

Report on Southern Punjab

Special Committee on Demarcation of Provinces



By:

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**Gohar Zaman,
Chairman,
Special Committee on Demarcation of Provinces**

Preface

Special Committee for Demarcation of Provinces was formed on the order of the Speaker of Youth Parliament of Pakistan in order to come up with detailed reports on the growing issue demarcation of existing provinces in Pakistan, as a response to the resolution moved by Gohar Zaman (YP25-PUNJAB05), Ahmed Numair Farooq (YP21-PUNJAB01), Elia Nouroz Ali (YP03-BALUCHISTAN01) and Shaheera Jalil Albasit (YP56-SINDH08). The Committee has come up with this report on the issue of Demarcation of Punjab, since it has been one of the major issues that are prevailing in the country.

The Voice of the new provinces is prevailing for some times, not only in Punjab but in other provinces as well. These demands are both ethnic and administrative in nature, but the fact is that this has become an important and worth-pondering issue. The core questions on which there was already a deadlock between the Government and Opposition in the house was that whether this demarcation should be there or not? And if such step is taken, would that demarcation be on linguistic/ethnic basis or administrative basis? These questions were put in front of the Special Committee for Demarcation of Provinces, and this is the core perspective of this report.

The role of the committee was to highlight the core reasons for this issue, identification of the factors involved in leading the issue to this extent, to study the ground realities and to come up with some viable recommendations on how the demarcation is to be carried out. Therefore a probing study was carried out and discussions were made amongst the committee members and a consensus was developed on how the issue should be resolved. The study mainly focuses on the comparison between the Southern Punjab and the Northern Punjab, also including examples of demarcation in several other countries.

Background

Today what we see in the largest province of Pakistan, Punjab, is that it has split into two parts philosophically. One is a stronger and the governing part of the whole province, while the other is the weaker and deprived part that contributes most to the agriculture of the province and the country. The stronger one is the central and northern Punjab while the deprived one is in the southern part of the Punjab province. The reasons for this gap created in the province are complicated and would be discussed later in detail in the report.

This sense of deprivation can be seen easily from the present statistics of the budget allocation and the rising voices of the separatist movements from the southern Punjab which demands the formation of a new “Southern Punjab” or “Seraikistan” province. Moreover there is also a great deal of cultural domination of the Punjabis on the Seraiki culture which is a major culture. So these all reasons have piled up from sometimes and they have been seen more dynamic in past 3-4 years, but these demands did exist since the time of independence of Pakistan. A brief look on the history will show us how much of these movements have been started and how they have increased year to year.

Beginning in the 1960s, Riaz Hashmi Saraiki nationalists have sought to gain official language status and to create a new province out of southern Punjab. This has led to a proposed separate province Saraikistan Saraika or Rohi, a region being drawn up by activists in the 1970s. The 1977 coup by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan, a centralist ruler, caused the movement to go underground. After his death in 1988, the Saraiki movement re-emerged with the goals to have a **Saraiki language recognised, to have official documents printed in Saraiki, a Saraiki regiment in the Pakistan Army, employment quotas and more Saraiki-language radio and television**. The movement's aim is to establish a collective identity for the Saraiki linguistic group in the Punjab province of Pakistan and to secure an official status for the language. As of 2002, there were approximately 15 million Saraiki people, who were speaking the Saraiki language, in central Pakistan in the Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan provinces, mainly based in the former princely state of Bahawalpur. Following are the considered as the main points around which the movement is focused on:

- The Saraiki Nationalist have a demand a separate Saraikistan Province from the southern parts of the Punjab Province. This province may comprise the districts of Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Multan, Lodhran, Vehari, Khanewal, Sargodha, Jhang, Muzafargarh, Layyah, Bhakkar, Mianwali, Khushab, Rajan Pur and Dera Ghazi Khan from Punjab province and district of Dera Ismail Khan from Khyber Pakhtunkhaw province.
- The Saraiki Nationalist have a demand of more budget allocation to the southern parts of the Punjab Province till the above demand is accepted.
- A demand of Saraiki being accepted as a separate language rather than a dialect, and its use in official documents for southern Punjab along side Urdu. Though Saraiki has been

accepted as a separate language in Pakistan, it is not used for official and educational purposes as some of the other regional languages like Sindhi in Pakistan. Only two languages are used for nationwide official purposes in Pakistan; Urdu and English.

