

Diluted Federalism, the Cause of Spoiled Nationalism: a study of historical facts of weak federalism in Pakistan

Junaid Ali Malik

Professional writer

Writes for various newspapers and channels

ABSTRACT

The study covers the issues that Pakistan faced and is facing owing to the absence of federalism. This absence is becoming the cause of nonappearance of nationalism among the people of small provinces. The reasons for the obvious segmentation of the society have been explored. People are disintegrated and are indulged in pursuing their regional status and goals. Their preference is to be recognized by their region rather by their country. The study has also discovered the major causes of tremulous federalism in Pakistan and how they affected the community as a whole. The role of the regional/local politicians has also been observed throughout the study especially with reference to Balochistan. Some recommendations to bring federalism back in the country have been put forth. The terms 'federal system' and 'federalism' have been used interchangeably.

Keywords:*Federalism, Nationalism, Pakistan, East Pakistan, Politicians*

Introduction

Nationalism is the ramification of the love and tenderness that the people of a country have for their state (Koukouzelis, 2011). It is directly related to passion of the people for their country. The major factor that brings forth nationalism is federalism. Under the contemporary nation system, there always is a proper structure of federal government that takes into account the activities of its units, which mostly are known as provinces or sub-states. Federalism is a political system in which the power of the central government is divided among the provinces/sub-states. If people are scattered for different and obvious reasons, there will be a feeble national structure that might collapse at any time. Redundant and superfluous slogans cannot save a country from getting segmented ethnically. In every country, the federal system of government has its significance (Wise & Nader, 2002). It works as a mother for the provincial ruling system. The latter operates under the supervision of the prior. The federal government and its representatives are to take the assistance the provisional governments to discharge their duties efficiently. One is like an empty vessel without the other. The unit of federalism is nationalism; a strong federal system will evoke the passions of love and harmony for the nation. Every member of the nation will pursue the national goals rather their personal ones. The stronger the federal system is, the more strengthened the nationalism will be. People will be ready to protect their country at any time and at any cost.

The central command lies in the hands of the premier, who with his team – cabinet – supervises the overall activities and the programs initiated by the provincial governments (O'Malley, 2007). Among the four provinces, there might not be any regime in the history when in all of them and in the capital Islamabad; the same federal party had established its roots. There are always different parties that hold

power in various provinces of the country. At that time, asking the provincial governments to boost up the process of sorting out the issues of the people becomes precarious. There augment the chances of altercation between the federal and the provincial governments. Though this issue, normally, cannot be observed at the time when in one province and in the federal capital, the same party is having power. And this is palpable for obvious reasons particularly in the developing countries like Pakistan. Chief Minister cannot disagree with Prime Minister of his own party, and if there happens to be any clash on any policy, which is very rare, the matter is surpassed and is not revealed to the masses.

Pakistan, unfortunately, has been very weak in the case of establishing a stronger and efficient federal system that could keep the spirit of nationalism intact. There are multiple reasons for this. All the four provinces and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Gilgit Baltistan (GB), Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) are adjoined with each other on the grounds of some factors like religion and culture, but not on the basis of an influential federal system. This system has its own identity and which, in fact, is the amalgamation of the people having various demographic features. Federal system is established by common men so that their issues could be sorted out. Unluckily, in the case of Pakistan, it could not live up to their hopes. This system has been weakened and became more complex after every general election under or not under the supervision of the military authoritarian rule.

Separation of the East Pakistan: a cause of weak federalism

Pakistan faced the dilemma of separation of its East wing Bangladesh due to an insubstantial structure of federalism (Nazir, 2008). The country was scattered in two tracts of land having a long distance of more than 55,000 miles to access each of the territory. Having a long distance between the two parts of one country does not mean that the separation is inevitable. There may be issues between the two parts, but they can be solved with the presence of a candid and extraordinary federal system. This system needed to be composed of politicians from both the sides during 1970s. Unfortunately at the time of separation, any such system was absent. Politicians were promoting their regional agendas. The foreign intervention from the side of India ignited the fire of regionalism. Bengalis wanted to have their own land and desired to get out of the national horizon of Pakistan. In fact, the federal government comprised of the de facto representatives of both the regions. The people of Bengal started feeling themselves to be the slaves of a government having no esteem for them (Innes, 1953). The motherly federal government was believed to be backstabbing its child Bengal for satisfying its own agenda. How could they live their lives in such an era of total misconception? They could not have thought of nationalism at that time owing to the absence of a solid structure of federalism.

