

# **ISLAMIC PARTIES IN PAKISTAN**

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## ISLAMIC PARTIES IN PAKISTAN

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The ability of Pakistan's radical Islamic parties to mount limited but potentially violent opposition to the government has made democratic reform, and by extension the reduction of religious extremism and development of a more peaceful and stable society, more challenging. This is a reflection of those parties' well-organised activist base, which is committed to a narrow partisan agenda and willing to defend it through violence. While their electoral support remains limited, earlier Islamisation programs have given them a strong legal and political apparatus that enables them to influence policy far beyond their numerical strength. An analysis of party agendas and organisation, as well as other sources of influence in judicial, political and civil society institutions, is therefore vital to assessing how Pakistan's main religious parties apply pressure on government, as well as the ability and willingness of the mainstream parties that are moderate on religious issues to resist that pressure.

These parties' ability to demonstrate support for their various agendas is an expression of coherent internal structures, policymaking processes and relations between the leadership and the rank-and-file. These aspects of party functioning are, therefore, as critical to understanding their role in the polity and prospects of influencing policy in the future as in understanding their relationship to the state.

The Islamic parties that are the subject of this report might operate within the current political order, but their ultimate aim is to replace it with one that is based on narrow, discriminatory interpretations of Islam. They have also taken equivocal positions on militant jihad: on the one hand, they insist on their distinction from militant outfits by virtue of working peacefully and within the democratic system; on the other, they admit to sharing the ideological goal of enforcing Sharia (Islamic law), while maintaining sizeable madrasa and mosque networks that are breeding grounds for many extremist groups.

Moreover, belying their claims of working peacefully, the major Islamic parties maintain militant wings, violent student organisations and ties to extremist groups, and have proved more than willing to achieve political objectives through force. After parlaying military support during the 1980s into significant political and legislative gains, and even absent military support and the electoral assistance

that entailed, the parties have still been able to defend earlier gains through intimidation and violent agitation on the streets. In response, faced with their opposition, the mainstream moderate parties have often abandoned promised reforms while in government, or even made further concessions, such as the National Assembly's constitutional amendment in 1974 declaring the Ahmadi sect non-Muslim. Such compromises have not offset the pressure of the *ulama* (religious scholars), as intended, but only emboldened religious hardliners.

The success of the six-party Islamic coalition, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), in the 2002 elections in North-west Frontier Province and Balochistan was initially perceived to be testament to the Islamic parties' power if they were unified in a single bloc. This result, however, was in fact due to massively rigged polls by the military regime of General Pervez Musharraf, which sought to sideline its main opposition, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Furthermore, the alliance, as reflected in its subsequent breakup, arguably revealed more about internal differences between the parties – particularly between the two largest and most influential, the revivalist Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and the orthodox Deobandi Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI) – than about their unity. Deprived of the military's support in the 2008 polls, the MMA was routed by the PPP, PML-N and Pashtun nationalist Awami National Party (ANP).

Although the Islamic parties support the enforcement of Sharia, they represent different schools of thought, and their resulting acrimonious relations have resulted in intra-religious violence and created splinter factions that have weakened the original party or, in some cases, made it defunct. This has also diminished the likelihood of a restored alliance in the next general election. Nevertheless, the Fazlur Rehman-led faction of the JUI (JUI-F), the JI and smaller Islamic parties remain relevant due to their relative internal coherence; a committed hardcore base, including youth recruited through madrasas and, particularly in the JI's case, university campuses; and the ability to leverage state institutions.

Their prospects for access to meaningful political power, however, still depend on military patronage. Should an

ambitious high command decide to disrupt the current democratic dispensation, as in the past, it would likely rely on the Islamic parties to counter the mainstream moderate opposition. In a sustained democratic transition, however, the ability of these parties to influence the polity will depend on the effectiveness of the mainstream moderate parties to consolidate civilian rule and mobilise support for political and legal reform.

Discriminatory religious provisions and judicial and political structures such as the Federal Shariat Court and the Council of Islamic Ideology remain on the books and in frequent use. In the current climate, if the government is to fulfil earlier pledges to repeal discriminatory legislation, the mainstream parties, particularly the PPP and PML-N, will have to exploit their far greater and moderate popular base and create consensus on restoring and defending fundamental rights and equality for all citizens. Their success in rallying nationwide mass support against the Musharraf regime in 2007, ultimately effecting its ouster, demonstrates their capacity to do so. Building on the gains they have made with the return to civilian rule, both major parties should, adopt a policy of zero tolerance toward all forms of religious intolerance and extremism as a fundamental element of their efforts to stabilise a still fragile transition the success of which is vital to the country's stability. But it will require far more active engagement with party activists and grassroots organisations to implement that policy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*To reduce religious intolerance and sectarian violence, enforce the rule of law, and strengthen democratic governance*

### To the Executive Branch of the Government of Pakistan:

1. Prosecute any individual or political party encouraging or supporting violence, including through hate speech and rallies against religious and sectarian minorities.
2. Require Islamic parties to disband their militant wings by invoking Article 256 of the constitution, prohibiting private militias; and take strong action against those that refuse, including disqualifying them from contesting elections.
3. Remove the ban on student unions but prosecute any student or student group engaging in hate speech or violence.
4. Revive earlier plans to reform the madrasa sector, specifically by:
  - a) registering all madrasas and enforcing transparent financial reporting requirements;
  - b) banning violent jihadi and sectarian teachings from syllabuses;
  - c) closing all madrasas affiliated with banned militant organisations and prosecuting their leaders, if sufficient evidence exists, under existing criminal law regarding violent acts or involvement in incitement to violence; and
  - d) keeping any madrasa suspected of links with militant jihadi groups under close surveillance.

### To the Legislative Branch of the Government of Pakistan:

5. Repeal the Nizam-e-Adl 2009 establishing Sharia in the Malakand region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province and avoid any concessions to Islamic parties in the future that undermine basic constitutional rights and federal parliamentary democracy.
6. Ameliorate discriminatory Islamic laws that are still in effect by:
  - a) introducing and enforcing strict punishments for false/frivolous accusations of blasphemy or crimes under the Hudood Ordinances; and
  - b) ensuring a high level of protection for judges, prosecutors, witnesses and accused during trials under these laws.
7. Pass a constitutional amendment to abolish the Federal Shariat Court, whose functions to review legislation for repugnancy to Islam are covered by the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII).
8. Ensure the impartiality of the Council of Islamic Ideology, so long as it remains in place, by:
  - a) prohibiting parliamentarians from serving as its chairperson; and
  - b) abiding by the letter and spirit of its constitution to ensure a diverse and representative membership, including judges, scholars and women.

### To the Judicial Branch of the Government of Pakistan:

9. Develop a clear interpretation of the state's authority to enforce Islamic moral values that is consistent with the Supreme Court's 2006 decision on the Hisba Bill; and protect constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights by directing parliament, pursuant to such judicial doctrine, to repeal the Nizam-e-Adl 2009, the Hudood Ordinances and all discriminatory religious provisions in the Pakistan Penal Code.