The Saraiki nationalist intellectuals reacted to the a perceived threat to their language and identity and set out to develop an ethno-linguistic consciousness. The efforts towards this cause were directed towards creating a Saraiki identity. Initially this was done to counter the "misleading label of Punjabis". These endeavors have been termed as the Saraiki movement'. Attempts have been made to get the support of the Saraiki speaking middle-class using economic reasoning to support the partition of the punjab on linguistic lines. The Saraiki movement was the combination of language planning and efforts to establish a collective identity to convince Saraiki speakers and others of the status of Saraiki as a separate language distinct from Punjabi. It also aimed to establish Saraiki as a separate language by invoking shared awareness of the local past among the people living across the Saraiki region speaking different dialects of the Saraiki language. Consensus on the name Saraiki for all the dialects spoken in the Saraiki region was a part of this reaction. Creation of a Saraiki identity in south-western Punjab involved the deliberate choice of a language called Saraiki, as a symbol of this identity. Language was chosen as a unifying symbol because a local language serves its speakers as an identity marker that can successfully separate them from other ethno-linguistic groups that share identity on another basis, such as culture, traditions and religion (in this case Islam). It was chosen also because it was an aspect the leaders thought will serve to unite the group and will be useful in promoting the interests of the group and ethno-politicians. Like many such movements, the Saraiki movement also started in the name of cultural revival and promotion. What really lay behind it was the lack of development of South Punjab region which was not voiced in the first phase, ethno-nationalism is generally a response to perceived injustice. In general, the slogans and demands of the Saraiki nationalists have been coupled with linguistic rights and economic grievances, but in the late 1990s and the following decade, the linguistic issue has ceased to have much importance. This is evident in the charter of demands made at the end of a Saraiki conference held in December 2003, in which, out of twenty-one demands made, only one pertained to language.

Seraiki Nationalist Groups

Following are the political parties working for the rights of saraikis and they demand the liberation of saraiki speaking areas from Punjab.

- **Pakistan Saraiki Qaumi Ittehad** : Chairman Colonel (Retd) Abdul Jabbar Abbasi.
Central Secretariat at Rahimyar Khan, Camp Office at Karachi.
- **Pakistan Saraiki Party**: Its head office is at Multan. Thaj Muhamaad Khan Langah is its President. Taj langah also known as baba saraikistan.
- **Saraikistan Youth Parliament**: Its head office is at Multan. Muhammad Faraz Noon is its Leader. Basic Demand of SYP is a separate province based on administrative distribution, not on language.
- **Saraikistan qaumi council**
- **Saraiki Quomi Movement,**
- **Saraikistan Qaumi Movement:**
- **Saraiki National Party**
- **Saraikistan Qaumi Ithad**

