power sharing is outlined in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution according to which taxing powers are vested both in the Union List and the State List. Imbalance between the sources of revenue earmarked for the Centre and states and elastic sources are assigned to the Centre (general income tax, corporate tax, customs) while inelastic sources (tax on agricultural income, irrigation) with expansive developmental responsibilities are placed on the states.

Article 275 of the Indian Constitution makes a provision for mandatory central grants-in-aid to the states on the recommendations of the Finance Commission. Article 282 of the Constitution provides for central assistance on discretionary basis for any specific purpose/subject falling under union, state or concurrent jurisdiction and a non-statutory Planning Commission has been set up in 1950 for advising the Centre in these matters.

She said that the Constitutional response to the Indian diversity is adoption of the principle of secularism; protection of minorities and "minorities within minorities," language pluralism, protection of disadvantaged groups and asymmetrical power sharing. The principle of secularism ensures religious freedom (Article 25-28), individual rights, collective rights of communities (personal laws), freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion (25), freedom to manage religious affairs (26); that no person shall be compelled to pay taxes for promotion of any particular religion as contained in Article 27) and no religious instruction or religious worship in educational institutions wholly maintained out of state funds (28). In protecting the rights of minorities, the Constitution gives them cultural and educational rights; Article 29 gives the right to conserve distinctive language, script or culture; Article 30 gives right to establish and administer educational institutions and that the state will not discriminate while giving grant to

institutions managed by minority-linguistic/religious. However no specific political rights are delineated.

Talking about the policy of language pluralism, Dr. Saxena said that there are two official languages of India: Hindi & English (English with proviso that Hindi as sole official language after 15 years of commencement of Constitution). After witnessing violent riots in Tamil Nadu, a constitutional amendment and parliamentary legislation made an allowance for indefinite continuation of English as alternate official language. According to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, there are 22 officially recognized languages in India and the rights enjoyed by these linguistic groups are to transact in their language.

Talking about the asymmetrical patterns of power sharing, she said that the greatest degree of asymmetry concerns the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Article 370 of the Constitution of India contains what it calls "Temporary Provisions" which provide that the legislative powers of the Parliament of India shall "correspond to matters specified in the Instrument of Accession" of the state to the Indian union, and any other matter "with the concurrence of the Government of the state." Similarly, Articles 371 A and G, extended to the states of Nagaland and Mizoram require the consent of the legislatures of these states, if the law concerned relates to religious and social practices of Nagas and Mizos, their customary law and procedures, administration of civil and criminal justice, and ownership and transfer of land resources of these states. Other special kind of federating units that are called *the Union Territories (UTs) that vary in size and are less autonomous and controlled in varying degrees by the centre.* Separate chapter of the Constitution deal with these. Originally, all of these were administered directly by the union through a centrally appointed administrator. None of these have a legislature but all are represented by at least one seat in the lower house of the Parliament. The Parliament can either extend the jurisdiction of a High Court of a neighbouring state to such territories or create a separate High Court for it (Article 241 [1] and [4]). Subsequently, two new types of UTs were created, namely, Pondicherry (Fourteenth Amendment Act 1962) and Delhi (Sixty Ninth Amendment Act 1991).

In some states ethnic and regional profiles demand special treatment and in such cases, Autonomous Regional District Councils are created such as Gorkha Hill Council in Darjeeling District in W. Bengal, Bodoland Region and Karbi-Anglong Hill Districts in Assam. These are granted

administrative and financial powers within respective areas under state legislations. Autonomous Tribal Councils also exist in India where tribal communities and areas are granted autonomous institutions administrated under authority of governors of respective states acting in his discretion in N.E. states.

Local Government System and Indian Federalism

Dr. George Mathew, Director, ISS

Giving an introduction, Dr. George Mathew said that India has the total area of 3.28 million Sq. Kms and its population has reached the 1 billion mark. The sex ratio is (Females / 1000 males) - 933. India has 28 states and 7 Union Territories. The biggest state is Uttar Pradesh with the population of 166,052,859 while the smallest state is Sikkim at 540,493 population. The literacy rate per cent in 2001 was recorded at 65.38%: Males: 75.85 % and females - 54.16 %. 26% of the population lives below poverty line. There are 22 official languages. Hindus constitute 80.5% while Muslims, the largest minority in India, are 13.4% followed by Christians (2.3%), Sikhs (1.9%), Buddhists (0.8%), Jains (0.4%), Other (0.6%).

