

Electoral Politics in Punjab Legislature's Election 1951

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Abstract:

The paper offers a historical analysis of the electoral politics around the election for provincial legislature of Punjab held in 1951. It covers the history of all aspects and facets of the electoral politics some of whom are generally ignored in the contemporary accounts. These elements include the political tactics for the election regulations, registration of voters, delimitation process and timing of elections. The political techniques of campaign, the issues of canvassing, presentation and substance of manifestoes to solicit voters, and management of various influences especially official one on the voters have also been evaluated. For this purpose development from the pre-election political conditions of Punjab under Pakistan Muslim League (PML) government towards holding of elections for the victory of already ruling party passing from legislation for adult franchise passed by Constituent Assembly as well as electioneering of PML, Jinnah Awami Muslim League (JAML), Azad Pakistan Party (APP), Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan (JIP), and Communist Party of Pakistan have been examined and recorded. The debates of Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, documents obtained from the National Archives London and British Library, official and non-official reports of different commissions and committees along with primary and secondary accounts of elections were utilized as the sources of the study.

Key Words: Electioneering, Punjab, Campaign, Electoral Regulations, Politics

Pre-Election Political Position of Punjab:

At the time of emergence of Pakistan, the political forces in Punjab could be divided in three sections; Ruling PML, Communists and Islamists. PML was no doubt the

biggest and the most powerful of all. In Assemblies there was not any considerable opposition to the League as it had an overwhelming majority in the Punjab Legislative Assembly as well as in CAP. Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Mamdot, a refugee landlord from the East Punjab and a typical Punjabi leader¹ of League formed the provincial ministry. The factions within League gave birth to new political forces and most of political activity in Punjab took place within Muslim League. Three of Mamdot's cabinet members – Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana, Mian Iftikharudin, and Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan were prominent and led some type of small or big factions within provincial League. Another important provincial leader Feroz Khan Noon was abroad on a diplomatic mission.²

The conflict and insubordination between Mamdot and Daultana mounted in May 1948. Jinnah offered Daultana to replace Mamdot but he backed down from forming government mainly because he felt too weak to face Mamdot's grip over much of the province's press and the Punjab Muslim League organization.³ In the crisis owing to influx of millions of Muslim refugees from India and migration of Hindu and Sikhs after partition of British Punjab on independence Mamdot's government was criticized of inability in arranging for food and shelter. Thus whole of social fabric crumbled down that deteriorated already shattered economy. To facilitate the settlement of the refugees, Mian Iftikharudin, a leftist, demanded liberal land reforms. His demand was neglected and he resigned from the ministry. Subsequently, he was expelled from the Muslim League. Shaukat Hayat and Daultana followed him and both of them also resigned.⁴ Mian Iftikharuddin and Shaukat Hayat founded a new party, the Azad Pakistan Party.⁵

Daultana with the support of his faction secured the good-will of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan who liked his moderate plan of land reforms. His faction brought charges against Mamdot under the PRODA. On 26th January 1949 Mamdot Ministry was suspended on the initiative of Prime Minister. Governor Rule under section 92-A was enforced⁶ and Punjab Assembly was dissolved.

Politics around Legislation of Election Laws:

The authority of framing the electoral rules to determine whole electoral procedure in the province was vested in the Provincial Governor. However franchise issue was to be decided by the CAP as the Government of India Act provided for a restricted franchise for the Provincial Assemblies. After one month of the dissolution of Punjab Assembly, as elections were pertinent, Governor Punjab appointed a three-member committee known as “West Punjab Election Enquiry Committee” convened by Federal Minister for Industries Chaudhry Nazir Ahmad, to re-visit provisions of law regarding voter’s qualifications, allocation of seats and the delimitation of constituencies in view of the post-independence refugee-mobilization greatly reduced number of Hindus and Sikhs and the increased the number of Muslims especially in Punjab.⁷

In the light of the recommendations of the Punjab Election Enquiry Committee, the government tabled the amendment in 5th and 6th schedule of Government of India Act 1935 through bill of 3rd Amendment in Government of India Act 1935. The bill based on Election Enquiry Committee’s report was placed in Constituent Assembly after thirteen months of the dissolution of Punjab Assembly. The Committee deliberated on report for seven months and submitted it to Governor. It was then that the Governor and the Constituent Assembly Pakistan had to legislate on election issues.

Commenting on the reason of the delay, the convener of committee mentioned that the Committee held questionnaire based survey to know the public opinion about the franchise. As the committee received only 45 replies of questionnaires on first call, it had to recall and then received 450 responses where adult franchise was supported. The Opposition, however, alleged that delay was owing to unpopular government’s hesitation for democratization and elections on adult franchise.⁸ Mian Iftikaruddin stressed that work related to elections must have been done on ‘war basis’ and PM should have declared on the night of dissolution of assembly that elections would be held on adult franchise and there was no need of forming committee for this purpose.⁹

As the Election Enquiry Committee proposed for adult suffrage and new delimitation in view of the special conditions of refugees-mobilization, the 3rd Amendment bill provided adult franchise and one seat to be allocated for population of one hundred thousand, hence the seats of assembly would have to be increased. Representation to various interest groups (trade and commerce, Zamindars, Tumandars and labour) in form of special seats was abolished. Only seat reserved for Punjab University remained intact. For the present election, on the temporary basis “one seat in each of so many of the Muslim territorial constituencies” was provided for the refugees to give them special treatment. The bill also provided that a person of 20/21 age will be enrolled as votes.¹⁰

The Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan placed bill in the Constituent Assembly. The government boasted that through adult franchise they “had given” the right of vote which did not exist for centuries to all peasants and all labourers without any reservation or limitation or qualification” They called the bill most progressive and advanced” and revolutionary¹¹ The government claimed that by giving seats to refugees it also had won the feelings of 60 lakh voters. This was precisely directed at Punjab elections because no special arrangements or representation was given to refugees in CAP.¹²

In order to take credit for the government for introduction of adult franchise Chaudhry Nazir Ahmad complained that opposition members in CAP Sardar Shaukat Hayat and Mian Iftikhuddin did not cooperate with and provide any feedback to the committee during its working. These members disclosed that Chaudhry Nazir Ahmad, like other members of ruling clique, was opposed to adult franchise and it was Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan who decided for Committee’s recommendation of adult franchise¹³ because considering him popular he could take risk of elections through adult franchise. Chaudhry Nazir Ahmad refuted the allegation of opposition members and claimed that he had given a press statement in favour of adult franchise even before being member of the committee.¹⁴

There was substance in the opposition's claim that the adult franchise was the initiative of the PM Liaquat Ali Khan. Governor Mudie considered Liaquat Ali Khan popular in common people and thought that the support to Liaquat Ali Khan could be gained from public through elections on adult franchise in the wake of growing opposition to him in ruling Muslim League circles. Therefore Liaquat and Mudie agreed in their meeting on 21st June 1949 that universal adult suffrage should be introduced for all above 21 years of age; that 25 years of age should be qualifying age for election; separate electorate would continue for Hindus and Christians though the Anglo-Indian would probably have to go in with the Christians; special constituencies would be abolished except for women and the Universities.¹⁵

Representing the opposition view Sardar Shaukat Hayat expressed his gratitude over provision of adult franchise while jeering at government that it "had robbed the people of their Assembly... and of their liberty" but "should at least become amenable to the voice of the people"¹⁶ Mian Ifikaruddin criticized the abolition of labour and farmers' seats and demanded that seats for farmers and labors should be continued. He demanded the same adult franchise for other provinces also.¹⁷ Nur Ahmad praised the bill on the grounds of abolition of class distribution and introduction of adult franchise without any gender discrimination¹⁸

The minority view was expressed in Assembly by Akshay Kumar Das who objected one seat for general communities because scheduled castes could fear not to be represented. He moved an amendment in bill through which one seat for scheduled castes was reserved.¹⁹ Two other Hindu members supported his amendment. PM explained that limit of one lakh population was for 1 seat of every community. One seat of lower communities in question was only for the communities whose population was less than 60000.²⁰ After this explanation the motion of minority member was rejected by Assembly. The Bill was passed on 18 January 1950. Only two opposition and two treasury members other than minority members, mover and committee member took part in debate.²¹

Politic Techniques regarding Voters' Registration and Delimitation:

There were two new provisions that the government introduced regarding registration of voters. Firstly as old electoral rolls had become outdated owing to settlement of six million refugees in Punjab, they too were registered and brought into the main stream politics of the province. Secondly with the new legislation rolls were modified according to adult franchise owing to new legislation. In the start of July 1950 the registration of over 8.5 million adult voters was commenced.²² Ultimately total number of voters was 4500000. It was 25% of total population of Punjab.²³ The registration of new voters was neither flawless nor fair. The influential and governmental politicians could easily register bogus voters in their favour. Electoral Reforms Commission Report later stated that matters regarding electoral rolls, and the conduct of elections were "extremely unsatisfactory". Bogus voters were included and eligible voters were excluded on a fairly large scale,²⁴

According to section 291 of Government of India Act 1935, the provincial legislature was to demarcate the constituencies. When the delimitation work was to be done in Punjab the legislature of the province was dissolved due to Governor's Rule. The demarcation provision was also not provided in the 3rd Amendment Bill. Shaukat Hayat, opposing the government's action of leaving the delimitation work on the discretion of Governor, demanded in the Constituent Assembly that a delimitation committee of people's representatives, instead of Governor, should be authorized to demarcate the constituencies.²⁵ Chaudhry Nazir Ahmad Khan, convener of Election Enquiry Committee, tried to waive off the opposition's stance by personal attack on Shaukat Hayat. He falsely claimed that delimitation question was not ignored in the report as mentioned by Shaukat Hayat who had discussed his constituency with the Committee. Shaukat Hayat by suggesting delimitation through representatives desired to decrease influence of governor's administration in delimitation.²⁶

Opposition's proposal for delimitation by a Committee of Legislators instead of Governor's administration was

rejected in initiation. In contrary to the government's statement in Constituent Assembly that delimitation legislation had been included in 3rd Amendment Bill, the constituencies were demarcated through Governor's Act known as "The Punjab Legislative Assembly Elections Act 1950". The number of seats for Punjab Assembly was fixed as 197 from 153 constituencies. 44 constituencies were two-seat constituencies which meant that from one constituency two members would be elected. From all two-seat constituencies one seat was specified for the refugees. 191 seats were fixed for Muslims, 4 for Pakistani Christians and Anglo Pakistanis, 1 for general communities and 1 was a special seat for Punjab University.²⁷

Dismissal of Assembly and Politics Afterwards:

Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot lost power in province but did not lose friends and support from PML organization. Khaliqzamn, the president of PML appointed him as member of Working Committee of PML after his dismissal from ministry even when Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan disliked.²⁸ The advisers to the Governor Francis Mudie were appointed on the nominations of Mian Abdul Bari, the President of the Provincial League but affiliated with Mamdot faction.²⁹ Mamdot knew that success in elections was required to empower him again and Governor who was an ally of Liaquat Ali Khan could not be helpful for him during the election which was to be arranged under Governor's administration.

