

## ISSUES OF HAZARA COMMUNITY AND SECTARIANISM IN QUETTA (PAKISTAN)

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### ABSTRACT

Almost 500,000 to 550,000 people of Hazara community of Quetta, Baluchistan are facing sectarianism. Historically the people of Hazara community are peace loving, law abiding and hard working citizens of Pakistan. They are loyal with Pakistan and are serving different departments of Pakistan. The well known banned terrorist organization named Lashkar e Jhangvi claims public responsibility of Hazara Shia killing in Quetta and profess it as a major objective of their organization until annihilation of the Hazara Shia people from Pakistan. Similarly Hazara community facing many other serious problems to protect themselves from terrorism: Inability of Pakistani state to take legal actions against terrorist who does sectarian killings, different government's tendency to support militant and terrorist organizations and individuals also for so called strategic objectives. Many families migrated not only in other cities of Pakistan like Peshawar and Karachi but also from Pakistan to Australia and other countries. In this situation the Hazara Shia community must do something for self protection and advocacy for their safety with governmental help. In last ten years they had done many efforts through lawful file suits, media awareness for their rights and through other legal tactics. This document focused some incidents of terrorist activities against Hazara Shia community in Quetta.

**KEYWORDS:** Hazara Community, Sectarianism in Quetta

### INTRODUCTION

The Hazara Shia community of Pakistan is a native population of indo Aryan descent. They are Persian speaking ethnic group belongs to Mongolian descent (Hartl, Daniel L, 308)<sup>1</sup>. They migrated from Afghanistan to Pakistan in 1890. They are not mix up with the Hazaras who are living in KPK, which are called Hazarawal and are Hindko speaking. About 500,000 to 550,000 (I. Khan 2010)<sup>2</sup> people of Hazara Shia community are living in Quetta, the capital city and military garrison of Baluchistan. In 1840 the members of Hazara community from the area of Afghanistan which is called Bamyun and Hazarajat region began to migrate to colonial India for labor work like construction etc. Especially during the first Anglo Afghan War 1838-1840 many members of Hazara community were the part of British Indian Army as scouts and soldiers. The word "Hazara" means a group of one thousand soldiers (H. F. Schurmann 1962, 115)<sup>3</sup>. In the era of Iron Emir of Afghanistan named Abdul Rahman Khan in 1890, the majority of the community migrated from central Afghanistan to

<sup>1</sup>Hartl, Daniel L.; Jones, Elizabeth W., *Genetics: Analysis of Genes and Genomes*, p. 308

<sup>2</sup>H. Gazdar, S. Ahmad Maker, I. Khan, 2010; Buffer Zone, Colonial Enclave or Urban Hub? Quetta: Between Four Regions and Two Wars, *Collective for Social Science Research*, Karachi, Pakistan. February, 2010. Working Paper no. 69

<sup>3</sup>H. F. Schurmann, The Mon-gols of Afghanistan: An Ethnography of the Moghols and Related Peoples of Afghanistan, *La Haye*, 1962, p. 115

Quetta city due to the injustice and biasness of Iron Emir (Monsutti 2003)<sup>4</sup>. Here in Quetta these people started small business, some become the part of British Indian Scouts, and others joined civil services<sup>5</sup>. They were loyal with their business and jobs, and it was clearly admitted by the British rulers. As a result the new generation of Hazara the children who born in Quetta they get education from British run schools, the trained and learned modern education from British schools. In turn they get jobs easily by British being hardworking. Similarly the community led to the social integration in playing the basic role in the development of British run Quetta.

After the partition 1947 the Hazara community established it as a strong ethnic group of Quetta. They joined the key posts of military and civil departments of the province. In 1947 Baluchistan remained a semi autonomous federal administrated region, while in 1969 finally Baluchistan was declared federated province of Pakistan and Hazara community of Quetta was also recognized by federal government as an indigenous tribe of Baluchistan. And it was clearly declared by the government of Pakistan to provide complete rights to the Hazara community accordingly.