Linguistic Origin

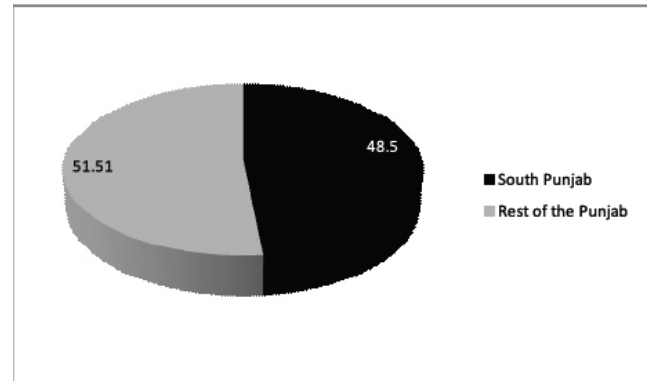
The origin of Saraiki language and culture goes back to the Indus Valley Civilization. The name "Saraiki) was formally adopted in the 1960s by regional social and political leaders who undertook to promote Saraiki ethnic consciousness and to develop the vernaculars into a standardized written language. Historically, the speakers of dialects now recognized as belonging to Saraiki did not hold the belief that they constituted a cohesive language community or a distinct ethnicity. This consciousness developed among locals in the years after the founding of Pakistan in 1947 in response to the social and political upheaval caused by the mass immigration of Urdu speaking refugee Muslims from India. This awareness kept on increasing with the passage of time and as the media became powerful and independent the awareness increased to such an extent that this turned into a Movement based on the aim to create a new Saraiki Province.

There are no defined boundaries of the Saraiki speaking region in the country as yet but traditionally, the political dimension of Saraikistan includes the Saraiki speaking areas of South and Northwestern Punjab along with the bordering region of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa where Saraiki is being spoken. Saraiki is spoken in Sindh and Balochistan provinces as well but these areas are not specifically included when referring to Saraikistan as a region. The districts of Bahawalpur, Multan, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Muzaffargarh, Layyah, Lodhran, Rajanpur, Bhakkar, Mianwali, Khushab, Sargodha, Bahawalnagar, Khanewal, Vehari, Jhang, and Dera Ismail Khan in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa are geographically regarded as components of the region. Sometimes, the region is categorized as the combination of four sub-regions:

- **Roh:** means mountains, referred to the Sulaiman Mountains in Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur districts as well as Salt Range hills around Mianwali.
- **Rohi:** Cholistan Desert in Bahawalpur
- **Thal:** Thal Desert in Bhakkar, Sargodha, Khushab, Mianwali, Jhang, Layyah, and Muzaffargarh districts
- **Daamaan:** meaning the foothills, referred to the foothills of Sulaiman Mountains in Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan. It may also referred to the plain areas around Multan

Southern Punjab

Southern Punjab has no definite boundaries but as described earlier in the report the areas where Seraiki is spoken in domination are considered to be the part of Southern Punjab, therefore 3 division of Punjab are the part of considered Southern Punjab, they are Multan, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan divisions comprising of 11 districts The total area of these districts of Southern Punjab is 99572km² which makes up 48.5% of the total area of Punjab Province. Which shows that area wise the southern punjab region is almost the half of the Punjab province.



Southern Punjab has a fast population growth rate. According to 1998 population census of Pakistan, these 3 divisions had 30.68% of the total population of Punjab Province. The following table shows Population growth of Southern Punjab region in comparison with Punjab Province from 2006 to 2010 as described by a discussion paper published by PILDAT

Entity	Population in Millions				
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Entire Punjab province	86.812	88.289	89.79	91.36	92.869
South Punjab	27.209	27.723	28.245	28.779	29.32
Population of South Punjab as percentage of total population of Punjab	31.34%	31.40%	31.46%	31.52%	31.57%

Moreover the the trend of population growth in southern Punjab can be seen from the chart in Appendix A at the end of the report.

It is ambient from this data that southern Punjab is comparatively less desely populated as compared to the rest of Punjab province, but still it can be seen that a huge difference exists between the development among the two sections of Punjab as we observe a very low standard of living in southern Punjab and Lack of development. The allocation of funds in Punjab province is explained in detail in the next section.

Allocation of Funds in South Punjab

ADP allocation

Since the development in any region is primarily based on the developmental budget that is received by that region, the funds received by the Southern Punjab are also critically low than the deserved share. The Annual Developmental Program (ADP) Funds are the most important funds and they are divided amongst the districts on the basis of the population and the backwardness.

The table below shows the allocation of ADP funds in Southern Punjab from 2005-2011.