In the end of April 1949 Mamdot's faction of Muslim League along with his supporter press, for ultimate electoral purpose, attacked the Governor on the grounds that there should not be a foreign governor and Governor's Rule³⁰ meant that British Raj had not yet ended. The attack on Governor started when the enquiry into the conduct of Abdur Rahim began, it was intensified when the enquiry into the conduct of Hasan Akhtar started, it was further intensified when the enquiry into the conduct of Mamdot neared completion. Mamdot financed the agitation.³¹

The campaign against Governor Mudie, sponsored by Mamdot and run by ML organization did well. On 22nd June

1947-49 Pakistan radio announced that Liaquat Ali Khan had reached agreement with the West Punjab Muslim League on the night of the 21st, almost exactly on the lines of the Liaquat formula. Mudie was not informed or consulted before this agreement³² and had to step down in July 1949.³³ Sardar Abdur-Rab Nishtar replaced him as governor to remain chief organizer of election being administrative head of the Province till April 1951 because Governor's rule remained enforced till then.³⁴

In the conflict between Mamdot and Daulatana and tussle between League and Prime Minister through Governor, the public opinion remained in favour of Liaquat Ali Khan. He had lost the friends in central and provincial organization. He had to replace Mudie who was more supportive to him. But his stature in the public was the strongest card in his hands. It was essential for him to set up a link with the people who were ready to follow him as their true leader. Khaliquzzaman and the Muslim League machine was out for him but the people were behind him.³⁵

In the situation when Liaquat Ali Khan had lost political friends within League and all provinces, he was isolated but his strength lay with the common people who believed him to be the only possible leader while Muslim League party machine had no popular backing whatsoever.³⁶ The ruling party, PML, after registration of votes waited for a suitable time holding provincial elections so that it could emerge victorious. The British ambassador observed that unless there was more prospect of a Muslim League victory, the elections were likely to be again postponed.³⁷ The ruling party ML wanted to win election by all means since start. On 21st June 1949 the Governor Mudie discussed the election programme with the Prime Minister and proposed him to get rid of Mamdot, try Feroz Khan Noon as a new chief minister. He suggested if it would not work, section 92-A should be enforced and a general election should be held. To Governor Mudie, the best course of action for Liaquat were that "he should have taken the lead and rally the people. He could do this best if he appointed advisers loyal to himself and would work with the Governor and who

could be assured of public support and who could help to prepare the way for proper elections.”³⁸

The setback of corruption charges against Mamdot was not as disturbing for his status in public as he was losing support within ML. In June/July 1950 Mamdot, was acquitted of eight out of the eleven charges of maladministration and corruption brought against him, by a Special Bench of the Lahore High Court, and he had since been wringing desperately to avoid final condemnation.³⁹ Meanwhile Daultana with support of Liaquat Ali Khan was able to get control of Central and Punjab Muslim League organization leaving little space for Mamdot. The Punjab Muslim League Council, in a meeting on 20th August 1950, accepted the resignation of party's Punjab President, Mian Abdul Bari, and elected as his successor, Soofi Abdul Hamid, a supporter of Daultana and of Liaquat Ali Khan. This victory for the Daultana faction was followed by the resignation of all the advisors to the Governor, who then carried on administration of the Province.⁴⁰ With the resignation of rival office bearers in ML organization and administration, the Governor, its administration and party offices all suited the ruling party in the upcoming battle of polling.

Having been defeated in the struggle for power though saved from disqualification from PRODA yet knocked out of PML's internal politics, Mamdot had no option but to leave the Muslim League together with a group of followers, in conjunction with Fatima Jinnah and Khaliqzaman. Daultana continued to lead the Muslim League in Punjab under Liaquat Ali Khan who tried to find some face saving formula to preserve the unity of the League in the province in view of the imminence of the Provisional elections.⁴¹ In October 1950 Mamdot founded an opposition party, the Jinnah Muslim League, as a platform to contest elections. The party adopted a 'Punjabi first' strategy.⁴²

Another disgruntled Muslim Leaguer who founded an anti-ML political party and was trying to get space through provincial elections was Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy, a former Chief Minister of undivided Bengal. Small, cultured,

and subtle, Suhrawardy who formerly led the East Pakistan Muslim League⁴³ was struggling to build opposition to ruling PML at all Pakistan level. His main lines of criticism were directed against the various Provincial Public Security Ordinances, especially that of the NWFP, and in favour of every possible refugee-grievance. He built up an All-Pakistan Awami Muslim League from a variety of disgruntled elements. He loudly condemned the Muslim League as unrepresentative, undemocratic and unconstitutional. Resolutions passed by the new party called for agrarian and industrial reforms, the release of political prisoners, conscription and withdrawal from the Commonwealth.⁴⁴

Islamist parties, second major political stake holder in Punjab, were Majlis-i-Ahrar, Jamaat-i-Islami Pakistan and Islam Party. Majlis-i-Ahrar was the topmost religious party that had been active in urban politics of Punjab since 1930.⁴⁵ Along with Ahrar, Jamaat-i-Islami, an Islamist organization under the guidance of a religious scholar Syed Abu-ul-Ala Maududi, having been founded in Punjab just sometime before partition, was trying to make footing.