Hazara community is living in the area of Quetta city near Cantonment, neighborhood of Marri Abad. This area is steep hillsides from west while the commercial area of Alamdar Road from the east which is famous as Shia Hazara area in Quetta. So the strategic location of the Hazara's area is so important. Strategically secured area was disturbed by the terrorists in August 2011 when Eid Gah bomb incident gives the result of many Hazaras casualties<sup>6</sup>. The other famous area of Quetta where Hazaras are lived is called Hazara Town is located eastern opposite side of the city. The town was established by Hazara business community for lower income Hazara people in 1980. This town has faced many bomb blasts from last 10 years by the arrival of Talibanization in Quetta. Almost one lack Pashtun and Bloch neighbors are living surroundings of Hazara town, and when some time ethnic or sectarian tensions appear in the city, Hazaras become victim of ethnicity and sectarianism as the same time. Male population of Hazara community work as laborers and merchants in the city so they must travel within city regularly, use public buses from Saryab Road. Major terrorism attacks are made on Saryab road either ethnic or sectarian. Why are Hazaras migrating to Australia? Tabraiz Hazara says in an interview "we are facing discrimination in Pakistan. Our Doctors, engineers and business men, government and private employees are targeted on the name of Shia sect. Our factories and shops are being destroyed by a banned organization Lashkar e Jhangvi with the help of Talban's. And Lashkar e Jhangvi has announced that no one Hazara should be allowed to live in Quetta. There is no rite of the government in Quetta city regarding Hazaras grievances. We have protested against terrorists, some terrorists are caught by police but they were not stand for trial. In this worst situation our elders decided to migrate for self protection. Australian government offered to 2500 Hazara families to migrate from Pakistan to Australia as refugees on humanitarian basis. So we are moving to Australia for self protection. Before this offer many of Hazara people are living in Australia, Canada and UK.

<sup>4</sup>"HAZARA: HISTORY". Alessandro Monsutti (Online Ed.). United States, *Encyclopedia Iranica*. December 15, 2003. Retrieved 2012-08 09.

<sup>5</sup>S.A Mousavi, *The Hazara's of Afghanistan: An Historical, Cultural, Economic and Political Study*, Richmond, 1998., pp. 23-25

<sup>6</sup>Daily newspaper Jang, September 1, 2011

## Issues of Hazara Community

### Quota over Merit

Baluchistan government introduced a quota system to make calm down the undereducated population of the whole province. But unfortunately quota positions replaced the merit positions. Hence all the Hazara civil servants who take their position on merit basis, they become retired in 2004 as ethnicity was given priority by the system as compared to educational ability. And the Hazaras were discriminated in this way. Currently 95% work force of Baluchistan province is either Baloch or Pashtun due to quota system. While before the quota system Hazara were holding the 75% seats of civil services in Quetta. Statistics given by Baluchistan public service commission, Hazaras still gets two to three hundred points higher than the Baloch and Pashtun in civil service exams and university exams. But due to the quota system based on ethnic ground they failed to get positions in civil services<sup>7</sup>. Hazaras were holding 50% seats in 1971 on merit basis but it decreased less than 5% in 2012 due to quota system. Because Hazaras have to compete for only seven seats out of 200 seats, which are allotted to the rural districts of Baluchistan as well. Baloch and Pashtun candidates have no need to take higher marks due to quota system, they only get round about 350 marks out of 1100 and got a position, because there seats are higher than the Hazara due to quota system. Hence development in Baluchistan cannot be seen because incapable officers are appointed on the basis of ethnicity not on the basis of competition or ability. And these officers become liability for Baluchistan government for long life. Further 5% those Hazara people who got positions in civil services they also become the victim of sectarianism. As Lashkar e Jhangvi with the help of other militant groups they target these Hazara officers. Furthermore in this situation the parents of the Hazara bright students do not allow their sons or daughters to take part in civil services because of fear of target killing. And they are going to take part in private sector banking, telecommunication, sole proprietorship etc. They are migrated to the other cities of Pakistan like Karachi and Peshawar to start their business.

### The Talibanization in Quetta

Afghan Taliban and Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan has started their activities in Quetta city on the name of "Quetta Shura". They are directly helping to Lashkar e Jhangvi as they both have same sectarian views. In this situation government is failed to stop the increasing network of Taliban's in Quetta.