**To the Mainstream Political Parties of Pakistan,  
in particular the PPP and PML-N:**

10. Cease partnerships for short-term political and electoral gain with Islamic parties and groups that propagate or resort to violence and/or limit options to implement democratic reforms.
11. Initiate a national dialogue and engage party bases to build public support for repealing all laws that discriminate on the basis of religion, sect and gender, including the blasphemy law, anti-Ahmadi laws, Hudood Ordinances and *Qisas* (retribution) and *Diyat* (blood money) laws.

**Islamabad/Brussels, 12 December 2011**

## ISLAMIC PARTIES IN PAKISTAN

### I. INTRODUCTION

Although the Islamic parties were routed in the 2008 elections, they remain well organised, retain a committed activist base and can still impede vital reforms. While no longer in power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Balochistan, as they were from 2002 to 2007, their influence on some major national issues, particularly Islamic legislation, remains significant.<sup>1</sup> As such, their role in the polity should not be ignored, even if their electoral strength is limited. Through their ultra-orthodox and exclusionary ideologies, the Islamic parties covered in this report are largely responsible for the religious intolerance, sectarian violence and militancy that threatens the security of the Pakistani citizen and the state.

By law, Muslims alone can hold the highest constitutional offices of president and prime minister. While this clause discriminates against non-Muslim citizens, Pakistan is constitutionally a liberal democracy, not a theocratic state. An estimated 96 per cent of Pakistan's population is Muslim, around 75-80 per cent Sunni and 15-20 per cent Shia.<sup>2</sup> Sunnis are further divided into four broad categories: Barelvis, Deobandis, Ahle Hadith and revivalist, modernist movements such as the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI). Deobandi parties<sup>3</sup> are strongly critical of

the Barelvi, Sufi and Shia strands of Islam. While the majority of Sunnis belong to the Barelvi sect, which is influenced by traditional rites and practices associated with Sufism, often around shrines and hereditary saints, and have historically kept religion by and large separate from politics, this has changed, with Barelvi parties now part of alliances with an ultra-orthodox and sectarian agenda.

Around 25 Islamic parties participate in politics in some form,<sup>4</sup> but their success has depended less on electoral victories than on support from military regimes. Their influence also lies in their ability to pressure governments from outside parliament or by entering into politically expedient alliances with the two largest mainstream parties that are moderate on religious issues: the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

The six-party Islamic alliance, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA),<sup>5</sup> was unable to compete with the mainstream moderate parties in the 2008 polls, largely because it was bereft of the vital military support that had enabled its success in 2002,<sup>6</sup> and also because of its failure to provide good governance in the two provinces it dominated for five years.<sup>7</sup> Its main rival, the PPP, now leads the coalition government in the centre, while the secular Awami National Party (ANP) has formed the government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and is a coalition partner in the PPP-led government in Balochistan.

<sup>1</sup> For earlier Crisis Group analysis on Islamic parties in Pakistan, see Asia Reports N°73, *Unfulfilled Promises: Pakistan's Failure to Tackle Extremism*, 16 January 2004; N°49, *Pakistan: The Mullahs and the Military*, 20 March 2003; N°36, *Pakistan: Madrasas, Extremism and the Military*, 29 July 2002; and N°95, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, 18 April 2005. See also Crisis Group Asia Reports N°178, *Pakistan: Countering Militancy in FATA*, 21 October 2009; N°130, *Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism*, 29 March 2007; and N°125, *Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants*, 11 December 2006.

<sup>2</sup> For detailed analysis of Pakistan's sectarian landscape, see Crisis Group Asia Reports N°164, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge*, 13 March 2009; and *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> The most prominent of the Deobandi parties include two factions of the JUI, led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) and Maulana Samiul Haq (JUI-S), which rely on the Deobandi madrasa-mosque sector for their influence and support, particularly in KPK and Balochistan's Pashtun belt. Both

parties were closely associated with the Taliban movement in Afghanistan and maintain contacts with Pakistani Taliban factions.

<sup>4</sup> Amir Rana, *A to Z of Jehadi Organisations in Pakistan* (Lahore, 2004), p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> The MMA was composed of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F), Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Samiul Haq (JUI-S), Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan (JUP), the Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith and the Islami Tehreek Pakistan (ITP).

<sup>6</sup> In those elections, the Islamic parties won a majority in North-west Frontier Province (NWFP) for the first time in history and obtained a significant share of seats in Balochistan, as well as the National Assembly. NWFP was renamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) in April 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Many MMA members acknowledge that their government failed public expectations, amid allegations of rampant corruption. Crisis Group interviews, MMA members, Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar, February-March 2011.

Yet, the Islamic parties, particularly the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F), but also the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI),<sup>8</sup> remain significant political entities due to their ability to mobilise street power, their influence on public institutions, including major universities, and, in the JUI-F's case, sizeable pockets of support in some Pashtun-majority districts, particularly in KPK and Balochistan. Equally important, they are able to leverage a legal and judicial system that, due to earlier Islamisation programs, provides the Islamist lobby with a powerful political apparatus. Furthermore, the Islamic parties have, linking up with anti-government forces such as Imran Khan's Tehreek-i-Insaaf, joined street protests since late-2011, calling for the PPP-led government's ouster.

General perceptions about increasing conservatism in Pakistan, particularly after the assassinations of the Punjab governor, Salman Taseer, in January 2011 and the central government's minority affairs minister, Shahbaz Bhatti, two months later, for opposing the blasphemy laws, are so far unsubstantiated. They are certainly not reflected in any visible increase in Islamic parties' popularity. Nevertheless, many Islamic, particularly Deobandi, parties are the beneficiaries of an environment of rising Islamist militancy. Even traditionally more moderate Barelvi politics has become increasingly militant: in 2009, many Barelvi parties, including the Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan (JUP), aligned with the militant Sunni Tehreek to establish a coalition called the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), which strongly opposes any amendments to discriminatory blasphemy laws and supports Governor Taseer's assassin.

The Ahle Hadith, an ultra-orthodox, puritanical sect inspired by Sunni Wahhabi doctrine, has benefited from a higher rate of conversion over the past few decades, but its main political party, the Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith, remains far from influential and thus dependent on alliances of convenience with former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's PML-N.<sup>9</sup> The Ahle Hadith sect has close links with many terrorist outfits, most notably the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JD), the renamed Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, which was responsible for the November 2008 Mumbai attacks.

Shia politics, too, have become more extreme. Shia parties were formed during the 1980s in response to the Islamisation drive of General Zia-ul-Haq, the strongman of the period, and drew support from the Khomeini revolution in neighbouring Iran. However, with zeal for an Iran-like Shia revolution subsiding, they are now attempting to recast themselves as mainstream Islamic parties,

rather than minority sectarian actors. Above all, Shia militancy and political activism are primarily a response to Deobandi extremism.

An Islamist takeover in Pakistan is highly unlikely, whether through militant violence or the ballot box. Nevertheless, so long as the Islamic parties are able to pressure governments, through parliamentary and/or often violent street politics, they will continue to obstruct vital democratic reforms, thus reinforcing an environment in which religious intolerance, vigilantism, and militancy thrive, the rule of law continues to deteriorate, and elected governments are unable to stabilise.