Third political stake holder in Punjab Communist Party of Pakistan was founded on 6 March 1948 after split from Communist Party of India under the leadership of Sajjad Zaheer. The party had played no direct part in the political life of Pakistan. It had no representation in the central or provincial parliaments and it was disrupted by warring factions. In the political field communists and fellow travelers were called upon to support any attempt to unite opposition parties against the Government but the emphasis was rather on intellectual and “peace” activities than on direct political actions.⁴⁶

Since the Muslim League appeared to be the strongest party, there were attempts on the part of other contesting parties to unite in a common front against it.⁴⁷ The marriage of convenience between Mamdot and Suhrawardy, two completely dissimilar characters, gave birth to Pakistan’s largest opposition group or electoral alliance in Pakistan. Jinnah Muslim League of Mamdot and All-Pakistan Awami Muslim League of Suhrawardy allied together and formed

Jinnah Awami League. Party's objective was to contest the Muslim League's supremacy in Punjab and NWFP. ⁴⁸ JAML, having no organization base in province depended on Mamdot and his landlord supporters. ⁴⁹ Muslim Leaguers who could not get Muslim League ticket slipped to JAML ⁵⁰

Electioneering of Political Forces:

After the completion of voters' registration, at the end of July 1950 the date of provincial election was fixed for January 15th 1951. ⁵¹ Polling started on 10 March 1951 and ended on 20 March. Results were announced on 30 March. In Lahore polling took place on 18 March. The seats of Punjab Legislature under contest were 197. Seven Muslim League nominees and one Christian candidate were elected unopposed, either due to the rejection of the nomination papers of the rival candidates or as a result of their withdrawal. The contest took place on 189 seats. ⁵²

Final elections contest took place among Muslim League, Jinnah Awami Muslim League, Jamatt-i-Islami, Azad Pakistan Party, Communist Party of Pakistan and the Islam League. ⁵³ The election in Punjab became pertinent Pakistan Muslim League was ruling and dominant party in Punjab since the birth of Pakistan. The party, however unworthy and unpopular many of the organisers of its machine might be, continued to command the loyalties of all but a few politically minded Pakistanis. Despite the factional differences and corruption scandals against various leaders of party the mystique of the League, derived from Quaid-i-Azam's life and miracles, availed to distort any criticism of its attitudes into treason against Pakistan. ⁵⁴ Muslim League's goal was to continue its rule and the strategy was to stop the way of Jinnah Muslim League to oust Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy whose membership in CAP had been cancelled in 1949. ⁵⁵

Politicking for Nomination of Candidates:

Eight Hundred applications were received for the ticket of Muslim League. A Five-Member Committee comprising of A.B. Haleem, Ghulam Nabi Pathan, Malik Sharif-ud-Din, Syed Hasan Mahmood and Khan Ibrahim Jhagra was constituted by

Central ML to visit the areas and present their recommendations. Parliamentary Board met in February 1951 and 197 candidates were nominated. PML Board gave tickets on the recommendations of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan.⁵⁶ PML issued the majority of tickets to landlords who wielded personal influence with the voters.⁵⁷

Daulatana was familiar with all influential political families of Punjab. He prepared a list of influential personalities in different districts and made pact with each of them to get their support. In Multan Daulatana-Gardezi and Gardezi-Gillani pacts were signed. Such agreements were made on the pages of Quran.⁵⁸ Electability Opportunity and nepotism prevailed instead of party officiation or ideology. PM's elder brother Nawab Sajjad Ali Khan was nominated as candidate from the refugee seat of Gujranwala. Chaudhry Jaleel Ahmad, former member Legislative Assembly and popular in mohajirs, was rejected in his competition.

Makhdoomzada Syed Hasan Mahmood, the member of Parliamentary Board, got his Gillani relatives in Multan ML had tickets. They were Makhdoom Wilayat Hussain Gillani, Pir Alamdar Hussain Gillani and Makhdoom Rehmat Hussain Gillani. On the influence of Sir Zafrullah Khan, two Ahmadi candidates Chaudhry Maqbool Ahmad (Sheikhupura) and Molvi Asmat Ullah of Chak Jhumra (Lyalpur) got ML tickets.] [Pir Budhan Shah Khaga and Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan Jahanian who both were workers of Pakistan Movement from Khanewal constituency were ignored and ticket was issued to former Unionist Khan Bahadur Haibat Khan. Chaudhry Lal Khan of Ahdian, a worker of Pakistan Movement, was neglected in competition to Chaudhry Maqbool Ahmad (Sheikhupura). In Khanewal both ignored League leaders, Khaga and Jahanian, joined hands together and succeeded to defeat ML candidate Bahadur Haibat Khan. On the neglect of winning horse of ML in competition with Gillani family, Multan reacted inversely and Dewan Ghulam Abbas Bukhari, every time winner, succeeded in competition to Makhdoom Rehmat Hussain Gillani.⁵⁹