### State Support for Sectarian Terrorism and the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi

Since 1980 General Muhammad Zia ul Haq's program of "Islamization" and the formation of Sipah e Sahaba in Jhang which become the cause of sectarianism in Pakistan<sup>8</sup>. Sipah e Sahaba gets more support from Zia's government in 1990s. Further a group which was extreme militant appear from Sipah e Shaba who's motive was to kill every Shia in Pakistan, this group was established in 1996 due to conflict within Sipah e Sahaba on leadership. Both organizations were banned in 2002 by President Musharraf. The founding chief of Lashkar e Jhangvi Riaz Basra killed in 2002 than Akram Lahori and Malik Ishaq become its leaders. They both were putted behind the baar for ten years. But now Malik Ishaq is not only released from jail but state systems have made him a media personality. Lashkar e Jhangvi has accepted the

<sup>7</sup>Baluchistan Public Service Commission, results updated December 2011. Accessed 3/12/2012  
<http://www.bpsc.gov.pk/Result.HTM>

<sup>8</sup>Zaman, MQ, "Sectarianism in Pakistan: the radicalization of Shi 'I and Sunni identities,'" *Modern Asian Studies*, 1998. Cambridge Univ. Press (p68-79)

responsibility of many terrorist attacks not only Shia targets but also attack on U.S consulate in Karachi and bombing on church in Islamabad. Proofs provided by RAND<sup>9</sup> corporation before the committee on Homeland Security in U.S House of Representatives, the Lashkar e Jhangvi is belonged to Deobandi School of Sunni Islam but not with the Bravelvi school of thought. It is clear that Lashkar e Jhangvi has best working relationship with Quetta Shura and with Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan. Hence Pakistani government has much time given the opportunity of protection to Lashkar e Jhangvi which has promoted the sectarianism. Currently Hazara community is a softest task for Lashkar e Jhangvi, peace loving Hazara community migrates in one city to other but not stand with weapons against Lashkar e Jhangvi. As a result Hazara community has become highly victim of Lashkar e Jhangvi as compared to another ethnic group<sup>10</sup>. Law enforcement agencies are failed to arrest the terrorists of Lashkar e Jhangvi. LeJ is operating openly on different well known roads of Quetta such as Saryab road, Alamdar road, Hazara road etc but rule of law is invisible<sup>11</sup>.

### The Violence

The violence against Hazara community was started in such a systematic way. It can be divided in three phases. First phase was based on propagation against Hazara Shia community in which they used the well known notion "Shia kafir" (Shias are infidels). First phase starts from 1980s to 1990 While in second phase started physical violence by target killing of the Hazara Shia officers, doctors, engineers, business men etc. Then third phase started, in this phase they not only targeted the people but also started mass killings by bomb blasts, suicide attacks on Hazara Police cadets, and students as well. Bomb attacks on religious gatherings etc.

### Propaganda against Hazara Community

From early 1980s to mid of the 1990s propagation against Hazara Shia community started by using well known notion "Shia Kafir" (Shias are Infidels). They make their propagation on high level by publishing stickers, pamphlets, and also use another well-known notion Wajib ul Qatl (Religiously Justified Murder). Hence they propagated in uneducated public that Hazara are Shias, so they are kafir and Wajib ul Qatl. From 1980 to 1990 the Saudi Arab's government gives 700 million US dollars to Pakistan for the construction of 20,000 new madrassas to serve the million children across the country<sup>12</sup>. For this money the village cleric would submit an application with the approval of District Commissioner and soon he gets check with the help of Pakistani government machinery. Saudi Arab gives financial aid to Pakistan on the name of Hawala (in support of armed jihadist). Hence it was strong alliance build by Saudi Arab with the Deobandi clerics who accepted Wahhabi ideology. The objective of Saudi Arab's financial aid was geo strategic balance of Power in Muslim world, because Iranian revolution was alarming for Saudi. So the Zia government and government of Saudi Arab help the Wahhabi ideology which becomes the cause of sectarianism in Pakistan.