Tracing the history of local government system today in practice in India, Dr. George Mathew said that there existed a traditional system of panchayats in the pre-independence India. There were Caste Panchayats and Local Bodies - Towns (Nominated). In the 1940 Indian Constitution, the Directive Principles (Part IV Article 40) defined panchayats as units of self-government. In the latter part of 1950s, three-tier Panchayats came into existence as Development Agencies. Panchayati Raj, a process from Gram Sabha (Village Assembly) to Lok Sabha (People's Assembly - Parliament) was a subject of debate and since 1978 Panchayats were seen as Political Institutions. In the District Government Idea debate in the mid 1980s, Panchayats and Municipalities became Institutions of Self-Government in Part IX and Part IXA of the Constitution followed by States passing conformity legislations. In 1996, Panchayats were extended to Schedule V areas. Through the 73rd & 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution on April 24 June 1, 1993, local bodies, Panchayats and Municipalities, came under Part IX of the Constitution after 43 years of India becoming a republic.

Panchayats and Municipalities are recognized as "institutions of self-government." Basic Units of Democratic System: Gram Sabhas (villages) and Ward

Committees (Municipalities) comprise all the adult members registered as voters. There are three-tier system of panchayats at village, intermediate block/taluk/mandal and district levels. Smaller states with population below 2 million only have two tiers and seats at all levels are filled by direct election.

Key features of the system are that seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and chairpersons of the panchayats at all levels are reserved for SCs and STs in proportion to their population. One-third of the total number of seats are reserved for women. One-third of the seats reserved for SCs and STs are also reserved for women. One-third offices of chairpersons at all levels are reserved for women. There is a uniform five year term and elections to constitute new bodies are completed before the expiry of the term. In the event of dissolution, elections are compulsorily within six months. There is an independent Election Commission in each State for superintendence, direction and control of the electoral rolls. Panchayats prepare plans for economic development and social justice in respect of 29 subjects listed in 11th Schedule. 74th Amendment provides for a District Planning Committee to consolidate the plans prepared by panchayats and Municipalities.

The local governments are funded through budgetary allocation from state governments, receive revenue of certain taxes, collect and retain the revenue they raise and through central government programmes and grants. In each State, a Finance Commission determines the principles on the basis of which adequate financial resources are ensured for panchayats and municipalities. Subjects transferred to the Panchayats include: agriculture, including agricultural extension; land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation; minor irrigation, water management and watershed development; animal husbandry, dairying and poultry; fisheries; social forestry and farm forestry; minor forest produce; small scale industries, including food processing industries; khadi, village and cottage industries; rural housing; drinking water; fuel and fodder; roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication; rural electrification, including distribution of electricity; non-conventional energy sources; poverty alleviation programme; education including primary and secondary schools; technical training and vocational education and public distribution system.

Counting the strengths of the system, Dr. George Mathew

said that the constitutional status for stability and continuity is one of the key strengths of the system. Timely election and representation for weaker sections are other strengths. While some of the weaknesses of the system include lack of awareness, rules, bye-laws etc., political will, lack of public awareness and vigilance, lack of accountability, decision-making not yet broad-based, rules & procedures not adequately framed, influence of elite in the village planning, lack of orientation of officials for working with LGs and lack of political will of political parties, etc.

How India Deals with its Diversities

Dr. Ash Narain Roy, Associate Director, ISS

Dr. Roy said that India is not a textbook federalism and it is described as “quasi-federal,” “federation without federalism” and “a Union of Unequal States.” The federal system in India can be called a “work in progress.” But the Indian experience is highly instructive for aspiring federal nations. India is a land of multi-faceted diversities: linguistic, religious, cultural, economic and even aspirations. Indians swear by the motto of “unity in diversity, but celebrate their differences. India is a multicultural state. But India is not monochrome, it is multi-colour. It is a mosaic, a salad bowl, not a melting pot. India is a kaleidoscope. You touch it and there is a new combination of shapes and colours.

E P Thompson, eminent historian says, “All the convergent influences of the world run through this society: Hindu, Moslem, Christian, secular, Stalinist, Maoist, democratic socialist, Gandhian. There is not a thought that is being thought in the West that is not active in some Indian mind.” Christianity is far older in India than in Europe. Islam came to India in the 11th century. Neither the religious nor the ethnic groups have territories marked out for them.