Even as the Islamist landscape evolves, the JUI-F and the JI remain the two most influential Islamic parties, representing the two main strands of Pakistani religious politics, Deobandi orthodoxy and Islamic revivalism respectively. The JUI-F depends on electoral success to be a major national-level player. The JI, which considers itself "non-sectarian",<sup>10</sup> lacks an electoral constituency of its own but is arguably the most organised of the major Islamic parties. Moreover, its founder, Syed Abul Ala Maududi, is widely credited with introducing a political discourse that other Islamic parties, even opponents, still draw on. Relying as it often does on violence in the street and using a committed worker base, the JI is able to influence debate even while it lacks electoral support. The role and impact of smaller Islamic parties also demand scrutiny, particularly their ability to mobilise on the streets and on campuses, as well as their links, much like the JI and the JUI-F, to militant outfits.

Knowledge of the internal structures of the Islamic parties, their policymaking processes and philosophies is critical to understanding their role in the polity and prospects for influencing policy. This report examines the internal workings, policies and agendas of the major Islamic parties, as well as their relationship with the state, particularly with the military, in order to assess how they maintain political influence despite limited electoral support.

<sup>8</sup> The JI had boycotted the 2008 polls.

<sup>9</sup> Rana, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>10</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JI members, Islamabad and Lahore, March 2011.

## II. ENCROACHING INFLUENCE

### A. POST-INDEPENDENCE

Most of Pakistan's major Islamic parties originated in pre-partition India in the early 1900s; the majority strongly opposed the two-nation theory,<sup>11</sup> subscribing instead to a pan-Islamic identity and a global Muslim *umma* (community). The opponents of a separate state for Muslims included the Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Syed Abul Ala Maududi who advocated Muslim "communal consciousness" as early as 1937.<sup>12</sup> With Pakistan's creation, however, these parties adapted their agendas to focus on a constitution that would provide the young country an Islamic identity as the Muslim League leadership grappled with the role of Islam in the new state.<sup>13</sup>

The Islamic parties' ability to pressure the political elite was evident in the Objectives Resolution of March 1949, adopted by the Constituent Assembly, according to which sovereignty would "belong to Allah Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated the State of Pakistan, through its people". The state would enable citizens to "order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam". Yet, the Objectives Resolution was only a part of the 1973 constitution's preamble until it was incorporated into the body of the constitution as part of General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamisation program.

Despite their role as pressure groups, resorting then as now to violent street protests, the ability of the Islamic parties to advance their political agenda remained rela-

tively limited during the first decades of Pakistan's independence. In 1953, for instance, Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin refused to accede to the JI's demand to declare the Ahmadi sect<sup>14</sup> non-Muslim and to dismiss the Ahmadi foreign minister, Chaudhri Zafarullah Khan. JI-led anti-Ahmadi riots in Lahore in 1953 resulted in widespread looting and killing and imposition of martial law in the city.<sup>15</sup> A judicial inquiry, the Munir Report,<sup>16</sup> argued concerning the status of Ahmadis that: "Keeping in view the several different definitions given by the *ulama*, need we make any comment except that no two learned divines are agreed on this fundamental .... And if we adopt the definition given by any one of the *ulama*, we remain Muslims according to the view of that *alim* [religious scholar, singular of *ulama*], but *kafirs* [infidels] according to the definitions of everyone else".<sup>17</sup>

In the 1970 elections, three Islamic parties – the JI, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) – fielded 299 candidates in the country's east and west wings, of which only eighteen were elected. The military's refusal to honour the election results, in which the Bengali-led Awami League won an outright majority, led to civil war in the east wing. During this conflict the JI's front organisations, including its student wing, the Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT), were responsible for widespread violence and targeted killings of Bengali political dissidents.<sup>18</sup> With the civil war culminating in war with India and the birth of Bangladesh in December 1971, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which had won a majority in the west wing, formed the country's first popularly elected government.

In 1973, the parliament unanimously adopted a new constitution establishing federal parliamentary democracy, with guaranteed fundamental rights, including freedom of religion. Article 2, however, declared Islam the state religion. Scarcely a year later, after the JI led another series of violent anti-Ahmadi demonstrations in Punjab, the National Assembly, succumbing to Islamist pressure, passed a constitutional amendment (the second) declaring the Ahmadis non-Muslim.<sup>19</sup> While the ruling party had acceded to the pressure of the Islamic parties in the hope of neutralising their opposition, this concession emboldened them further.

<sup>11</sup> The two-nation theory was the basis for the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. For those ascribing to it, Pakistan was the natural culmination of a movement aimed at providing Muslims, seen as culturally and traditionally distinct from Hindus, their own homeland.

<sup>12</sup> Seyyed Vali Raza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: the Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley, 2004), p. 104.

<sup>13</sup> Mohammad Ali Jinnah's 11 August 1947 speech is a frequent reference point for both Islamists and secularists in Pakistan. In it, he stated: "In course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the state". Text of Jinnah's address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, printed in Independence Day supplement, *Dawn*, 14 August 1999. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F)'s information secretary, Hafiz Riaz Durrani, described this speech as a "betrayal of the people of Pakistan". Crisis Group interview, Lahore, 11 March 2011. JI members choose to emphasise instances when Jinnah identified the need for a distinct homeland for Muslims. Crisis Group interviews, JI members, Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, February-April 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Ahmadis are a Sunni minority sect, followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, whom a section of the community believes was a twentieth century prophet.

<sup>15</sup> Crisis Group Asia Report N°160, *Reforming the Judiciary in Pakistan*, 16 October 2008, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup> After Justice Muhammad Munir, who led the inquiry.

<sup>17</sup> Report of the court of inquiry constituted under Punjab Act II of 1954 to enquire into the Punjab disturbances of 1953, Lahore, 1954.

<sup>18</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror* (New Delhi, 2005), p. 63.

<sup>19</sup> Constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly and Senate, the lower and upper chambers of parliament, respectively.



Bent on destabilising a government they perceived as anti-Islamic and determined to Islamise the political system, the Islamic parties joined a military-backed alliance of anti-PPP parties in 1977, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), that sought to oust Bhutto from power. According to an analyst, “they employed the catch-all slogan of *Nizam-i-Mustafa* [the Islamic system of government] which meant different things to different people: to orthodox and fundamentalists it meant a polity which accommodated their religio-political views and guaranteed an effective role for them in the political system”.<sup>20</sup> When the PPP won a two-thirds majority in the 1977 elections, the PNA claimed widespread electoral rigging and led violent street demonstrations, enabling Zia, the army chief, to declare martial law. Reneging on pledges to hold elections within the constitutionally defined period of 90 days, Zia declared that he would Islamise the polity before new polls could be held.

Bhutto was hanged on a murder charge in 1979 after a sham trial. In this, too, the Islamic parties played a role. The JI president, Mian Tufail Mohammad, campaigned aggressively for his execution, even pressuring two others accused in the case, both JI members, to confess and testify against Bhutto.<sup>21</sup> Some judges on the Lahore High Court and Supreme Court benches that pronounced and upheld the death sentence were affiliated with the JI.<sup>22</sup>

## B. ZIA AND POST-ZIA

The Zia regime banned political parties and detained scores of opposition leaders and activists, while fostering politics shaped largely by local, tribal, ethnic and religious considerations. Zia’s eleven-year rule also entrenched Islamisation, with extensive reforms to the constitution and law to make orthodox interpretations of Sunni Islam the state ideology.<sup>23</sup> Under the Zia regime, the military’s relationship with the JI and other conservative Islamic parties deepened at the expense of moderate Islamic actors like the Bareilvi JUP. Islamic injunctions and jurisprudence were guided by the JI and the Deobandi *ulama*.<sup>24</sup> Those reforms, discussed in more detail below, are vital to understanding the influence of these parties on the polity today.