Financial Year	Total Volume of ADP (Million Rs.)	Allocation to 11 Districts of South Punjab (Million Rs.)	Allocation to 11 Districts of South Punjab %
2005-2006	63.000	11.790	18.714
2006-2007	100.000	17.760	17.760
2007-2008	150.000	22.040	14.693
2008-2009	160.000	25.700	16.063
2009-2010	172.000	41.880	24.349
2010-2011	182.000	52.819	29.021

Now comparing this with the population of the southern Punjab shows that the fund allocation is very low than the population of the southern Punjab. This percentage has increased after 2009 and has reached its maximum of 29.02% in year 2010-2011 but still it is low than the population percentage which was 31.57% in the year 2010. Hence this shows that the core reason for the backwardness of the southern Punjab has been the lack of developmental funds which is the right

of this region. This analysis with population can be seen in the form of chart in Appendix B as published by PILDAT in a discussion paper.

Primary education

The latest data of 2008-2009 shows that there are a total 44,970 primary schools in complete Punjab province out of which 15,455 are located in Southern Punjab region which forms almost 34.36%.

The enrollment, teachers and the student to teacher ratio are shown in the following table as published by PILDAT in a discussion paper:

Entity	Enrollment	Teaching Staff	Student Teaching Ratio
South Punjab	1,805,151	39,766	45.39
Rest of Punjab	3,231,651	80,734	40.03
Total	5,036,801	120,500	41.80

This can be seen from the above chart that 33% of provincial teaching staff is from southern Punjab and the teacher to student ratio is very low in southern Punjab which is a key indicator of quality of education and this shows that the quality of education in southern Punjab is very low as compared to the rest of Punjab. This was only about the primary education, the condition of secondary and higher education is even poor in the southern Punjab province as compared to the rest of the province.

Health Facilities

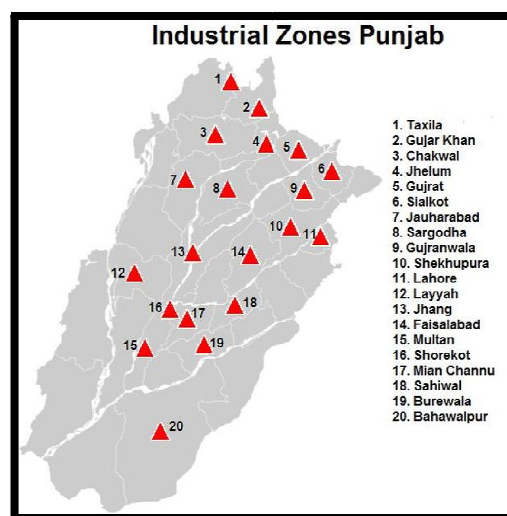
The case of health is even worse in Sothern Punjab. Out of 326 public health facilities of Punjab Province only 86 are located in the southern Punjab. The table below describes this as the percentage of the punjab's health facilities.

	Number	Percentage
South Punjab	86	26.38%
Rest of Punjab	240	73.62%
Total	326	100.00%

This statistical data shows an unfair distribution of the health facilities in Punjab province where 48.5% of area and 31.57% are served by only 26.38% of hospitals, most of which are in traumatic bad condition and experiences a shortage of doctors as the doctor to patients ratio is very low in the southern Punjab region. This depicts a very pathetic condition of health in this region of most prosperous province of Pakistan.

Industrial Infrastructure

The economic well being of any region is directly dependent on the industries in that region, since the industries provide employment to skilled and unskilled labor and cause a boost in regional markets. This further leads to more trade and hence more employment and a better standard of living. Unfortunately, the southern Punjab is deprived of much industrialization, the statistics show a very unfair distribution of industries and labor employment in Punjab. The map distribution shows an unfair distribution of the industrial zones, where most are located in the central and northern Punjab and only 5 are located in the southern region. The table below shows the distribution of Industries in Punjab and comparison of Southern Punjab with rest of Punjab along with the growth from year 2004 to 2008.