<sup>9</sup>Fair, C.C., "Antecedents and Implications of the November 2008 Lashkar-Taiba (LeT) Attack Upon Several Targets in the Indian Mega-City of Mumbai," CT-320 March 2009 Testimony presented before the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection on March 11, 2009 accessed from: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2009/RAND\\_CT320](http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2009/RAND_CT320)

<sup>10</sup>Non-partisan Pak Institute for Peace Studies Annual report 2010

<sup>11</sup>"Pakistan > Terrorist Group > Lashkar-e-Jhangvi" *South Asia Terrorism Portal*, P  
14 <http://www.satp.org/satporgrp/countries/pakistan/terroristoutfits/lej.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations, *CRS Issue Brief IB93113*

### Targeted Killings of Hazara Shia Community 1999-2003

From 1999 to 2003, almost 17 high profile persons of Hazara community were killed in daylight on the name of sectarianism. On 5<sup>th</sup> October 1999 the physical violence was started against Hazaras of Quetta. When the member of provincial assembly Baluchistan and the Minister of education named Sardar Nisar Ali<sup>13</sup> Hazara was targeted in high secured area Baluchistan Secretariat. In this incident his driver and gun man were also died. The Lashkar e Jhangvi accepted responsibility of this incident. And they used different tactics for targeting Hazara community. They get data of Hazara officers, their addresses etc. And follow them from home to their offices and vice versa. Even if some time they saw any Hazara in huge rush they opened fire on him and run away from the place. In this sectarian violence they have not killed only Hazaras but also non Hazara Shia people as well. Ali Madad Changazi a senior officer of State Bank of Pakistan was killed by Lashkar e Jhangvi on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2001 at 4pm near his office<sup>14</sup>. Killers were run away from there and government was remained silent. The second incident in the same month, when Professor Abid Abbas Naqvi was killed near Saryab road, he was doing shopping in Plaza. He was professor of Engineering at Baluchistan University. Unknown killers run away. This incident took place on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2001. Two weeks later on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2001 the son of Professor Atiq Naqvi of sociology department was killed by the motorcycle riders. On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2002 senior civil servant and Deputy Director of Quetta Merchants Association M. Essa Saqib were killed in the daylight in well known departmental store on Saryab road, he was the owner of that departmental store. Only one day later on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2002 Haji M. Jan who was the senior customs official was murdered in his government office near Bolan approximately 60KM away from Quetta city. The Lashkar e Jhangvi targeted the high profile people. They searched such Hazaras whom were either doctors, or engineers, or high profile officers. Hence they targeted Dr. Saqlain Naqvi on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2003 out of his medical clinic in Sibi neighborhood of Quetta. In the same month Lashkar e Jhangvi killed a Jewelry shop owner Haji Abdul Ghafoor, while he was sitting and reading newspaper in his shop in the area of satellite town Quetta. Another civil servant who was the vice president of local Imambargah Syed Niaz Shah was shooting down and killed near his office located on Saryab road Quetta on June 6 2003. A bank officer Arshad Zaidi was killed near his Bank office located on Jinnah Road Quetta. Syed Talib Shah was killed on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2009 on Fatima Jinnah road Quetta he was a business man and Lawyer as well. Another Engineer Ahmed Najafi was killed in his wood factory on Sirki road Quetta on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Again a lawyer was targeted on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009, Wilayat Hussain was Advocate of High court Baluchistan, and he was killed while returning from his office toward home. Chief Inspector Mines Muhammad Ashraf was killed near his office at Saryab Road Quetta on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009<sup>15</sup>. Another doctor become victim of sectarianism on 17 August 2009, Syed Abid Zaidi who was heart specialist, he was killed in his clinic at Fatima Jinnah Road Quetta. Chairman Hazara Democratic Party Hussain Ali Yousafi was targeted near his office at Jinnah road Quetta. He was a travel agent by profession. He became victim on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009.