In spite of having a huge population, more than other provinces of the West Pakistan and generating more revenue in commodities like cotton, Bengalis were not allotted their share on the financial and non-financial grounds. Besides these injustices, the role of the politicians from the East Bengal was also disconcerting. They were having the utter intention to destruct the nationalism of the country. They did not listen to any voice and took even the assistance of India and its military subsidiaries (Van Schendel, 2002). It was a two-sided blunder that could

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have resolved only when an efficient structure of the federal government had been set up. The whole system was fragile. Due to not having a central party, the nation could not find out its rulers. The seat of premiership was to be filled either by Zulifqar Ali Bhutto or by Majeed-ur-Rehman; both of them, the federal leaders, could not confront with the challenges unanimously (Ahmed & Afridi, 2014). Their lack of mutual thinking inflamed the fire of freedom from a freed country. It was basically the lack of federalism that produced all those factors which separated the East wing from the West one. In this mishap and a turning point in the history, India played a fanatical role in defaming Pakistan Army and her politicians. India did not leave any chance in creating division within Pakistan's community and destroying her national values. Most important of all indifference of the politicians accommodated Indian aggression very well.

Disintegration of federalism due to national-language controversy

Among the causes of the separation, one of them was the language issue. Although this issue had been prevailing on the national arena since Pakistan got independence, and it remained getting worsen till the time, Bangladesh came into being in 1971 (Sisson & Rose, 1991). It carried on pinching the federal and local structure of government and ended up in Urdu-Bengali riots (Hussain, 2000). The federal government failed to give autonomy to the provinces, which is their indispensable right. It also failed in opting for the language to be used on the provincial level. Thus people of Bengal felt Urdu taken for granted and a burden. Majority of them wanted to read and write in their own language, but the federal government was determined to gain for Urdu a national-language status. The nationalism, which was feeling proud in being Pakistani, was compromised by them when the situation got worsened. The people of the Bengal initiated feeling proud in being Bangladeshi. Although there were a number of other reasons, like deciding the party that will rule the country, economic disparity, influence of Hindus over Bengali Muslims, etc. which made the weakened federalism evident.

The 18th Constitutional Amendment – the upshot of federalism

Although there have been a number of events, when the rulers – public representatives and military sovereigns – of Pakistan showed their interest in strengthening the federalism, but the passage of the 18th constitutional amendment was of supreme significance. It was passed on April 8, 2010 with an objective of bestowing more power to the backward and less-developed provinces. Out of 342 Members of the National Assembly (MNA) 292 favored the amendment (R. Ahmad, 2010). The prime importance was given to the parliament, which is the base of federalism where members from various regions of the country join hand in hand to consider the national issues. They think like a united nation in spite of having different demographic features. Among a number of attempts to strengthen the roots of federalism, this amendment, in the rigid constitution, was one of them.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) was the ruling party of the country at the time when this amendment was passed. The salient features of this amendment were: it curtailed the power of the president by taking back his power of dissolving the National Assembly and renamed the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Khyber PakhtunKhawa (KPK) (Shah, 2012). Indeed the national leadership from every corner of the country appreciated it and embraced its features. After a long

reign of political instability, the political leadership opted for modifying the constitution and making it in favor of the politicians, who are the true representatives of the masses. They, by this amendment, curtailed the power of the president and strengthened the supremacy of the premier – the elected leader of the people, symbol of federalism, and source of nationalism. The modifications of the military dictators, who altered the terms of the constitution every time they gain power, were abolished with its implementation. On the other side, there was a dire need to rename NWFP as the people of the province were considering themselves to be deprived of their identity. Agreeing on a new name of an old province was owing to the unity of the national leadership.