Entity	Year 2004	Year 2008	% Growth
South Punjab	1,407	1,837	30.56%
Rest of Punjab	5,114	6,712	31.25%
Total	6,521	8,549	31.10%

The above statistical data shows that in 2008 out of 6712 industrial units in Punjab only 1837 are located in Southern Punjab, which is only almost 26% of the Punjab for a region with population 31.57% of Punjab. This indicator hence describes the reason for a low standard of living and ascending poverty in Southern Punjab.

Poverty

Southern Punjab has a high percentage of 43% living below the poverty line, which is very crucial for any region. If we see Punjab overall, it has 27 % population living below poverty line. Then when we see certain districts for example Layyah, Bhakkar, Rajanpur and Lodhran we see that almost half the population is living below the poverty below. The following table provides statistics for the population living below the poverty line in the 3 divisions of Southern Punjab.

Division	Percentage
D. G. Khan	50.58%
Bahawalpur	39.86%
Multan	38.91%

In contrast with the developed areas of Central and Northern Punjab, people of southern Punjab lack the proper nutrition, health facilities, literacy, infrastructure and even clean drinking water. The all above administrative mismanagements have led the case of Southern Punjab up to this extent that some urgent and dynamic reforms have become a need of time, where the demarcation is also worth-pondering options.

Demarcation

After having a look on the historic background and the present statistical analysis of the condition of Southern Punjab, now the question that arises is that Is Demarcation the only way out? And If yes, then what is the guarantee that condition will become better. There has been a keen study by the committee on these questions.

For the 1st question, the answer is obviously a No, since there is a big margin of improvement that can be done in the present status quo. Only if this discrimination is removed from the provincial government while allocating funds and paying attention than surely all of these existing problems in the southern Punjab can be solved and there will be no need of any such demarcation. Therefore the demarcation is always a last cure for such ills. But the ground realities are totally converse. Since we have seen a huge amount of fund allocation in Punjab by the present federal government, where a Prime Minister belonged to Multan. Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani spent nearly 60 Billion rupees on the development of Multan and its suburbs. But still this voice of separation and formation of Seraikistan hasn't ended. Therefore the demarcation of Punjab into A Southern Punjab or Seraikistan and Punjab is now considerable.

For the 2nd question, there has been a debate on how, if yes, demarcation should be carried out. So when analyzed, it was found out that if demarcation is done than only on administrative basis it should be carried out, otherwise if we consider the Seraiki speaking region then the new province would be the largest of all the provinces and that will need an approval from 3 provinces i.e. Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwah since the proposed seraiki province comprises o seraiki speaking belt and that extends from Mianwali and Jhang in north to Sukkar in South (which is a part of Sindh) and Dera Ismail Khan in west (which is part of KPK). Moreover if this division is based upon the ethnicity, than voices of new provinces and fragments would be heard as it has been seen that right after the announcement of a Seraiki Province by President Asif Ali Zardari, the voices of a "Mahajir" province is also echoing. But this does not mean that seraiki's should be ignored. Seraiki should be given the status of a proper regional language and seraiki culture should be promoted. As stated in the previous section with statistical data the cause of backwardness of Southern Punjab is primarily the un-just and unfair fund allocation, therefore a new province that is expected to have the 2nd highest population will get the funds according to the population and can utilize those funds in an effective manner.

The examples of effective governance by making smaller units can be seen in many prosperous countries. India at the time of her independence had 14 provinces, and now it is having 28 provinces and states. Indian Punjab, though much smaller than Pakistani

Punjab has been split into 3 provinces namely Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and this was even on linguistic basis as a result of demand by sikh nationalists. Bangladesh, though much smaller than Pakistan has 64 units having status of province. Afghanistan has 34 and Iran has 31 provinces. Even United State has 50 states for efficient governance. Therefore the idea of dividing Punjab into two fragments for better governance is a viable idea if acted upon keenly.