Instead of political work and activity for party, the scions of influential families were preferred. Many example can be queted of multiple nominations within a family. Two close relatives of a village Ferozwala in Gujranwala, Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan and Chaudhry Nabi Ahmad were delivered ML tickets. In district Gujrat two real brothers Nabzada Mehdi Ali Khan and Nawabzada Captain Asghar Ali got tickets. Former had left government job for Pakistan Movement and later contested against Muslim League on Unionist ticket in 1946. From Lahore Sheikh Sadiq Hussain got ticket and his nephew Sheikh Masood Sadiq got mohajir ticket from Rawalpindi. Three brothers from district Sahiwal, Malik Fateh Sher Langrial, Malik Jahangir Langrial and Malik Bahawal Sher Langrial got tickets from district Montgomery. Nawab Sir Muhammad Jamal Khan Leghari and his son Sardar Muhammad Khan Leghari got tickets from Dera Ghazi Khan. Rana Nasrullah Khan Naeer from Kamalia District Lyallpur and his brother in law Rai Muhammad Iqbal of Chichawatni got tickets on mohajir constituencies. Sirdar Muhammad Hussan Ganjianwal got ticket from Chunian. His cousin Sirdar Ahmad Ali got ticket from Kasur. Major Mubarik Ali Shah and his cousin Colonel Syed Abid Hussain got tickets from district Jhang.⁶⁰

Interests of Provincial League leaders of Daultana factions namely Daultana, Muhammad Hussain Chatha and Soofi Abdul Hamid were secured in distribution of tickets. Former two struggled to get their relatives tickets from central Punjab. Chaudhry Abdul Ghani Ghuman from district Sialkot got two tickets. When he vacated his seat Chaudhry Nasrullah Malhi got party ticket. Soofi Abdul Hamid him got two tickets from Sheikhpura and Multan. When he vacated seat from Khanewal Multan his close relative Rao Abd-ur-Rehman got elected from that seat. Haji Muhammad Ali of Kulla from Sheikhpura and Chaudhry Nasrullah Khan of Mian Meer from Lahore, close relative to each other got tickets with the influence of Daultana.⁶¹

In district Mianwali the supremacy of group of Col. Muhammad Aslam Khan Niazi was established on the desires

of Daultana. Party workers were ignored during the distribution of ML tickets. Hakeem Muhammad Ashraf, president of city Muslim League Lyallpur was ignored and ticket was given to Mir Abdul Qayoom who had been Congressite and firm nationalist. He was deadly opposed to Muslim League and supported the formation of Republican Party and remained the secretary of Punjab Republican Party. Sirdar Fazand Ali Dogar who had contested Nawab Mamdot in 1946 from district Ferozpur was given ticket from mohajir constituency of tehsil Chunian. At least 16 ML's nominated candidates were formerly attached with Unionsit Party. To suppress Sirdar Abdul Hamid Dasti in district Muzaffar Garh half of the tickets were given to the persons who had contest Muslim League in 1946. In protest to these nominations workers of League organized protection in Lyallpur, Gujrat, Rawalpindi and Sahiwal.⁶²

The report of electoral Reforms Commission holds that the close relatives of bureaucrats, as they could easily be elected with the support of their public servant relatives were nominated at a large scale. It cited a prominent Muslim Leaguer and former Member Legislative Assembly as saying, "more than 50 persons who were elected the owed their success overwhelmingly to their very close relationship with public servants."⁶³

The tickets of Jinnah Muslim League were issued after PML had nominated its candidates. About one third of Jinnah Muslim League's candidates were those who had been rejected by PML tickets and who had signed that PML's pledges not to contest elections in any capacity.⁶⁴ Jinnah Muslim League also distributed tickets to electable irrespective of their ideology. Even former political enmities were ignored before the expediency of electoral success. Pir Muhammad Sardar got ticket from district Sahiwal. He had contested against Nawab Mamdot himself in 1946 from district Ferozpur. Chaudhry Ghulam Rasool of Satra from Sialkot, Chaudhry Muhammad Ashraf of Pahrianwala from Gujrat and Baji Rasheeda Lateef from Lahore were such ticket holders. Khan Bahadur Chaudhry Faqeer Hussain of Bhardwal from Samundari constituency got Jinnah ML ticket. He was Unionist candidate in 1946 from

District Amritsar. The head of opponent group of Niazis, Malik Ameer Muhammad Khan of Kalabagh got ticket from Karachi with support of Liaquat Ali Khan. He got success with the help of district administration. In Lahore city Muslim League could not stand strong candidates. Candidates of Jinnah Muslim League, Nawab Iftikhar Mamdot, Mian Amiruddin, Sheikh M. Amin and Justice Shamim Hussain Qadri and Chaudhry Enayatullah of Garhi Shahoo were big personalities in contrast to Syed Hadi ali Shah, a former councillor Mian Sarfraz Mahmood and Khwaja Ghulam Mustfa. Sirdar Rasheed Ahmad, a worker of Pakistan movement, succeeded to secure ticket against Nawab Qizlbash. Khan Qurban Ali Khan categorically said to Daultana that he will get Qizlbash succeeded. Thus ML candidate lost. In the town of Chuhng in a scuffle on polling station the supporters of ML candidate were beaten and on the complaint the Muslim League high command kept silence.⁶⁵ Nomination papers of a large number of opposition party's candidates were rejected on flimsy and technical grounds.⁶⁶ In some cases seconders, proposers were kidnapped.⁶⁷