### Target Killings and Bomb Blasts against Hazaras (2003 to 2014)

On 8<sup>th</sup> June 2003 12 cadets which were belonged to Hazara community were killed by Lashkar e Jhangvi, and the spokesman of Lashkar e Jhangvi clearly accepts responsibility<sup>16</sup>. Cadets were on the way toward police training center near

<sup>13</sup> Daily Newspaper Jang, October 6, 1999

<sup>14</sup> Daily newspaper DAWN, August 16, 2001

<sup>15</sup> Daily newspaper Jang, October 13, 2009

<sup>16</sup> Daily newspaper Jang, June 9, 2003.

Saryab Road Quetta. On 4<sup>th</sup> July 2003 again Lashkar Jhangvi accept the responsibility of firing incident on Friday Prayer in Imam Bargah Kalan on Mikangi road, in result of this incident 47 Hazara Shia people were killed while 65 men and children were become injured<sup>17</sup>. And also it was announced by Lashkr e Jhangvi that they want to finish all Hazara's in Quetta. In result Inspector General Police of Baluchistan caught almost 25 suspects with the help of Frontier Corps but unfortunately even not a single suspect were charged or trial. Due to lawlessness in the city no one was ready to stand as witness against those suspects. After 8 month on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004 near the Governor's house of Baluchistan 36 Hazara people including men, young boys, children were killed in open firing. Police did not take any step to protect the innocent people. And this firing remains approximately 20mints<sup>18</sup>. From 2003 to 2004 268 Hazara community members were killed according to the report of Jang Newspaper<sup>19</sup>. And 150 plus people martyred in two bomb blasts in Hazara town and Alamdar road in 2012 and 2013.

Following chart provides detailed statistical data of the mass murder of Hazara community from 2003 to 2014.

**Table 1: Incidents of Mass-Murder against Shia Hazara of Quetta: 2003-2014**

Date	Location	Killed/Wounded	Type
8-6-2003	Saryab Road Quetta.	12/9	Roadside mass murder
4-7-2013	Imam Bargah Kalan near Mari Abad Quetta.	47/65	Attack on Religious event.
2-3-2004	Ashura Jaloos Liaqat Bazar Quetta	36/94	Attack on Religious event.
19-3-2005	Dargah Fatah Pur 40 km from Quetta	7/2	Roadside massacre
30-5-2008	Jinnah Town Quetta	5/6	Roadside massacre
19-7-2008	Hazara Town Quetta	6/12	Roadside massacre
20-9-2008	Kirrani Road Quetta	5	Roadside massacre
18-11-2008	Kashmirabad Saryab Road Quetta	4	Roadside massacre
21-11-2008	Shabaz Town Quetta	5	Attack on miners
14-1-2009	Saryab Road Quetta	6/4	Attack on police check post
24-2-2009	Barma Hotel Saryab road Quetta	5	Unknown attack on Hazara owned hotel
1-3-2009	Double road Quetta	2	Hazara owned engineering shop
3-3-2009	Eastern Bypass road Quetta	5	Roadside massacre of laborers
23-3-2010	Akhtrabad Quetta	3	Unknown roadside massacre of fruit sellers
16-4-2010	Civil hospital Jinnah road Quetta	8	Attack on Hazara Police guards posted at civil hospital
20-6-2010	Archer Road Quetta	3	Roadside Massacre
3-9-2010	Youm ul Quds Rally Mezan chowk Quetta	63/83	Suicide bomb at religious rally
28-10-2010	Masjid road Quetta	5	Attack on hazara owned factory
15-12-2010	Karam Khan Road Quetta	3/1	Unknown roadside massacre
16-02-2013	Blast	73	Hazara town
30-06-2013	Blast	33	Alamdar road
21-01-2014	attack	30/37	QuettaS

**Source:** An Independent Investigative Report Produced by Minority Support Pakistan In partnership with Hazara

<sup>17</sup> Daily newspaper Dawn July 5, 2003.