Now rises the question that what should be done if Punjab is divided. The most appropriate way is that only 3 divisions of Southern Punjab namely Bahawalpur, Multan and Rahim yar Khan should be merged to form a new province named as Southern Punjab. Now the important issues that will be encountered are enlisted below:

Division of assets and finances:

The division of assets can be carried out on the consensus of both the provinces i.e. the newly formed Southern Punjab province and the existing Punjab province, since there is no universal rule of asset division, but wherever this has been done this has happened on the basis of population. Therefore the estimated divide would be 30 -31 % given to newly formed province approximately 1:2 ratio. All the infrastructure would be hence divided including office machinery etc

Hydraulic Lines

The next question will be that what would be done with existing hydraulic lines system of Punjab, of course the general rule will not be in favor of the new province, that says the Heads and Barrages would be the property of the land where they are situated. The water division of IRSA should be followed and new province will receive water according to its cultivatable area.

Economy of new province

There is a dire need of industrialization in the proposed new province of Southern Punjab, since there is a lack of industry. The new province will have to set up its own industries as early as possible. The economy of this province will be totally agro-based, therefore there will be a dire need of extending the canals to the areas where the water is not frequently available as there is a low rainfall in this region. This will help to increase the productivity through agriculture.

Education and Health:

If boundaries are demarcated immediately, then the higher education of this region will suffer worst than anything. The statistics of primary schools have been given earlier, but the important is that most of the universities under provincial government are located in upper Punjab in the cities of Lahore, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad. At present the students of southern Punjab are enjoying open merit in all public sector universities. According to a survey, 60% of student studying in public sector engineering universities and medical colleges belong to the southern Punjab. This means once a new province is formed these students of southern Punjab will have to compete on the reserved seats (provincial quota) which are very limited in number. There are only 2 Universities and 4 medical colleges working right now in southern Punjab. Therefore steps need to be taken to ensure that this loss does not occurs.

Same is the case with the health, most of the hospitals are located in upper Punjab. Once a new province is formed, it would be the duty of administration of that new province to provide health facilities to its residents, which would require he amount of funds and time.

Present Scenario:

At present the Government of Pakistan People's Party along with the allies have indicated the formation of South Punjab Province (Seraikistan). A resolution has been passed in the national and provincial assembly of Punjab. Now this waits a bill from the government and that bill will have to be passed from provincial assembly of Punjab. President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari has also mentioned his support for the demarcation of provincial boundry of Punjab and formation of Seraikistan.

The Case of Bahawalpur

The demand of Bahawalpur province is a different demand and has different roots. Though the primary cause of this movement is the backwardness of Bahawalpur region as compared to the rest of Punjab. But the Bahawalpur province movement does not support the southern Punjab movement. This is primarily due to 2 important reasons:

- Bahawalpur had historically a separate identity, as it was a princely state which merged into Pakistan in 1955.
- If Southern Punjab becomes a province, the centre of Power will become Multan and the Bahawalpur will not get the deserved power.