In return for countering opposition to the military, the JI was also allowed to extend its influence to the bureaucracy, judiciary and public universities; members and sympathisers were appointed to powerful posts in each institution. The Islamisation of the legal and judicial processes and the JI presence in state and educational institutions remain fundamental to the party’s political influence, even as it has lost much of whatever electoral strength it once had.

Cold War dynamics favoured General Zia’s domestic preferences. As a frontline ally of the U.S. in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, the military received billions of dollars in military and economic assistance that was channelled to radical Islamic groups. Madrasas that served as avenues of recruitment and indoctrination for the jihad mushroomed, and the Islamic parties, particularly the JUI-F and the JI, became critical intermediaries between the military and the foot soldiers fighting the Soviets. According to a former member of the JI’s student wing, the JI and JUI, by calling for jihad not only against the Soviets but also the Soviet-backed Najibullah government, advanced new tactics of attacks against other Muslims, a precursor to the inward-oriented extremism of militant outfits such as the anti-Shia Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Pakistani Taliban groups today.<sup>25</sup>

Zia’s sudden death and general elections in 1988 brought the moderate left-of-centre PPP back to power, with Bhutto’s daughter, Benazir, as the first woman prime minister. Her government, however, was constantly challenged by the military high command and its civilian ally, the Islamic Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI), an alliance of centre-right and Islamic parties patched together by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) directorate. The IJI included the JI and Sharif’s PML-N.<sup>26</sup>

That the JI’s primary loyalty lay with the military was evident, when in 1993, despite its alliance with the PML-N, it launched major protests against Sharif’s government at the military’s urging, contributing at least in part to its dismissal by the president that year.<sup>27</sup> The JI subsequently spearheaded violent demonstrations against Benazir Bhutto’s second government in 1996, which was ousted in a military-led intervention in November.<sup>28</sup> Despite these demonstrations of

<sup>20</sup> Hassan Askari-Rizvi, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan: 1947-1997* (Lahore, 2000), p. 234.

<sup>21</sup> Text of affidavit by Supreme Court advocate Farooq Be- daar to the Lahore High Court, 2 May 2011, reproduced in Shakil Shaikh, “Prosecution manipulated evidence in ZAB trial”, *The News*, 5 May 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Afzal Khan, “Bhutto’s judicial murder: Some stray thoughts”, *The News*, April 9, 2011.

<sup>23</sup> Crisis Group Asia Report N°102, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, 28 September 2005, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Mullahs and the Military*, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Saleem Safi, “The Taliban and our hypocrisy”, *Jang*, 10 February 2009.

<sup>26</sup> A former ISI director general, Lt. General Hameed Gul, who was removed by Benazir Bhutto, has confessed that he provided the funds for and facilitated the formation of the IJI alliance. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed the Bhutto government in 1990 at the military’s behest, eighteen months after it took office. With Lt. General Asad Durrani, then director general of ISI, disbursing millions of rupees to prominent IJI candidates, the 1990 elections brought Sharif to power. Crisis Group Asia Report N° 203, *Reforming Pakistan’s Electoral System*, 30 March 2011.

<sup>27</sup> Crisis Group Report, *The Mullahs and the Military*, op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> In 1996, former Air Marshal Asghar Khan filed a petition in the Supreme Court against Durrani and Army Chief Aslam Beg alleg-

street power, the JI had little electoral support. Having parted with the PML-N, it, like other Islamic parties, failed to win much of the vote in the 1993 elections, a pattern repeated in 1997. The electoral fortunes of the Islamic parties changed, however, under General Musharraf's regime.

### C. THE MMA

After seizing power in October 1999, the Musharraf military regime extensively rigged the 2002 elections to sideline its political opposition, spearheaded by the PPP and the PML-N. With the military's active support, the six-party Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), campaigning on the dual issues of enforcement of Sharia and opposition to the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan, emerged as the third largest party in the National Assembly, behind the PPP and Musharraf's Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid-i-Azam (PML-Q); composed mainly of PML-N defectors, it achieved a majority in Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and shared power with the PML-Q in Balochistan.<sup>29</sup>

In the National Assembly, the MMA voted for Musharraf's seventeenth constitutional amendment, which validated the coup and centralised political power in the military ruler, as well as allowing the general-cum-president to continue as head of state. In return, the MMA was permitted to pursue its Islamisation agenda in NWFP. Belying some predictions that the Islamic parties would be more moderate in power than in opposition, it launched a broad Islamisation drive that included a ban on music in public and attacks on cable operators.

In 2003, the NWFP Assembly passed the Hisba Bill to oversee the implementation of Sharia. It called for a parallel justice system of moral policing through a Taliban-like provision for the propagation of virtue and prevention of vice. Religious *mohtasibeen* (ombudsmen)<sup>30</sup> at the provincial, district and municipal (*tehsil*)

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ing their misuse of public money for electoral manipulation. Durrani signed an affidavit confessing to distributing the money on Beg's orders. Crisis Group Report, *Reforming Pakistan's Electoral System*, op. cit. See also Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington D.C., 2005), p. 241.

<sup>29</sup> The head of the ISI's political cell in 2002 has since admitted manipulating the 2002 elections on Musharraf's orders. See Umar Cheema, "The man who rigged the 2002 polls in Pakistan finally spills the beans", *The News*, 25 February 2008. For detailed analysis of the military regime's actions against the mainstream opposition parties and support to the MMA, see Crisis Group Reports, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform*, op. cit.; and *Mullahs and the Military*, op. cit.

<sup>30</sup> Plural of *Mohtasib*.

level received the authority to ensure observance of an "Islamic way of life" and could summon individuals, issue orders and award punishments when vaguely-defined "Islamic morals" were not publicly observed. The bill was widely criticised as "an assault on the fundamental freedoms of citizens and an attempt to impose a particular school of thought on the people in the name of religion".<sup>31</sup>

Even the conservative Council of Islamic Ideology expressed reservations on the grounds that narrow Wahabi or Deobandi Islamic interpretations would conflict with those of other sects, while many of its provisions unnecessarily replicated laws already in place.<sup>32</sup> The Supreme Court eventually struck down the bill, arguing that the "private life, personal thoughts and the individual beliefs of citizens cannot be allowed to be interfered with". It also reinforced the 1954 Munir report that:

[The *ulama* had no unanimity before the Court of Inquiry on the definition of "Muslim", because everyone being a Muslim has his own interpretation of Quran and *Sunnah* [sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad]. Therefore, [an ombudsman] under the Hisba Bill, cannot be empowered to determine in his discretion whether any act is consistent with Islamic moral values and etiquettes or not.<sup>33</sup>

In 2006, the MMA introduced the Apostasy Act in the National Assembly, calling for the death penalty for male apostates from Islam and imprisonment until penitence or death for female apostates. Apostasy could be established through confession or the testimony of two adult witnesses. Apostates were to be given a maximum of one month to "return to Islam". The draft bill also called for the government to revoke the right to property of anyone even accused of apostasy.<sup>34</sup> All key MMA parliamentarians signed the bill, which had yet to pass when the legislature completed its full term in 2007.