Campaign Politics:

In the wake of Mamdot faction's compromise with Liaquat Ali Khan on 21st June and sidelining the Governor Mudie, the British expected that the whole election machinery and the administrative machinery too would be twisted to the use of leader of PML. Many PML leaders announced that they would be in full control of the transfers of officers, a vital power in rigging an election. If, the British slightly observed that, the Governor 'interferes' in his own administration, the party would merely start a campaign for his removal again.⁶⁸

Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan openly supported and canvassed for Daultana led Punjab ML⁶⁹ He took a thorough trip of Punjab and addressed public gatherings on many places. He claimed that PML was banner bearer of the betterment and welfare of people. He called ML as the trust of Jinnah. In Gujrat he declared "I am not such a politician who makes false promises to win election." His personal popularity was at peak at that time. His economic policies had left good impact on the

country. His popularity made the success of Muslim League in Punjab easy.⁷⁰ He not only campaigned vigorously throughout the Province but mobilized virtually all the resources at his command to ensure the victory of the Muslim League. Moreover his broadcast to the nation of the discovery of the Rawalpindi conspiracy just on the eve of the elections proved timely and effective.⁷¹

The government used the tactic of arrest opponent during the campaign. Political opponents were harassed and thrown into prison on the pretext of being dangerous to the State. Large scale arrests were, undertaken under the Public Safety Act. Arrests were made of Kissan Leaders, Trade Union Leaders, leaders of the Islam League (Allama Mashriqi).⁷²

Opposition parties entered the arena too near the elections to make a serious impression on the province.⁷³ In competition with Liaquat Ali Khan's support with PML, Mamdot declared that Fatima Jinnah would visit Punjab to address the gatherings of JAML. However Miss Jinnah did not attend any meeting.⁷⁴ Suhrawardy availed the elections as an opportunity to acquaint the people of the Punjab with his policy as he was the chief of the party and its principal speaker. He availed himself of the occasion to visit practically all the constituencies of the Punjab, including places which had never been visited before by any of the leaders of the province.⁷⁵

The Jamaat-i-Islami took off its election campaign for almost half a year. Its election expenditure amounted 130,000. The party campaigned in 37 areas and gained the signatures of the people in favour of its programme of Islamisation. In those areas where Jamaat campaigned its candidates managed to gather only 200,000 votes.⁷⁶ Two newspapers of the Jamat-i-Islami were also banned.⁷⁷ The contention of Ziring that "Islamists, Ahrar and JI gave Daultana, their support in the 1951 provincial elections"⁷⁸ does not look credible. While the Ahrars sided with the Muslim League, JIP also did not enter into an uneasy coalition with the Jinnah Muslim League while Long has maintained that it did.⁷⁹ In fact Jamaat-i-Islami planned to contest Punjab elections through collaboration with Azad Pakistan Party.⁸⁰

Azad Pakistan Party set its face against the centralization process.⁸¹ In it gathered the young disillusioned Muslim Leaguers from the Punjab anxious to reform drastically the existing economic setup. The party leader Mian Itikharuddin made an unsuccessful attempt to forge a united front of opposition parties.⁸²

The Communist Party was in covert confrontation with the government. With the approach of elections in Punjab during autumn 1950, while the Central Committee of Communist Party of Pakistan remained underground it made an overt appearance as a political party. A manifesto was published and it was announced that candidates would be put up at the elections. From January to March 1951 the Communist Party was busy obtaining support for the eleven candidates which it intended openly to put forward in the Punjab elections. In Lahore Firozuddin Mansoor, a pre-partition Communist leader was directed for overt party activities for the sake of party's contest in election. As the elections drew nearer Communist Party unleashed a considerable pamphleteering activity mostly of a low grader order. Firozuddin Mansoor prepared a party election pamphlet based on the Manifesto of Communist Party but slanted so that its chief attack fell on the Muslim League, as the tool of the "imperialists". Owing to some technical delay this appeared too late for the election campaign. It was issued on May 19th and was at once confiscated by order of the Central Government that intended to arrest Mansoor also.⁸³

In constituencies where no communist candidates was standing, electors were instructed to vote for Azad Pakistan Party, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan expressed that the Jamaat-e-Islami also received communist support, financial and otherwise. Major leaders of party were picked in Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case on 9 March 1951 just one day before the election in Punjab. Moreover, due to lack of mass organisation to translate party's programme into reality⁸⁴ the party was unable to imprint its mark in result of elections.