The other points of consent from all the parties were the removal of the name of General Zia ulHaq from constitution, uplifting the ban from third terms premiership and chief ministership, repudiating 17th amendment and Legal Framework Order (LFO) introduced by General Pervaz Musharraf, appointing the senior judges by the parliamentary commission, appointing the Chief Election Commissioner with consensus between government and opposition, establishing the benches of high court in Mengora and Turbat, reestablishing the Council of Common Interest (CCIs) and its meeting within 90 days under the leadership of premier, and considering a situation an act of high treason where constitution will be ignored (M. Hussain &Kokab, 2012; Islam, 2013). The major portion of the parliamentarians agreed over the amendment and extended their support for it. That was one of the times when the national leadership joined hands and unanimously agreed on very crucial matters.

Federalism and its influence in Balochistan

The case of Balochistan has been the cause of disturbance for the federal government in Islamabad. The sense of depravity among the Baloch is the ramification of minimal consideration over the issues of the province by federal as well as local leadership. The federal government, although failed most of the times in living up to the expectations of requirements of all the provinces, the case of Balochistan is and has been of sensitive nature. In the province, till 2008, one might not be able to find out the support for the federal government, but after this year, the situation got better. After that year, the national/federal government expressed its dire need for ensuring development in Balochistan. This agenda is being fulfilled in many ways. Giving the local parties the necessary powers and offering amnesty to the people who have revolted against the state are the part of the schema (Akhtar, 2007). They have revolted and abandoned nationalism for a reason. When that reason will be tackled by the federal government in Islamabad, and the emotions of the people are given due importance, the spirit of nationalism will rise up. This all will happen only with true federalism. The role of the Nawaz government is positive till this time with respect to Balochistan, but it still needs to do more to bring prosperity and tranquility in the lives of common people of the province.

The local chieftains need to play their roles in getting this agenda fulfilled. By strengthening the federalism in the province, the sentiments of national harmony will be increased (Kundi, 1948). The people will reject the foreign agenda in the province. The lack of federalism will enhance the support for anti-Pakistan sentiments. These sentiments have been flared in the past by non-state actors who

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have been supported by spy agencies of the neighboring countries (Imtiaz, 2010; Mazhar, Javaid, & Goraya, 2012). In most of the areas, there was not writ of the government in the past. Although the situation is much better, there are still steps to be taken by the federal and the local leaders. Both of them are to take preventive measures to avoid any mishap in future. Blaming only the federal government or only to the local rulers cannot free any of the party from their duties. The representatives of federalism, especially with the regard to Balochistan, will have to consult the local or regional politicians to infuriate the spirit of nationalism among them.

Need of federalism for successful completion of CPEC

Among a number of other national issues, creating consensus on the route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the contemporary one. During the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping, signing ceremony of more than 51 agreements with Pakistan occurred. CPEC encompasses a number of other projects besides the road infrastructure. It was signed on April 20, 2015 and the completion year has been predicted to be 2019. From the total investment of \$46 billion, \$11 billion is to be spent for improving the road infrastructure all around the country. CPEC is to be constructed with this sum of money. The length of CPEC is 2,442 kilometer, and it will connect – by road – one side of the country to another. China will import and export its products through this route from its territory Kashgar to the port city of Pakistan Gwader (Ahmar; Irshad, 2015).

The remaining amount is to be spent for gratifying the energy deficit in Pakistan. The whole investment is being considered to be of utmost value for not only Pakistan and China but also for the region, the surrounding countries. The trade in South Asia will efficiently be conducted comfortably and cost-efficiently. Though the concerns of India, all-time rival of Pakistan, are comprehensible, the apprehensions from provincial and local political parties inside of Pakistan are out of most of the people's mind. India immediately expressed her concerns to China and tried to depict a gruesome picture of Pakistan's security situation (Ranjan, 2015). Fortunately China proved herself an all-time ally of Pakistan once again, and turned a deaf ear to Indian concerns. Indeed, China made Pakistan aware of any possible and clandestine attempt by Indian spy agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) to disturb this project through Baloch insurgents.