<sup>18</sup> Daily newspaper Jang, March 3, 2004

<sup>19</sup> Daily newspaper Jang, March 3, 2004

Qaumi Jirga (Reg.), Quetta, Baluchistan First Published February 2012. [www.minoritysupportpakistan-org.arohalabs.net](http://www.minoritysupportpakistan-org.arohalabs.net)

### **Hazaras Efforts to Control the Situation**

Hazara community had put their case in front of Judiciary and other law and enforcement agencies. Also they contacted with IHRC International human rights commissions and other human rights organizations. They called for a Grand Jirga for negotiations for their self protection in 2007<sup>20</sup>. They also construct barriers at all points of the areas in which they live like Alamdar Road Quetta, and Hazara Town Quetta. They also demanded for security check posts from Government of Pakistan. The leaders of Hazara Democratic Party and other Hazara parties raise their voice for the rights of Hazara Community. They did meetings with government officials.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

According to my views for the better protection of Hazara Shia Community following steps should be taken. So that the community which loves peace, may start their religious practice peacefully according to the fundamental human rights and the law of Pakistan. In this situation religious extremists and the mafias based on ethnicity should be discouraged who take advantages of lawlessness. Following recommendations should be adopt sincerely,

#### **Responsibility of the Government of Baluchistan & Law Enforcement Agencies of Quetta**

- To create an impartial commission for the cases pending in the courts of Hazara community's martyred or injured. Independent investigation to search out the guilty organizations or independent people.
- The members of the commission must should be unbiased, law specialists, and well reputed FC officers.
- Banned organization are still in the field with new names, so immediate steps should be taken by Chief Minister and Governor of Baluchistan to banned those old organizations with new names which are clearly involved in spreading sectarianism.

#### **Responsibility of Federal Government of Pakistan**

- An honest officer from federal government interior ministry should be appointed for Hazara community's issues of discrimination. An office of the concerned officer should be opened near Hazara Town in Quetta to collect facts and figures and to provide protection measures through local commissioner.
- An opportunity should be given to the representatives of Hazara community to present their problems before the parliamentary committee of Parliament of Pakistan. So that they present their grievances and issues according to the historic background. And finally lawmakers should take steps to prevent Hazara's problems.

#### **Responsibility of Human Rights Organizations and International Community**

- Freedom of religion is the slogan of human rights organizations. So the international human rights organizations should take measures for the protection of peace liking Hazara community.
- Human rights organization can also help to local and federal governments for facts finding, investigation and can provide advocacy services to effectives.



- Spread awareness about the discrimination and killing of Hazara community.
- Foreign journalists and researchers should be providing an opportunity of access in Quetta. So that international community may become aware about the worst situation.
- At least a report should be published after each 3 month based on facts, and the role of the responsible persons.
- At international level investigation actions should be adopted by the help of United Nations and by the help of welfare states to protect the lives of thousand Hazara's.

### **Responsibility of Media and Pakistan's Civil Society**

- Media should expose the issues appropriately based on facts. When sometime sectarian incidents happened media should break the news as the failure of government responsible persons or failure of law enforcement agencies, media should not create conspiracy theories of culture differences of sectarian differences. They should expose the duties of officials as they are failing to provide protection to the public which is their core responsibility.
- Media should ask difficult questions to federal and provincial Interior ministers on their lake of responsibility. They should not make the sectarian groups leaders as hero.
- They should highlight the rights of religious minorities according to the constitution of Pakistan.
- They should convey the message that government is accountable before the law.
- The public representatives like Members of national and provincial assemblies should be asked questions.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The challenges of weak government and non state actors are an obstacle in the way of protecting Hazara Shia Community in Quetta. Religious minorities are not protected in Pakistan, and the international sectarian factors are involved in it weather Saudi Arab or Iran. In this situation the Hazaras discrimination is based on international worst agenda. Pakistani Government is not in a position to take preventions against this agenda due to lake of leadership. In KP we are facing drown strike, while in Baluchistan ethnic crises and sectarianism has confused the government of Pakistan. Law and enforcement agencies are become failed, judicial response is very low.

The role of human rights organization in best manners can play important role to protect Hazara Community from terrorism. Government should take some democratic steps for the rights of different communities in Pakistan including Hazara community of Quetta. Legal reforms should be adopted. Individuals, organizations, political parties, human rights wings, print and electronic media should take steps for making Quetta peaceful.

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