The only remarkable performance of the Communist Party took place in Mirza Ibraheem's constituency. Ibrahim, a

veteran low-grade agitator with a long record of imprisonment, was in prison during election days. Mansoor, assisted by fellow-travelling organisations, campaigned for his release.⁸⁵ Mirza Ibraheem led with 8083 votes, followed by Malik Muhammad Aslam (7769) and Ahmad Saeed Kirmani (7759). *Pakistan Times* announced Ibrahim's victory, the Returning Officer rejected 1170 ballot papers of Mirza Ibrahim, 267 of Malik Muhammad Aslam and only 23 of Ahmad Saeed Kirmani due to marks on the ballot papers. Thus Ahmad Saeed Kirmani of PML was declared successful. This was a big scandal that created much trouble in Lahore.⁸⁶

Issues in Campaign:

The important issues under the consideration of Muslim League in July/August 1950 were government's policy in Korea, disputes in the provincial Leagues, refugees, minorities, and the constitution of the Muslim League itself.⁸⁷ Muslim League issued its election manifesto on 21 November 1950. Rural economics and progress, rehabilitation of refugees, industrial development, development of labour, unemployment, civil liberties, education, health and public building, civil defence were the main points of the manifesto. A programme to annul the jagirs and prizes was also included in the manifesto. A 'Manshoor Day' was observed in the province and public gatherings were arranged on the day.⁸⁸

PML's appeal to the electors was not based on its manifesto. Instead the party relied on personal influence or other non-political pressures: the escape from the spoken slogans in practice was evident from the fact that a large number of ML candidates was comprised of landlords. At the same time, Daultana talked enthusiastically about the need for tenancy reform. The contradictions between rhetoric and reality were sufficiently submerged.⁸⁹ JAML also continued to ape inadvertently the method and approach of PML, namely the use of personal influence or other non-political pressures instead of an appeal to the people on clear cut political principles and a definite programme.⁹⁰

The Communist Party's election manifesto called on the working people to promote the following demands: withdrawal of Pakistan from the British Commonwealth, a united front to combat the country's dependence on the imperialists and to promote democratisation, establishment of national industries, confiscation of foreign interests and nationalisation of the key industries, workers' control at factories, improvement of living and working conditions (eight-hour working day, guaranteed minimum wage, better housing, etc.) effective agrarian reform, confiscation of landlord estates without compensation and distribution of the confiscated land among the peasants.⁹¹

Jamaat-i-Islami formed its four-point program a few months before elections. According to that programme Jamaat pledged to (1) change the day to day life and thought of individual Pakistanis (2) bring together and educate the committed and upright individuals (3) bring social transformation in the lives of Pakistanis and (4) bring transformation in the ruling body and political infrastructure of Pakistan.⁹²

The issues involved in the election were the usual platitudes. As far as the programmes were concerned no basic difference existed between the Muslim League on the one hand and the opposition parties on the other (with the exception of the Communist Party). All of them promised to institute reforms in the socio-economic field with a view to improving the lot of the common man. They all stood for democracy, for agricultural and industrial development, efficiency in governmental administration, protection of minorities, settlement of the refugees etc. In addition to these, however, the more significant and real issue hinged on whether the Muslim League deserved the mandate of the people to continue to rule. The opposition alleged that the Muslim League had outlived its usefulness. Having played its role in the Freedom Movement it had failed to materialise the hopes and aspirations of the people and its leaders had embarked on an unscrupulous and unprincipled quest for power. The Muslim League retaliated by calling all rival parties anti-Pakistan because the Muslim League alone had made Pakistan.⁹³

Malpractices in Electoral Politics:

Bogus voting was carried out on a large scale, particularly among women. It is alleged that methylated spirit was used for clearing thumbs before reaching the next polling station. It was estimated that about three-fourth of the votes cast in Lahore were illegal. The conduct of returning, presiding, and polling officers was not without suspicion and partiality, and ballot boxes were known to have been forcibly opened.⁹⁴ All Opposition parties complained of malpractices in all steps of electioneering. During the election campaign, JAML alleged official interference in support of the ML candidates and after the elections, it demanded fresh elections and an inquiry into election malpractices.⁹⁵

Because of rigging all political parties were about to boycott the elections. Due to rigging in Fateh Garh, a village in Lahore, a party had decided on 15 March to lock the polling office and wore the shoes-garland to the polling officer. Newspaper reported on 16 March that the rigging was at peak in the constituency of Mumtaz Daulatana. Zahid Chaudhry and Hasan Jafar Zaidi write: On 18 March the local officials did not follow the electoral rules and regulations in Sheikhpura. Former Advisor to Governor Malik Muhammad Anwar boycotted the elections in protest of rigging.⁹⁶

Nawa-i-Waqt, the paper of Mamdot, commented “The rigging and use of force had left not only Unionists far behind but even surpassed the acts of Nazi Party. The League candidates used such shameful tactics that would make the Nazis shy of. ... If this is the situation in Lahore the suppression in rural Punjab must have been great. We are grieved that Muslim League has choked the democracy in order to win the elections. The nomination of 192 favourites was better to such farce of elections. If the opinion of people were not regarded what was the need of election farce. Farce is very soft word for these elections. There is no word in the dictionary that could describe the great fraud with people in these elections.”⁹⁷

Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, JAML leader, demanded in a press conference, that new elections should be held after declaring the elections void. He said the elections were so rigged that governor Rule or nominated assembly would have been better. He told in Lyallpur the Muslim League candidates got the votes of labourers belonging from other areas polled in their favour. Every labourer was given two rupees for his vote. In one constituency of Sialkot district the ballot papers were handed over to the candidate one night before the elections. The office of Jinnah Muslim League received the complaints of official interference, police torture from 80 constituencies.⁹⁸