There have been a number of seminars at the local and regional level where the native politicians expressed their grievances over the project and stressed over the completion of the western route first. Most of the similar politicians do not even know what the western and eastern routes consist of. Without getting familiar with the facts and figures they have started off creating ambiguity in the minds of the nation. They are attempting to project their regional status rather their national identity. It is fact that no matter if it is the eastern or the western route, the finishing point of any route will contribute prosperity in the country. Federal government is doing something to imbue nationalism among the people by expressing its role in the regions which once were ignored by the same-level administration. Strategically thinking, the successful completion of the project will change the fate of Pakistan financially and non-financially. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Planning, along with other cabinet ministers of the federal government

defended CPEC and assured that it would justly address all issues. The project has been secured by the special unit of Pakistan Army. The personnel of this unit will protect the workers and engineers working on the projects. Premier Nawaz Sharif visited Balochistan many times solely and with the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif. The political leadership took the local people into confidence and assured the development of Balochistan on priority basis.

Federal government needs to ensure that the completion of this the project occurs at any cost; no matter wherever it is being constructed, it will benefit principally to the regions where the transport infrastructure will be constructed, and commonly to the entire country. Till this time it has been triumphant and being completed with no major hurdle. The project will need at least three years to be accomplished. On one side, there is a weak structure of federal government, which is said to be improving by the national leaders in Islamabad, and on the other side, there is non-seriousness from the local political parties. Apparently the latter does not seem to be supporting to the prior. As soon as the cooperation will be raised from both the sides, there will be development and an era of carnage will be terminated (Harrison, 1978; MansoorAkberKundi& Jahangir, 2002). Until that people of Pakistan will be suffering from the recklessness of the regional and national politicians.

Causes of an enfeebled federalism in Pakistan

Pakistan has been ruled by military dictators more than it has been ruled by politicians (Kaplan & are Value-Neutral, 2000). The army generals took power with the slogan of making the people more commanding and powerful by promoting the federal values; the same was the case when the seasonal and ever-green politicians came into power. Unfortunately both of them could not promote federalism in its true spirit. They even could not create a link between federalism and nationalism. People need federalism which could consider everyone equivalent and could promote development in all parts of country evenly. It is obvious that the government of a country needs nationalism from the masses, while the people need federalism in consideration. They need presence of their representatives. The causes of lack of federalism are many in number depending on the situation. After taking into account the already mentioned events in Pakistan's history, one can derive following factors, which are responsible for fragile structure of federal government and destruction of the nationalism.

Pursuing the personal and local interests

When every person of a nation starts thinking only about him and gets out of the national horizon, the bonds of federalism becomes weaker. Most of the rulers in the history of the country stressed over their personal or party interests (Husain, 1999). Their agenda could not cross the regional or the provincial precincts. In general, every party has been responsible for pursuing the local interest ignoring the addenda of the state. Provincialism has already caused Pakistan a lot of financial and non-financial loss. The county is already suffering from terrorism, deteriorating economical situation, ethical and sectarian division, low level of living and other similar issues (Momani, 2004). She really requires dire attention of all the political leaders and wants them to pursue Pakistan's agenda rather their own.

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Absence of harmony between the provincial and federal government

The continuous confrontation between the provincial and the federal government is another crucial cause of weakened federalism (Sayeed, 1954). The issues between both of the stakeholders might create disharmony. The ultimate loss is to the masses, and their reaction will be hatred towards the federalism, thus they start forsaking nationalism or national cause. When they are unable to be heard how they are going to be remained attached with the federalism, a time will come when they will start pondering over pursuing their regional or provincial agenda. The political parties having strength and reputation among the people of the province might create chaos. The loyalty of the people to the federal government is lost. In the contemporary time, the absence of harmony between the two crucial entities can cause commotion at every level. The federal government has been incapable of determining its position. It will have to decide if it wants to get along with the provincial government or not. It is basically the matter of determining the priorities. If the matter is significant and the provincial government is unduly creating uproar, just like what happened in the case of Kalabagh, the federal government after taking into account the opinion of the people can disagree with the provincial authorities (Safdar, 2004). By doing so the nationalism will not affect, but the federalism will strengthened as it showed its presence. Though this is another situation and needs to ponder over depending on the essence of program or the project.

Inefficiency of public sector organizations

The role of public organizations is negligible in promoting federalism. They can empower the foundations of nationalism in the country by promoting federalism and its values. They are the symbol of federalism and can leave positive impression on the minds of the people, which will result in nationalism. The most important thing is that they are the organs of a body, which is federal government, and are required to form just and equitable rules and regulations for the people of every province. Their influence should favor all the provinces equally. Furthermore their presence needs to be maintained and increased as the time passes. The recruitment policy of the governmental agencies is not clear. It creates ambiguity when the people cannot sort out the method of distributing the posts on provincial bases. The method of recruitment should be bluntly revealed and the necessary reasons should also be exposed so that the perception of only favoring the province of the Punjab could be faded away in the minds of the people of other provinces.