India is indeed a land of bewildering diversity. In the words of Octavio Paz, “India is an ethnographic museum. But it is a living museum, one in which the most modern modernity co-exists with archaicisms that have survived for millennia.” Mark Twain, while visiting India in 1896 said, “Anything that can be done by God or man has been done in this land.”

Federalism is the bedrock of India's democratic edifice. In a country of India's size and diversity, federalism has come to be identified with national identity and national aspirations. UNDP Report said a few years ago that India is an example of how “poor and diverse countries can do well with

multicultural policies.” The Indian experience thus debunks the theory that cultural diversity leads to clash of civilizations.

Talking about Federalism and Secessionism, he said there are four variables: 1) Strong federal state but accommodating, responsive. Result: Maybe short-term secessionist threat, but long-term decrease in such threat (India, Canada). 2) Strong federal state but unaccommodating, unresponsive. Result: Continuing repression, continuing secessionist threat leading to break-up (Yugoslavia, Soviet Union). 3) Weak federal state but accommodating. Result: Possibilities of peaceful break-up (Velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia). 4) Weak federal state but unaccommodating. Result: Turbulence, violent break-up (Serbia).

He said that in order to resolve sub-national movements/secessionism, political-institutional arrangements should address demands and aspirations, take affirmative actions, grant greater autonomy and employ the tools of power-sharing. Shared sovereignty is about self-rule and shared rule and is the head and heart of the federal system. The Lordship of the Centre over the States is unacceptable. Centre's advice should be like a radar guiding the States how it must deal with a particular situation. It should not be a missile to silence the roaring voice of people struggling through peaceful and democratic manner

Dr. Roy said that to reinforce religious, linguistic and cultural diversities, the Indian Constitution laid down a framework of constitutional safeguards to protect citizens' fundamental rights, including the right to freedom of religion. Preferential treatment to minorities is not a privilege but an entitlement flowing from the mandate of equality. Secularism suits the genius of a multi-religious, multi-caste and multi-lingual country like India. A democracy works best in an environment of pluralism and respect for and tolerance towards others. During the freedom movement, Gandhi said that no group was privileged even if it happened to be in huge majority and that minority groups would be protected against majoritarian agendas.

Dr. Roy termed India's linguistic diversity to be “mind-boggling,” and said that as many as 1,652 languages and dialects are spoken here. India has 22 officially recognized languages.

Addressing the question of can the Indian example be

replicated, he said that to many historians, India was an “unnatural nation” and an “unlikely democracy.” In fact, when India demanded independence from Britain in the mid-1940s, Churchill derided the demand saying, “To say India was a country was like saying that the Equator was one.” But India has promoted multiple identities. As Amartya Sen says, “singular identities lead to miniaturization of human beings and belittling of human identities.” Sen says: “I can be at the same time an Asian, an Indian citizen, a Bengali, an American resident, an economist, a feminist, a defender of gay rights, an a non-believer in an after life...”

When India began its democratic course, there was no dearth of prophets of doom. India, they prophesied, would either become an autocracy, be Balkanized or be the victim of mass hunger. Today, the same India, the land of “million mutinies,” and of “soothsayers and snake-charmers”, has become a “poster boy” of economic success. In 2004 an extraordinary thing happened. A Roman Catholic woman, that too of foreign origin, was invited to become the Prime Minister. But she stepped aside for a Sikh Prime Minister who was sworn in by a Muslim President. Today India has a woman President, a Muslim Vice-President, a former untouchable as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and a Communist Speaker of Parliament.

Dr. Roy said that he will not recommend anyone to replicate the Indian story. India is a “functioning anarchy”, a land of perennial contrasts and contradictions. India's strength is cultural and civilizational. The role of society has been a crucial factor in India's success in managing its diversities. India has evolved through accommodation and compromise.

Federalism does not provide a panacea for all the ills of a multiethnic, multi-religious and multicultural society. But it does offer greater capacity for solving problems. There is no single model to follow. Federalism's success depends on how a given state copes with the group rights and cultural rights of its diverse people. If India has made a success of its federal polity, it is thanks to its impressive democratic record, institutional strengths, civil society and political culture. Unity in diversity is slowly giving way to diversity as unity.

Secular Polity and Indian Federalism

Professor M. Aslam

Professor of Rural Development School for Continuing Education Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi

Prof. M. Aslam said that secularism, through its respect for all religions, has taught Indian society religious tolerance. He said that the main contradiction is not between religious and secular but it is between secular and communal.