However Government denied that allegations of rigging. On 1st April talking on election success in Lahore Prime Minister Liaquat Ali called the allegations of rigging as baseless and wrong. He claimed that the elections had proved that the heart, mind and soul of Punjab supported Muslim League.⁹⁹

Many scholars cited that the elections were 'farce, a mockery and fraud upon the electorate'. Tahir Kamrans observed that 'anomalies, when reported in the press, triggered very serious doubts in the minds of the general public, making thereby the credibility of those elections doubtful.'¹⁰⁰ Yunas Samad argues, the Central Government ceased to be neutral and non-partisan in the elections.¹⁰¹ Safdar Mahmood commented that in case the candidates of Muslim League would not rig the elections and the government machinery remained neutral, the party could win with heavy majority easily. Safdar Mahmood contends that the rigging was the doing of Qurban Ali Khan, IG Police who was associated with Mumtaz Daultana or owing to the political pressure of local officials. Governor or Prime Minister did not have any doing in it.¹⁰²

JAML appointed a three-man Enquiry Committee that prepared a report, but the Punjab Government preferred to ignore it.¹⁰³ The Electoral Reforms Commission appointed by Ayub government later observed that the election in Pakistan were not entirely free and fair. nomination papers of the opposition party's candidates were rejected on flimsy and technical grounds. The report quoted the comment of the

Lahore High Court Bar Association, “official interference and electoral dishonesty was practiced, encouraged or connived by the government”.¹⁰⁴

Results, Effects and Outcomes:

	Seats	% votes
Muslim League	143	51.1
Jinnah Awami League/Awami League	32	22.7
Independents	16	23.7
Azad Pakistan Party and Jamaat-i-Islami	1	2.0
Islami League	0	0.4
Communists	0	0.1
Total	192	100.0

Source: S.V.R. Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jamaat-i-Islami of Pakistan* (London: 1994), 129, 71 cf. Gankovsky and Polonskyaya, *History of Pakistan*, 176

In spite of official support and system of its own making PML bagged 143 seats and secured only 52 per cent of the total vote cast. In Lahore, the opposition won 6 of the 12 seats.¹⁰⁵ Amir Abdullah Khan Rokri, Malik Fateh Sher Jhumet, Khan Muhammad Afzal Dhandla and Maulana Abdus Sattar Niazi were prominent who defeated ML candidates. On a refugee constituency in Tehsil Phalia of ditrict Gujrat Muslim League lost to Syed Jameel Hussain Rizvi, a retired Judge of High Court who was an independent candidate. Muslim League’s Badar Din lost. Chaudhry Sakhi Muhammad of Jinnah League defeated Jahan Muhammad Khan Bosal. Siraj Din Nagra was defeated from Mian Abdul Bari in Jaranwal.

Rana Abdul Hameed and Mian Abdul Haq defeated district president of Muslim League Sahiwal .¹⁰⁶

The Communist Party fared badly, winning not a single seat. This was a shock for the party leaders.¹⁰⁷ JIP performed poorly due to one of two possible reasons, Jamaat's failure in propagating its ideology or the distrust of the people on Jamaat. Mawdudi was optimistic of the outcomes of election which he thought helped to spread the party's manifesto across the length and breadth of the province and had solidified the Jamaat's social base by attracting many new supporters inclined to its message.¹⁰⁸

The voting turn-out remained very low. In Lahore, the percentage of votes cast was no more than 30 percent, while in the rural areas the figures were much lower. The low poll was indicative of a lack of public interest. Lack of education and the political backwardness of electorate was partly responsible for its lack of enthusiasm but a heavier factor seemed to be a feeling of skepticism and apathy engendered presumably by the long months of unprincipled personal and factional wrangling in the province.¹⁰⁹

The victory of the Muslim League was also attributed not so much to the efforts of the political workers as to the prestige position and popularity of the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan.¹¹⁰ The results of the elections alarmed the Muslim League leadership. It showed once again that Liaquat Ali Khan did not have as strong hold on the country as he would wish.¹¹¹ Jinnah Awami League was moderately successful in challenging the supremacy of Muslim League and with the working of a month or two, held nineteen seats.¹¹²

Mumtaz Daulatana was elected as the leader of Muslim League Parliamentary Party in its meeting on 3rd April. And subsequently he assumed the position of Chief Minister of Punjab. Members of his cabinet were Soofi Abdul Hameed, Sardar Abdul Hameed Sasti, Chaudhry Muhammad Hussain Chattha, Sardar Muhammad Khan Leghari, Sheikh Fazal Elahi Paracha and Syed Ali Hussain Gerdaizi.¹¹³

Conclusion:

The study of electoral politics of Punjab elections denotes that the ruling Muslim League dominated and controlled the electoral process starting from rule-making to the counting of votes regardless of fair or foul political tactics. The Opposition found very little space for electioneering. However the Opposition performed comparatively better in the wake of controlled system of elections. The alliance technique was used to counter the monopoly of ruling party. However the ruling Muslim League successfully selected the suitable electables. It succeeded to win majority seats despite unconvincing vote proportion through use of government machinery multiplied with the post-partition sympathy for its leaders especially the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan.

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