Despite claims of religious purity, allegations of rampant corruption marred the MMA's tenure in power. Many MMA members now acknowledge that the two provincial governments in which they took leading parts failed to satisfy public expectations.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, with the death of the MMA chief, the Barelvi JUP's Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani, in December 2003, the alliance appointed the more divisive JI chief, Qazi Hussein Ahmed. Infighting and internal frictions led Samiul Haq's faction of the JUI to leave the alliance in 2005.

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<sup>31</sup> "Hasba law assault on basic rights", *Dawn*, 26 July, 2005.

<sup>32</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Masud, former chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology, Islamabad, 20 February 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Cited in Crisis Group Report, *Reforming the Judiciary*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>34</sup> Text of proposed Apostasy Bill 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Crisis Group interviews, MMA members, Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar, February-March 2011.

The true dissolution of the MMA, however, began when the two largest parties, the JUI-F and JI, disagreed on whether to resign from the national or provincial assemblies in protest against President Musharraf's attempts in 2007 to continue in power.<sup>36</sup> The two parties also disagreed on contesting the 2008 national elections. Arguing that the elections would be rigged and well aware that its lack of electoral support would reveal its internal weaknesses, the JI decided to boycott. The JUI-F, confident that it remained electorally relevant, took part. According to the JI senator and president of its NWFP shura (council), Professor Mohammad Ibrahim, some JI members still regret the boycott because its options became limited to working outside the political system; others, however, insisted that the party would gain from its "principled stance" in the long-term and still believe this.<sup>37</sup>

What was left of the MMA alliance performed poorly in the 2008 national elections. Absent robust support from the military, even the JUI-F had bad results in its home constituencies of the NWFP and Balochistan. The Islamic parties currently have eight seats, including reserved seats, in the 342-member National Assembly.<sup>38</sup>

### III. THE ISLAMIST AGENDA: HOW UNIFIED?

The relationship between the two main religious parties, JUI and JI, has historically been turbulent. Their first disagreement arose over armed struggle in Kashmir, which the JI's Maududi initially argued could not be classified as jihad since the bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan on Kashmir<sup>39</sup> had not been abrogated. The JUI, accusing Maududi of being soft on the U.S. and its Pakistani allies, countered that the principle enemy "of Islam and the Muslim world was Anglo-American imperialism, and Maududi, the chief opponent of socialism, was playing the role of an agent for America". Until well into the 1990s, JUI members considered the term "Maudidiyat" a serious insult, and the volume of anti-Maududi writings by Deobandi *ulama* became "so huge that if the articles, comments, and excerpts from the speeches of the party leaders were put together, it would make a multi-volume book running into thousands of pages".<sup>40</sup>

The MMA saw its success in the 2002 elections not just as a revival of Islamism following the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan, but also as testament to the Islamic parties' power if they unified. Yet, as its ultimate breakup suggests, the alliance arguably revealed more about internal differences than unity. Despite such fundamental disagreements, however, electoral alliances of the Islamic parties remain possible, although they would have to include both the JUI-F and the JI to be significant. The JI has welcomed the JUI-F's decision to leave the ruling PPP-led coalition in December 2010 as a step toward restoring their alliance. In March 2011, JUI-F head Maulana Fazlur Rehman visited the JI headquarters in Mansoorah with other party members, raising prospects of another partnership before the 2013 general elections.<sup>41</sup> But attempts to revive such a partnership have thus far failed.<sup>42</sup>

Senior JI members criticise what they perceive as the JUI-F's pro-government stance and its wavering position on perceived U.S. interference in Pakistan's affairs. Disapproving of the very notion of an alliance, JI's Professor Ibrahim argued: "There is a reason we are separate parties with distinct mandates. If we ally with other parties, we are doing so merely for pragmatic concerns. That doesn't mean we are

<sup>36</sup> The JUI-F, benefiting the most from its dominant role in the Balochistan and NWFP governments, was understandably reluctant to cede power. Zulfiqar Ali and Mohammad Riaz, "Differences in MMA over timing of resignations", *Dawn*, 26 September 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Crisis Group interview, Professor Mohammed Ibrahim, president, JI's KPK shura, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>38</sup> See Election Commission of Pakistan website, [www.ecp.gov.pk/Misc/PartyPosition/NAPosition.pdf](http://www.ecp.gov.pk/Misc/PartyPosition/NAPosition.pdf).

<sup>39</sup> The UN-brokered Karachi Agreement and Ceasefire line of 1949 in Kashmir.

<sup>40</sup> Sayyid A.S. Pirzada, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam* (Oxford, 1999), p. 101.

<sup>41</sup> "JUI chief meets JI leaders", Associated Press of Pakistan, 5 March 2011.

<sup>42</sup> "MMA revival talks fail again", *Express Tribune*, 22 July 2010.

running on the same ideological platform”.<sup>43</sup> Another senior JI member explained:

The Jamaat is keeping its options open. Of course, there are some parties that are clearly mismatched with the Jamaat’s agenda. Islam is our main reference point, and most of the Islamic parties’ declared agenda falls within our scope. But the bitter taste of 2007 [when the JI and JUI disagreed about resigning from the assemblies] has not necessarily gone away yet.<sup>44</sup>

For their part, JUI-F members describe the JI as “rigid”, “intolerant” and “self-interested”.<sup>45</sup> In one JUI-F member’s account, when NWFP Chief Minister Akram Durrani was asked how he could work with General Musharraf, he responded: “Don’t ask me about Musharraf. Give me credit for being able to work with the Jamaat-e-Islami”.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, ideological differences that have historically pitted JUI and JI against each other persist and, in the words of JUI-F information secretary Hafiz Riaz Durrani, “will continue until JI members distance themselves from Maududi’s thought and ideology”.<sup>47</sup>

Important ideological divergences, including sectarian orientation and domestic and foreign policy preferences, exist across the Islamist political landscape. The parties also differ in their internal structures, with significant ramifications on the level and kind of influence they wield on the polity. A breakdown of the key Islamic parties, including their agendas and internal structures is, therefore, useful to assess their varying degrees of impact, current and potential, in a changing domestic and regional environment.

## A. JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI

### 1. Party mandate

The JI is a well-organised political party, with clear lines of authority and a nationwide network of locally organised branches. It also has a consistent party platform, based on the ideas of its founder, Syed Abul Ala Maududi,<sup>48</sup> the author of more than 120 books and pam-

phlets addressing a range of topics including Islamist politics, Pakistani nationalism and social and economic issues. Maududi’s idea of an Islamic *nizam-e-zindagi* (way of life), which seeks to encapsulate Islam as a blueprint for life – simultaneously religion, legal system and ideology – provides a frame of reference for most Pakistani Islamic parties, including many of JI’s opponents.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, Maududi’s writings have defined the parameters of the country’s religio-political debate, with some even giving him the credit for making the very concept of an Islamic political party broadly acceptable.