All democracies, particularly new democracies will only evolve, develop and flourish with an informed, engaged citizenry. Democracy education is needed for people to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and democratic values, which foster their capacity to participate effectively and responsibly in their societies. Democracy education must also respect human rights and cultural diversity. Democracy education is essential to protect, sustain and advance the democratic gains made by societies in transition in recent times.

Citing the example of India, he said that steps such as reorientation of school syllabus, adult education & other efforts, human rights education and establishment of a Human Rights Commission have worked in the favour of democracy in the country.

He said that democracy should welcome religious expression and enjoyment but there should be a clear separation between the authority of the democratic government and the authority of religion. It is only then that secularism will take root.

Visit & Briefing

Centre for Advocacy and Research

The Pakistani delegation visited the Centre for Advocacy and Research, an Indian NGO working on advocating the rights of marginalised population including urban and rural poor, HIV positive people, single women, people living with disability, women in sex work and sexual minorities, etc.

The delegation was briefed specifically about the organisation's work with the urban poor and the initiative the organisation had taken to get marginalised people to speak out for their rights within the system.

The delegation especially interacted with the organisation's team members who helped the urban poor and marginalised communities to be their own spokespersons. The team members especially briefed Pakistani MPs about the Indian government scheme similar to that of the BISP.

Visit to the PRS-Legislative Service India and briefing

The Pakistani delegation met with the team of the PRS Legislative Research, an independent civil-society initiative in India that works on providing background research and non-partisan analysis of legislation in the Indian Parliament.

In briefing the delegation, the Director PRS Mr. C. V. Madhukar said that the PRS Legislative Research, an independent research initiative, aims to strengthen the legislative debate by making it better informed, more transparent and participatory. The PRS is the first initiative of its kind in India. Existing in the private domain and not under the government or the Parliamentary secretariats, the PRS produces easy to understand 4-6 pages long Legislative Briefs on a range of Bills. These Briefs are sent to all MPs in both houses of Parliament, about 1200 NGOs across the country, and the top 500 companies. We also email our Briefs to more than 600 people in the media. The Post Session Summary is a synopsis of all the legislative business that has been transacted in a Parliament session while its Pre-Session Alert is a summary of the legislative business that is likely to be transacted in the forthcoming session of Parliament. The PRS also produces one page Bill Summary which summarises the contents of the Bill into one page, so the busy user can get a quick snapshot of the main features of a Bill.

The Pakistani delegation was specifically interested in the

Receptions

Receptions by the Pakistani High Commissioner

The High Commissioner of Pakistan in India, Mr. Shahid Malik hosted a reception at the Pakistan High Commission, Delhi for the visiting Pakistani delegation. The delegates met with the Pakistani team at the High Commission and interacted on various issues including relations between Pakistan and India.

Later, Mr. Shahid Malik also hosted the delegation at his residence for an afternoon tea.

Luncheon Hosted by Shri K. Rahman Khan Honourable Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha

Shri K. Rahman Khan, Honourable Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha, hosted a luncheon in the honour of the visiting Pakistan delegation at the Indian Parliament. The delegation discussed in detail various rules and processes relating to the role of Rajya Sabha in India in addition to a discussion on issues of concern for both countries. The Pakistan delegation raised many issues of concern for Pakistan and stressed that the two countries needed to move forward towards resolution of these issues at the governmental as well as at the Parliamentary levels. Shri K. Rahman Khan welcomed the suggestion of closer cooperation and contact at the Parliamentary level terming it highly desirable between the two neighbours to move towards peaceful co-existence and prosperity of the region.

Feedback by Pakistani MPs

Upon conclusion of the tour to India, Pakistani parliamentarians presented the detailed feedback to PILDAT through filling out individual feedback forms prepared by PILDAT.

The delegates overall believed that they had a vista of good learning integrated in the programme. This study tour was well thought-out in total and met its main objective: sharing of parliamentary practices. They appreciated the modern techniques used by the Indian parliamentarians such as email, software for prioritizing questions of the member during the Parliament, independent training institution like the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies (BPST) for the capacity building of the parliamentarians, members of the civil and military bureaucracy and even foreign visitors.

Pakistani MPs also appreciated various well-established practices in the Indian electoral system that they wanted to introduce in Pakistani electoral process such as photo electoral rolls and electronic voting machines, etc. The MPs also believed, upon comparison, that the real question for the Election Commission of Pakistan was to exercise its independence and authority to ensure the conduct of free and fair elections in Pakistan. Many practices of the Election Commission of India were worth emulating in this regard, they opined.