Lack of democracy and democratic principles

Democracy takes into account the opinion of others. The principles of democracy are based on the provision of the assistance to not only the provincial governments but also to every political party. The federalism enhances the ability of enduring the harsh criticism from every corner. The democratic principles that are based on justice, equality, respect for others, better standards of living, etc. seem to be in absence in the country (Sen, 2001; Upadhyaya, 2008). The democratic principles have been bashed by most of the politicians and military dictators of Pakistan alike. Achieving the objective of nationalism will become plain sailing only when the democratic values are adopted. The revival of federalism is adjoined with

democracy which will ultimately nurture nationalism among the people of a scattered country.

Installation of the foreign agenda

It is justified to say that Pakistan, from the very early times, has been the victim of the foreign influence (M. A. Shah, 1997). The major political parties in every reign could not promote the national agenda. The individual authoritarian rulers of the country even could not attain and pursue the interests of the country. The federating units started off repealing the objectives of the federation with the passage of the time. Thus the division of various ethnic groups became deeper and more dominant. Unfortunately, not only the super power America but also the regional countries have tried to put their influence on the governmental decision making and even to the lives of a common man socially and ideologically. Some Pakistanis favor Saudi Arab's intervention in the religious and social matters and follow the Saudis, while the others favor Iranian agenda and follow Iranian footsteps (Nasr, 2002; Zahab, 2002).

Remedies/measures to strengthen federalism

Although Pakistan could not attain success in gaining an effective federal system from the very beginning of her inception; she is going towards the right direction especially with the revival of democracy. The second consecutive democratic reign of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan's People Party (PPP) being the first one, in the country is expected to positively and constructively influence the factor of federalism in many aspects. Instead of having majority in the province of Balochistan, PML-N decided to give an opportunity to National Party (NP) – exclusively based in Balochistan. On the terms settled in Murree Accord, agreed between PML-N and NP, Professor Abdul Maalik was unanimously elected as the Chief Minister of the province. After gaining success in the general elections of May 2013, this accord was proposed by PML-N. This was considered to be one of the steps that promoted the importance of federalism. Unfortunately, the weakened federalism is still prevailing in the country that will utterly lead towards the destruction of nationalism if not controlled. This weakness is bringing about lack of unity among various groups of people. Some of the remedies that can instigate the sentiments of federalism in Pakistan have been mentioned below. Their implementation can cause harmony among the masses.

Effective decision making with the participation of every stakeholder

Constitutional amendments are passed in the parliament that is the nursery of forming rules and regulations. It is a federal institution, which needs to ensure the involvement of the representatives from the remote areas of Pakistan (Baxter, 1974). The rational decision making is required in the times to come, and this will be occurred at the time when every stakeholder, from every province, is given chance to speak up and suggest something that best describes the situation prevailing in his constituency. With the participation, the sense of ownership and accountability nurtures up among the diverse segment of people. They feel devotion for the people belonging to other provinces. One of the major reasons of falling of Bangladesh was the non-involvement of the Bengalis in the decisions making process. Federalism is strengthened when any federal entity is listening to the concerns of every stakeholder.

Delivery timely justice

People want to have access to justice. Unfortunately, Pakistan falls into the category of one of those countries, which is having a very critical and slack justice system. Inefficiency of the just system of a country affects the mentality of investors too, which directly and indirectly leads towards declined standard of living of the nation as a whole (Klapper& Love, 2004). People are bound to pay a huge sum of money for getting the initial legal process started. Provision of every sort of justice is a federal phenomenon, and requires federal government to take precise and quick action in delivering it on time and on the individual level (A. Shah, 1997). Every province of Pakistan has about the similar situation in this regard. Most of the cases go unreported as people want to avoid getting indulged into the legal proceedings which are expensive and unbearable in most of the cases. With the failure in the provision of the timely and rational justice, Jirga system is being adopted, especially in the remote areas of Pakistan. This system especially prevails in Khyber PakhtunKhawa (KPK), Southern Punjab, Northern Sind, and in most of the areas of Balochistan. It is the duty of the federal government to realize the dream of getting efficient justice. Federalism is about maintaining rule of law and providing timely justice. When the poor or the middle class of Pakistan are unable have justice, how they are going to support nationalism. They would be having no faith in their government.