In the early years after independence, the JI’s main objective was to Islamise Pakistan’s law and constitution: the country was to be a model for the contemporary Islamic state, with a small cadre of highly educated and pious men leading an Islamic revolution in South Asia.<sup>50</sup> While the JI has evolved from being a small, elitist revolutionary movement into an organised political party, it nonetheless maintains its elitist character. Power is still concentrated at the top of a rigid hierarchy. Although it engages the poor through welfare work, its politics, a scholar observes, “are irrelevant to the demands of the underprivileged”.<sup>51</sup>

The concept of the Islamic “way of life” remains central to the JI’s mandate and ideology, as does the commitment to establishing a political and social system governed by Sharia. The party’s manifesto emphasises personal transformation through obedience to Allah and living as a “true Muslim”, rather than distinct political or economic goals. Lack of separation between the personal and the political is central to the party ethos. Its constitution states: “The mission of Jama’ate-Islami and the objective of all its efforts and struggle shall in practical terms be the establishment of the *Deen* (religion)”. It adds: “Establishment of *Deen* does not mean establishing some part of it, rather establishing it in its entirety, in individual and collective life, and whether it pertains to prayers or fasting, Haj or *zakat* [Islamic tithe on income and wealth], socio-economic or political issues of life”.<sup>52</sup>

The JI initially drew its main support from the mohajir<sup>53</sup> communities in Karachi and other parts of urban Sindh. The emergence of the mohajir-led Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM, later renamed Muttahida Qaumia Movement) in 1984 eroded much of that base. In response, the party extended itself to Punjab and NWFP. Despite a larger geographic

<sup>43</sup> Crisis Group interview, president, JI’s KPK shura, Professor Mohammad Ibrahim, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>44</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JUI-F members, Islamabad and Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>46</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUI-F official, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>47</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUI-F information secretary Hafiz Riaz Durrani, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>48</sup> Syed Abul Ala Maududi founded the Jamaat-e-Islami in India in August 1941.

<sup>49</sup> Maududi defined ‘*deen*’ (religion) as a “law, code, the Shari’ah, method, and system of thought and a praxis by which humans live their collective existence”. Syed Abul Ala Maududi, *Four Key Concepts of the Quran*, edited and translated by Tarik Jan (Leicester-shire, 2006), p. 157.

<sup>50</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Rehman, JI member and director general, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, 2 March 2011.

<sup>51</sup> Nasr, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>52</sup> Constitution of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Crisis Group translation.

<sup>53</sup> Urdu-speaking migrants from India and their descendants.

coverage, the JI's base remains limited, in both membership and financial support, to the newly urbanised and literate lower-middle class, a function of its calls for revolution through "the use of advice and propagation of thought for reforming the mind and character and preparing public opinion",<sup>54</sup> mainly through party literature. A member acknowledged that "the party's outreach from the written message is greater than outreach from the spoken word".<sup>55</sup>

Lacking a broad base, the JI has benefited largely from alliances with the military, in a mutually beneficial relationship. For instance, its alliance with Zia's military regime in the 1980s yielded considerable dividends in foreign as well as domestic politics, even as it advanced, and continues to support the military's domestic and external agendas. The party played a central role in the U.S. and Saudi Arabia-supported anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan, cooperating with the ISI to recruit and train militants and encouraging them to join Islamist mujahidin groups, particularly Gulbuddin Hekmetyar's Hizb-e Islami. In the words of an analyst, "a division of tasks took place between the Jamaat and the Pakistan army ... the Jamaat was entrusted with managing the relations with [Afghan] Islamist parties, recognising only the latter [the Afghan mujahidin parties] as being representative of the resistance".<sup>56</sup> After the 1989 Soviet withdrawal, the JI lent equal support to the military's proxy war in Indian Kashmir, mainly through its militant front organisations, Al-Badar and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, which remain active.<sup>57</sup>

The party also led street protests in 1999 against the Lahore peace process between the Nawaz Sharif and Atal Bihari Vajpayee governments and later supported the military's operations across the Line of Control in Kargil, which derailed dialogue with India, brought the nuclear-armed neighbours to the brink of war and compelled U.S. diplomatic intervention.<sup>58</sup> Twelve years later,

in November 2011, JI leaders joined the banned Jamaat-ud-Dawa and another terrorist group, Jaish-e-Mohammad, to stage demonstrations against the government's decision, largely supported by the Pakistani business community, to lower trade barriers with India by granting it Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status. Their anti-Indian rhetoric closely tallied with the military's anti-Indian agenda.<sup>59</sup>

While JI's support for militancy in Kashmir has not abated (and nor has its zeal for the imposition of Sharia), the party has modified its agenda according to changing domestic and regional dynamics, increasingly championing issues with more populist appeal, including opposition to supposed U.S. interference in Pakistan.<sup>60</sup> From 2005 to 2008, it put out nearly 30 press releases a month, mostly regarding the U.S.<sup>61</sup> According to a JI member, "constitutional issues in the country are now on the backburner".<sup>62</sup> Other JI members disagree with this categorisation, arguing, for instance, that the Raymond Davis issue<sup>63</sup> was as much about domestic policy as foreign.<sup>64</sup> The linkage is evident in this statement by JI *amir* (president) Syed Munawar Hassan: "The Jamaat is organising a massive campaign for bringing about Islamic revolution and doing away with U.S. influence in the region".<sup>65</sup>

With the military leadership strongly condemning the 26 November NATO airstrike in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas' (FATA) Mohmand Agency that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, the JI joined the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JD, the renamed Lashkar-e-Tayyaba) in street protests and rallies. At one of these a senior JD member called for killing 100

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ty", in Peter L. Lavoy (ed.), *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia* (Cambridge, 2009), p. 295.

<sup>59</sup> "MFN protests", *Dawn* editorial, 30 November 2011.

<sup>60</sup> The JI's antipathy to the West can be traced back to Maududi, who wrote that Islam and the West "are like two boats sailing in totally opposite directions. Any attempt to sail in both the boats at a time shall split the adventurer into two pieces". Syed Abul Ala Maududi, *West Versus Islam*, translated by S. Waqar Ahmad Gardezi and Abdul Waheed Khan, Second Edition (Lahore, 1992), pp. 13-14.

<sup>61</sup> Omar S. Bashir, "Explaining Islamist Pressures on State Behavior: The Jamaat-i Islami and Pakistani Foreign Policy", Thesis, Oxford University, April 2009. Available at: [www.princeton.edu/~obashir/bashir\\_thesis\\_2009.pdf](http://www.princeton.edu/~obashir/bashir_thesis_2009.pdf).

<sup>62</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Rehman, JI member and director general, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, 2 March 2011.

<sup>63</sup> Raymond Davis, a CIA contractor, had killed two Pakistanis in January 2011. His arrest and the issue of whether he would be prosecuted in Pakistan became a serious bilateral issue between Islamabad and Washington. He returned to the U.S. in March 2011. "'Blood money' deal frees CIA contractor Raymond Davis from Pakistan", ABC News, 16 March 2011.

<sup>64</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JI members, Islamabad and Lahore, February-March 2011.

<sup>65</sup> See Yousaf Ali, "Rulers have become US puppets, says Jamaat chief", *The News*, 4 April 2011.

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<sup>54</sup> Constitution of the Jamaat-e-Islami, op. cit.

<sup>55</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Rehman, JI member and director general, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, 2 March 2011.