The delegates really appreciated the functioning of various institutions in India according to the Indian Constitution and felt that such a demarcation of roles and responsibilities was needed in Pakistan for democracy to flourish.

Pakistani MPs also felt that there should be avenues of regular interaction between Pakistani and Indian legislatures as there was much to learn on both sides. Interaction at the Parliamentary level should also be helpful in resolving various long-standing issues between the two countries as MPs from both sides can bring in a fresh perspective to resolve these issues.

Delegates especially highlighted that they would like to put together the learning from the study tour as a set of proposals to the current parliamentary leadership and to their own political parties.

MPs generally believed that the study tour was a good learning experience though some aspects of it, such as meeting with the chair and members of the Defence Committee that could not take place, would have also been good learning. Some MPs felt that given the peculiar nature of Pak-India relations, the interaction with Indian parliamentarians should have been more broad-based to discuss issues including Kashmir, peace, security, counter-terrorism, water scarcity and economic and commercial cooperation, etc.

Profiles of the
PROFILES OF THE DELEGATES
Delegates

Profiles of Delegates



Ms. Farzana Raja, MNA

Federal Minister/Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme
Women, Punjab, PPPP

Ms. Farzana Raja, affiliated with Pakistan Peoples Party, was born on January 02, 1970 in Gujrat, Punjab. She completed her degree of Economics from University of Punjab in 1992. She passed her Real Estate Broker Licensing Exam from USA and became the member of Long Island Realtor Board. Since her college days she has been active in students' federations. Later, she has been honoured by her party which assigned her various important positions such as Central Member Foreign Liaison Committee while she has also worked on various other central committees of the party on various issues such as Media Policy and Women Empowerment, etc. During her tenure as a Member of Punjab Assembly from 2002-2007, she was also appointed as a Coordinator Central Information Bureau of PPPP in 2004. Later in 2006, she became the Information Secretary of the PPPP in Punjab. In October 2008, she was appointed as Federal Minister/Chairperson of "Benazir Income Support Programme" by the PPPP Government, which is the largest programme dealing with social welfare in the country. She is serving in three Standing committees of National Assembly including Standing Committee on Communication, Information & Broadcasting and Rules of Procedure & Privileges. Her hobbies include travelling, reading and swimming. She is married with a daughter and a son.

Dr. Aytullah Durrani, MNA

(NA-268, Kalat-cum-Mastung Haidri, Balochistan)
Minister for State for Industries & Production

Dr. Aytullah Durrani is MNA and Minister of State for Industries and Production, Government of Pakistan. Dr. Durrani was elected as MNA for the first time in 2008 from the platform of Pakistan Peoples Party. He is a member of National Assembly Standing Committee on Petroleum & Natural Resources, Defence Production and Population Welfare. He holds a PhD in Physics. Energy sector is one of his key areas of interest. He is married with three sons.



Ms. Anusha Rehman, MNA

Women, Punjab, PML-N

Ms Anusha Rehman, affiliated with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), was born on June 01, 1968 in Lahore. She completed her Masters degree in Legal Laws LLM from University College London, United Kingdom in 2004. She is a regular writer in the national newspapers. She is also the Central Vice President of the Lawyer's Wing, Pakistan Muslim League (N), responsible for managing and organizing the Lawyer's wing of the party across Pakistan.

As Deputy Convener, Legal and Anti Rigging Wing, PML-N, she was the co-author of an election publication 'Corrupt and Illegal Practices-A New Paradigm of Blatant Violations.' She has expertise in managing and monitoring the election process, training of election agents and conduction of awareness programmes for candidates pertaining to poll rigging. Moreover she has been involved in co-ordination of international and national election monitoring teams to help ensure fair, free and transparent elections. As a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan she is serving in three National Assembly Standing Committees; Information Technology and Communication; Law, Justice and Human Rights and Science and Technology. She is also a member of Executive Committee of Young Parliamentarians Forum - YPF.

**Mr. Bilal Yasin, MNA**Member of National Assembly, PML-N
NA-120, Lahore-III, Punjab

Mr Bilal Yasin, affiliated with Pakistan Muslim League (N), was born in December 13, 1970 in Lahore. He graduated from University of Punjab in 1991. He is a businessman by profession. He was awarded a ticket from PML-N and elected as a member of National Assembly from Lahore in General Election held in February 18, 2008. Mr. Yasin was also elected as the member of provincial Assembly of Punjab in 2002-2007. He is serving in three Standing Committees of National Assembly, i.e. on Water and Power, Interior and on Kashmir Affairs, Northern Areas.