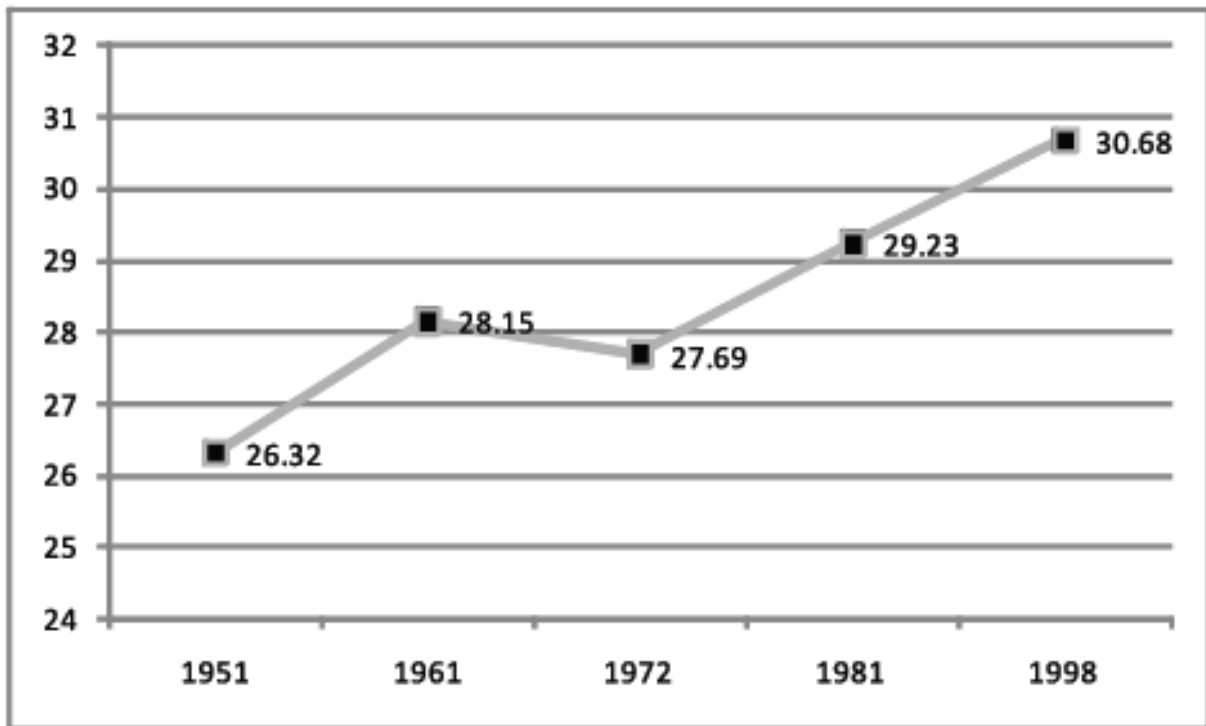
Therefore, in essence, the case of Bahawalpur movement is entirely different, since there is a vast history behind this issue. Bahawalpur shall surely be dealt with separately. But at present, talking administratively, the problems of Bahawalpur are same as other parts of southern Punjab and the issue of identity of Seraiki is also common to both. Therefore the solution of overall southern Punjab issue will ultimately lead to much remedy of issues of Bahawalpur.

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations drafted by the Special Committee on Demarcation of Provinces regarding the solution to South Punjab's growing problem, which the Government should consider while making any policy or any change in the existing system.