<sup>56</sup> Frédéric Grare, *Political Islam in the Subcontinent: The Jamaat-i Islami* (New Delhi, 2001), p. 67.

<sup>57</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Mullahs and the Military*, op. cit.

<sup>58</sup> JI leader Khurshid Ahmed described the Sharif government's decision to withdraw military forces from Kargil as threatening the "the very existence of the country and the freedom of its people" and declared the prime minister a "security risk". He added that the withdrawal had "distorted the Kashmir issue and has stabbed the Jihad movement in the back". It also "rendered even our nuclear deterrence ineffective and has very adversely affected our defense capability and morale of the fighting forces". Quoted in Saeed Shafiqat, "The Kargil conflict's impact on Pakistani politics and socie-

Americans for every Muslim killed in drone attacks,<sup>66</sup> while another reportedly stressed that jihad was the only acceptable response to foreign intervention and “terrorism of any form, including drone attacks and attacks on checkpoints”.<sup>67</sup>

The party argues that foreign interference also extends to contentious domestic issues. For example, mobilising its activists against repealing the blasphemy law, JI leader Munawar Hassan also claimed that legislators were being pressured to amend such laws only by the West.<sup>68</sup> Even after Punjab Governor Taseer’s assassination in January 2011 for criticising the blasphemy law, the JI condemned him for speaking of a “black law” and held a series of protests in major cities against any proposed changes.<sup>69</sup>

The JI’s influence on policy, particularly its ability to impede legal reforms, is not only due to earlier partnerships with the military but also the result of a coherent and organised internal structure that produces discipline, consistent messaging and a committed activist base working under strong party control. This base, while relatively small, has proved able to mobilise and use street protests and coercion on university campuses to project power far beyond the party’s numerical strength.

## 2. Internal structure

The JI claims to be the country’s most internally democratic political party, a regular and arguably effective selling point to new and potential recruits.<sup>70</sup> The majority of its district, provincial and national-level officials are indeed elected, including the *amir*, who presides over an elected central advisory council (the Majlis-e-Shura). Democracy, however, does not extend to internal dissent and debate, with the result that those who do not unreservedly subscribe to the founding father’s philosophy are often expelled. Membership requires demonstrable allegiance to Maududi’s doctrine; only those committed to the JI’s tenet of an Islamic *nizam* (system) can join.<sup>71</sup> The personal lives of aspiring members are monitored,

while advancement in the party hierarchy depends on unquestioning acceptance of the leadership’s directives.

Ji officials claim that party members currently number around 4.5 million (a figure difficult to substantiate). There are two categories: simple “member” (previously known as *muntafiq*) and the more organised *rukun* (also meaning member but in this case of a higher rank). Ostensibly to prevent campaigning and patronage, which the party considers antithetical to its *raison d’être*, its constitution stipulates that the *amir* “should be neither an aspirant for, nor desirous of, the office of the *amir* or any other office within the Jamaat”.<sup>72</sup> Thus, *rukun* are free to write down anyone’s name when called on to elect the *amir*. However, the central shura provides a list of three individuals as “guidance”.

District-level shuras select the JI’s electoral candidates to the provincial and national legislatures, with final approval by the central shura. Once parliamentarians are elected, the senior-most party member from the group is selected as its leader. This group makes all decisions regarding parliamentary affairs, although it consults the central shura. However, as a JI member explained, there is often significant overlap between central shura members and parliamentarians, blurring the lines between the two entities.<sup>73</sup>

To become a *rukun* (who currently number 25,000), requires a candidate to submit to monitoring of his life and actions for up to six months by the relevant district shura to ensure that he abides by all major Islamic tenets. A former member of the JI’s student wing, the Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT), said that when he was introduced to JI literature at a young age and became active in the IJT, he was told to elevate his “concerns to a higher level” and, as a result, was persuaded to distance himself from the “petty” concerns of his family, studies and social life.<sup>74</sup>

Ji’s funding comes primarily from its own members and their families, as well as the revenues of its publishing house, which puts out, for example, the monthly Urdu magazine *Tarjuman-Ul-Quran*.

The Majlis-e-Shura is the party’s central decision-making body. The party constitution establishes a “system of checks and balances” whereby disagreements between the *amir* and the central council require conciliation:

Efforts shall be made to arrive at unanimous decisions in the Central Advisory Council. If there is no unanimity on an issue, then the decision will be taken with the opinion of majority. If the *Amir-e-Jamaat* is against the council’s decision, then he can postpone the decision for the

<sup>66</sup> See “JD vows to make Pakistan a Taliban state”, *Express Tribune*, 30 November 2011.

<sup>67</sup> See Rana Tanweer, “Third rally in a week: prepare for jihad, Jamaatud Dawa says”, *Express Tribune*, 27 November 2011.

<sup>68</sup> Asad Farooq, “Tahaffuz Namoos-e-Risalat holds rally”, *Daily Times*, 10 January 2011.

<sup>69</sup> “Thousands rally in Lahore over blasphemy law”, *Express Tribune*, 30 January 2011.

<sup>70</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar, February-April 2011.

<sup>71</sup> Crisis Group interview, JI Deputy Secretary General Farid Piracha, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>72</sup> Constitution of the Jamaat-e-Islami, *op. cit.*

<sup>73</sup> Crisis Group telephone interview, April 2011.

<sup>74</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, February 2011.

next meeting of the shura. At this stage, the decision by the majority will be the final decision.<sup>75</sup>

Dissent like this has, however, been rare – a point that the JI's leadership uses to assert the party's organisational coherence and strength over dependence on individual leaders. Indeed, while other Islamic parties have often splintered into factions, the JI has remained intact. The last major internal confrontation occurred in 1957, when the majority of members decided to participate in the electoral process, provoking clashes with many who argued against directly politicising the organisation and consequently left the party. Subsequently, the JI "initiated a purge"<sup>76</sup> to remove from the party those who disagreed with Maududi or prohibit them from holding party offices.

While giving the worker base some input into major party processes, such as election of officials, distinguishes the JI from parties such as the PPP and PML-N that have little or no internal democracy, the claim of robust internal democracy has little credence. JI has had only four *amirs* in 69 years.<sup>77</sup> Members acknowledge that the differing personalities of those leaders have had major ramifications on how the party has functioned.<sup>78</sup> For example, Qazi Hussain Ahmed's focus on street politics and mass mobilisation through strikes and marches, led it to be perceived for the first time as a populist party. Under the current *amir*, Munawar Hassan, the party still depends on street protests to make its presence felt, but it also has an increased focus on internal organisation and on foreign affairs – specifically the U.S.-led "war on terror" and U.S.-Pakistan relations,<sup>79</sup> which it links to domestic politics.