Mr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman, MNA

NA-185, Bahawalpur-III, Punjab, PML-N

Mr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman has been elected as a Member of the National Assembly for the first time in February 2008 General Election. He is politically affiliated with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Born on December 21, 1970 in Bahawalpur, Mr. Baligh ur Rehman was an outstanding student and took keen interest in extra curricular activities. He completed his B.Sc Engineering in 1994 from University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S.A. He is a businessman by profession. Widely travelled, Baligh ur Rehman has visited countries such as USA, UK, Australia, France, Saudi Arabia, India and Malaysia. As a legislator, Mr. Baligh ur Rehman is interested in Foreign Affairs, Education and Science and Technology. Mr. Baligh ur Rehman is married and is the father of one son and two daughters. His hobbies include travelling, collecting stamps/coins and playing squash.

**Mr. Muhammad Moazam Ali Khan Jatoi, MNA**

NA-179 Muzaffargarh-IV, Punjab, PPPP

Mr. Muhammad Moazam Ali Khan Jatoi, affiliated with Pakistan Peoples Party, was born on August 10, 1981 in Muzaffargarh. He completed his Masters of Business Administration from University of Central Punjab, Lahore in 2007. He is a young entrepreneur by profession. He is serving in three Standing Committees of the National Assembly, i.e., Defence Production, Narcotics Control and on Women Development. His legislative interests include Foreign Affairs, Finance, Defence and Communication. Mr. Jatoi has visited UK, Ireland, Singapore, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and UAE. His hobbies include travelling, reading and hunting.

Pakistani Parliamentary
Delegation
Study Tour to India



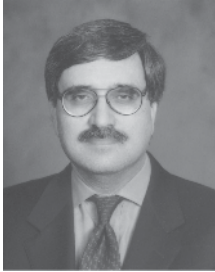
Mr. Nauman Islam Sheikh, MNA
NA-198, Sukkur-I, Sindh, PPPP

Mr. Nauman Islam Sheikh was born on July 27, 1978 in Sukkur, Sindh. He is politically affiliated with the Pakistan Peoples Party. He is an industrialist by profession. He is serving as a member of three National Assembly Standing Committees, i.e., Commerce, Foreign Affairs and Interior.

Ms. Nousheen Saeed, MNA
Women, Punjab, PML

Ms. Nousheen Saeed, member of Pakistan Muslim League has completed her Bachelors degree of from University of Karachi. She has been involved in active politics and elected as a Member of National Assembly on a women reserved seats of Punjab in General Election held in Febraury 18, 2008. She is serving as a member of its three Standing Committees, i.e., Environment, Housing & Works and Ports & Shipping. She is interested in foreign policy issues and collective decision making on diverse complicated issues.



**Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob**

Executive Director, PILDAT

The founder Executive Director of PILDAT, Mr. Ahmed Bilal Mehboob has over 20 years' experience in senior management and advisory positions and over 5 years experience in design, planning and implementation of legislative strengthening projects involving national and provincial legislatures. His major area of work has been in the forefront of strengthening democracy and democratic institutions and providing thorough leadership on crucial issues that affect democracy and political growth in the country. Mr. Mehboob has carved and spearheaded a non partisan political research initiative from the platform of PILDAT and has facilitated the formation of dialogue and research groups on areas such as civil military relations and electoral reforms, etc. He is respected widely as a commentator on political and legislative issues.

Ms. Aasiya Riaz

Joint Director, PILDAT

Ms. Aasiya Riaz, Joint Director of PILDAT, coordinates various research projects within PILDAT and manages PILDAT's projects and activities as PILDAT's co-director. She has over 8 years' experience of working in the field of research, management and analysis. She has been working in the areas of democratic and legislative strengthening; research on political and public policy issues; civil-military relations; dialogues between the Muslim World and the West and Electoral Process, etc. Trained in the field of media and political communication at the London School of Economics, UK, Aasiya has worked with the mainstream press and electronic media in Pakistan as well. She was also a Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow at the National Endowment for Democracy, USA where she worked on US Think Tanks and the subject of Civil-Military Relations. Aasiya also graduated from the Stanford University, USA Course on Democracy, Development and Rule of Law in August 2007. She regularly appears on national and international media for political analysis and commentaries.





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