On one side, people can save their money, and on the other side they can have access to the timely justice that they might not have acquired in decades. With the provision of the justice by the people might feel satisfied with the performance of the system. After they get this one of the facility, they will improve then the spirit of nationalism in them. Otherwise they are scattered unaware of the situation prevailing in the country. Federal government of Pakistan needs to demonstrate its role in strengthening the federalism in the country by having an equal and efficient system of justice in urban as well as in rural areas. One of the crucial federal organs of the country is the Supreme Court (SC) which needs to advice the lower courts to deliver justice on prime bases (Ahmad, 2005). It will enhance confidence and loyalty of the people.

People-to-people contact

This sort of interaction can be made at any level depending on the mission taken into consideration. The government and its institutions should ensure the interaction of the people from different provinces (Adeney, 2009; Muhammad, 2012). Though people are already attached with each other socially, culturally, morally, there is still an acute need to have people get in touch with the ones from other provinces. The Inter-Provincial sport tournaments, student-to-student interaction in educational and non-educational institutions, raising and teaching the significance of unity are some of the activities that can be performed for the betterment of the people at the local level. The significance of the people to people contact is not only productive in securing the sovereignty of the country but also in understanding the pains of others. The mishap of Bangladesh happened due to not having any structure which could support people to people contact. The Bengalis considered themselves out of the national horizon. The lack of unity was the

blunder of the Eastern and the Western Pakistani-originated influential stakeholders.

Social awareness regarding the importance of federalism

The federal government and its departments need to actively participate in workshops and seminars, news' programs, and other similar shows to raise the awareness of federalism. The people from various regions of country can be asked to take part in the national educational, social, economical, and other programs that could offer them representation on the country level. Their political representation can yield positive results on their regions as they will be able to have the local issues solved. When the representation of people from a specific region ends, the emotions of deprivation flare up (Campbell & McLean, 2002; Majeed, 2010). The federal government should express its presence at local level, and the local representatives should express their presence at the federal level. This will bring a new and much waited era of nationalism in the country.

Different governments but implementation of the one-point agenda

Though there are and will be provincial governments of various parties in different provinces of Pakistan, but they should move forward for a common goal. As a country, Pakistan needs unity among her political parties. The unnecessary criticism on any of the ruling or opposition party might bring about the same tumult that the country has already faced in 1970s. Every government should be responsible for its activities. The federal government should ask the provincial governments to act for the betterment of the people till the extent the latter has influence. The basic agenda should be the sponsorship of synchronization. Communication among the federal and the provincial institutions should be amplified to comprehend the issues at any level unreservedly.

Concluding thoughts

Federalism needs to be strengthened in the country and among the masses. It is directly related to the nationalism. The central government needs to express its presence in all circumstances. It has been formed for just one reason and that is fortifying nationalism among the people of various units of the federation. The tree of federalism will bear the fruit of nationalism. The presence of a federal government over the provincial and local ones is of utmost importance (Cheema, Khwaja, & Qadir, 2006). By taking into consideration the past consequences of lack of federalism, not only politicians but also persons and organizations having authority should act upon democratic principles. Pakistan cannot suffer any other mishap. Every stakeholder of the nation are required to feel the pain of others (Ali, 1987; Ziring, 1984). They should be united politically, socially, morally, and humanitarily to preserve the federal values. There is a dire need to comprehend the meaning of federalism, and this should be taken place in a broader context so that every relevant factor could be enclosed in it. People of a country, in the case of democracy, choose their representatives to have their issues resolved. These issues vary from one region to another or from one province to another. For the common man, the purpose of casting the vote is to gain access to the indispensable amenities. It is the job of the federal government to get this objective fulfilled as hurry as possible and with the necessary cooperation with provincial and local

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governments so that the deteriorating situation of the nationalism could be improved.

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