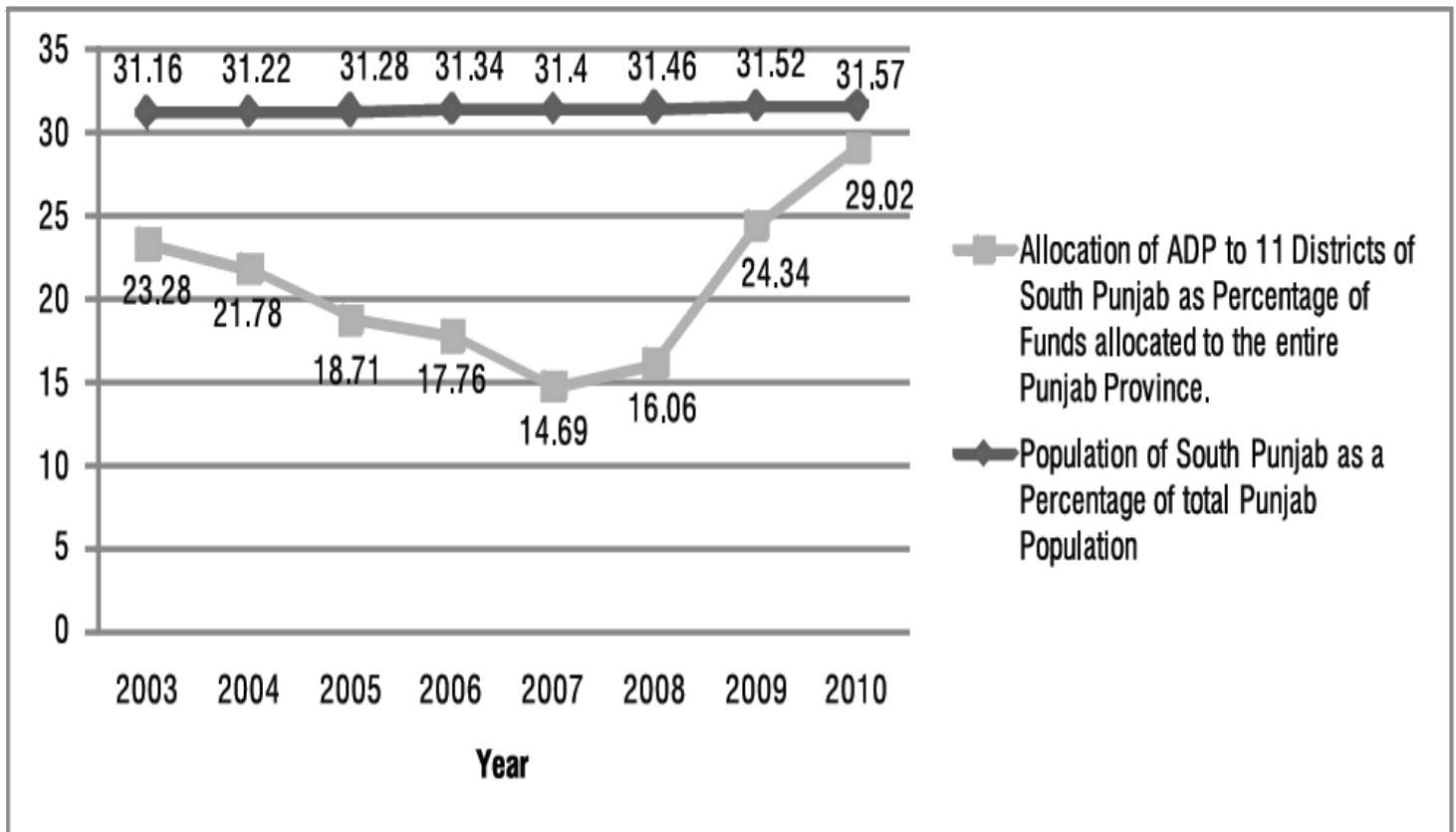
- Demarcation should be the last step in order to resolve the crisis in Southern Punjab, there are other possible remedies for this issue.
- Demarcation, if ever done, should be solely on Administrative basis and the
- Demarcation, if necessary, should not be done immediately and there should be a time period of 5-6 years.
- As mentioned in the report, immediate Demarcation of Punjab Province is not the way out, therefore the Government should neutralize the disparity by increasing the developmental funds to the districts of Southern Punjab immediately.
- Special Quotas should be increased in the Government Jobs, Armed Forces and Admission in Public Universities, and existing quotas should be increased for the citizens of Southern Punjab.
- New Public Universities should be established in these deprived areas of Southern Punjab. At least 2 General Universities, 1 Engineering and IT University and 3 Medical Colleges. Moreover 1 Women University should be established.
- Subsidies should be provided to the poor farmers on fertilizers, machinery and water.
- Industries should be encouraged in the region, by establishing proper Industrial states in the populated cities like Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan, Multan, Bhakkar e.t.c
- Export Processing Zones and dry ports should be established, as the industrialist has to reach Lahore in order to use the dry port.
- Seraiki should be accepted as a separate regional Language. Equal status should be given to Seraki as Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, Makrani, and Hindko
- Seraiki should be introduced in the education in Districts of Southern Punjab as Sindhi in Sindh.
- Committee shall come up with reports on Bahawalpur movement and Hazara Movement.

Appendix A



Population of Southern Punjab as a percentage of population of Punjab, 1951-1998

Appendix B



Population and ADP allocation as a percentage of Punjab, 2003-2010

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