There also remains little room to question Maududi's founding ideology. Members who propound differing religious interpretations are often forced out.<sup>80</sup> Maududi's death in 1979 in effect ossified a party philosophy that appeared more open to reinterpretation and change during his lifetime. According to a professor at Islama-

bad's International Islamic University and a former IJT member, intellectual debate within the party has largely dried up since 1979.<sup>81</sup> The JI nevertheless still emphasises scholarship and writing to influence public debate, particularly through its affiliated think tank, the Islamabad-based Institute of Policy Studies. In recent years, the party has also employed modern tools such as the internet to enhance recruitment, including through a revamped website that carries a weblog in both Urdu and English.<sup>82</sup>

The JI performs a range of welfare activities. Established in the 1950s, its welfare wing comprises a nationwide network of organisations providing various social services. The most prominent of these, even as it insists on an independent status, is Al-Khidmat. This NGO runs hospitals, schools, women's vocational centres and emergency response units. According to a development expert, "converting beneficiaries into voters is at most a secondary concern; instead the primary motive for the engagement in welfare work is to win the trust of party members by establishing the party's commitment to the implementation of religious precepts".<sup>83</sup> Yet, even in its humanitarian role, the JI depends on the military's patronage and support. For instance, Al Khidmat (along with the JUI's Al Khair Trust) was enabled by the military's help and the resulting access to provincial relief funds to play a major role in aiding victims of the 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods.<sup>84</sup>

## B. JAMIAT ULEMA-E-ISLAM (FAZLUR REHMAN)

### 1. Party mandate

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F) is a predominantly Pashtun Deobandi party led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Its organisational structure and support relies heavily on a large madrasa network. Unlike the JI, the JUI-F has functioned primarily as a "party of the masses" for which electoral success is critical.<sup>85</sup> Successes in elections, no matter how limited, have given the JUI-F opportunities to form governments at the provincial level as well as a presence in federal cabinets, and hence access to resources and power. It is therefore understandable that the party opposed the JI's

<sup>75</sup> Constitution of the Jamaat-e-Islami, op. cit.

<sup>76</sup> Nasr, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>77</sup> These are: Maududi, who was the party head for 30 years until 1972, Mian Muhammad Tufail, Qazi Hussain Ahmed and the current *amir*, Munawar Hassan.

<sup>78</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JI Deputy Secretary General Farid Piracha, Lahore, March 2011; Professor Mohammad Ibrahim, president, JI's KPK shura, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>79</sup> Crisis Group interview, Farid Piracha, JI deputy secretary general, Lahore, 10 March 2011.

<sup>80</sup> Examples include Dr Israr Ahmed and prominent theologian Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. Dr Israr Ahmed subsequently formed his own party, the Tanzeem-e-Islami. Crisis Group interview, Saleem Safi, journalist and former IJT member, Islamabad, 3 March 2011.

<sup>81</sup> Crisis Group interview, Dr Husnul Amin, assistant professor, politics and international relations department, Islamabad, 23 February 2011.

<sup>82</sup> Jamaat-e-Islami website, <http://jamaat.org/home/index>.

<sup>83</sup> Masooda Bano, "Marker of Identity: Religious Political Parties and Welfare Work – The Case of Jama'at-i-Islami in Pakistan and Bangladesh", Religions and Development Research Programme, Working Paper 34, Department for International Development, Oxford University, 2009, p. 12.

<sup>84</sup> Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°46, *Pakistan: Political Impact of the Earthquake*, 15 March 2006, p. 5.

<sup>85</sup> Crisis Group interview, Professor Qibla Ayaz, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, 16 March 2011.

decision to boycott the 2008 elections. Although it won only seven seats, it was nevertheless part of the PPP-led coalition at the centre until December 2010.<sup>86</sup>

Since its formation, the party has undergone changes in leadership, program and names. In 1947, a group led by Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani broke off from the JUI to form the Markazi Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (MJUI), which campaigned for an Islamic constitution and sought to enforce a political system based on the *Sunnah* in an independent Pakistan. Under Usmani, the MJUI was a major pressure group, playing a significant role in the Objectives Resolution of 1949, which was to provide the Islamic content of the 1956 constitution, as well as the anti-Ahmadi agitation discussed above. It failed, however, to create a significant political constituency of its own. In an October 1956 gathering in Multan, a large segment of the party decided to participate more actively and independently in politics, with the central aims of implementing an Islamic system of government and ensuring minority status and a separate voters list for Ahmadis.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman's father, Mufti Mahmood, assumed the party leadership in 1962. In January 1970, the JUI announced a manifesto that, among other provisions, called for the adoption of an Islamic constitution defining "Muslim" to entail belief in the finality of the Prophet Muhammad, thus excluding Ahmadis; allowing only Sunnis to serve as head of state; making congregational prayers compulsory; and banning perceived "anti-Islam" missionaries.<sup>87</sup> The manifesto also addressed social issues such as equal housing and job opportunities, free dispensation of justice and freedom of the press.

Allying with the secular Pashtun nationalist National Awami Party (NAP) after the 1970 elections, in which it won seven seats in the National Assembly and nine in the provincial assemblies,<sup>88</sup> the JUI became a partner in the NWFP and Balochistan provincial governments. In 1972, Mufti Mahmood was sworn in as NWFP's chief minister, declaring "the establishment of a true Islamic order" as his administration's major priority. His pro-

vincial government established a board to bring existing laws into conformity with the Quran and *Sunnah*, prohibited free movement of unveiled women in commercial centres, guaranteed interest-free loans and declared Arabic a compulsory school subject.<sup>89</sup> In 1973, he resigned in protest against Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's dismissal of the Balochistan government.

The JUI had an ambiguous relationship with General Zia-ul-Haq's military regime during the 1980s. Distrustful of his close ties with the Jamaat-e-Islami, the party joined the anti-Zia and PPP-led Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). In the words of a current JUI-F member, "Zia co-opted Islam because he feared he would lose large constituencies to Islamic parties. He was not sincere".<sup>90</sup> Yet, the party benefited considerably from its support to the military's anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. By providing recruits through its madrasa network for the cause, the JUI established a give-and-take relationship with the military, which also resulted in changes within its cadres. According to a JUI-F associate, Zia's rhetoric infiltrated the lower levels of the party, causing the provincial and district ranks to espouse more hardline, pro-military policies, while the central leadership still officially supported the MRD.<sup>91</sup>

As a result of these disagreements, the party split into two factions in the mid-1980s. A splinter group headed by Samiul Haq (JUI-S), maintained a closer relationship with the Zia regime than JUI-F. Under Musharraf, however, while both factions were members of the MMA (until the JUI-S left the coalition in 2005), Fazlur Rehman's faction, as the larger and more influential, was the main beneficiary of the military's support and patronage. The MMA's record while in power in NWFP, discussed above, demonstrated that the JUI-F's focus on idiosyncratic interpretations of Islam has remained constant. Out of power, JUI-F members stress that their party retains its focus on the worship of Allah, pursuing life according to the Quran and *Hadith* (sayings of the Prophet) and, ultimately, enforcing Sharia.

Yet, since it also aspires to a populist image, the party has a handful of minority members, such as Asiya Nasir, a Christian from Balochistan, who is currently a senator. Nasir said she has never been forced to abide by Islamic injunctions but admits that if the party strays from its orthodox religious/political ideology, it would risk losing popular support.<sup>92</sup> In March 2011, some JUI-F members supported Nasir in parliament when they joined her and other opposition members in a walkout following her speech condemning the unequal treatment of Pakistani minorities. A few days earlier, however, three JUI-F members had remained seated while all

<sup>86</sup> Fazlur Rehman's group left the ruling coalition after Azam Swati, the JUI-F information technology minister and a major financial supporter of the party, was ousted from the federal cabinet in December 2010 on allegations of corruption. See "JUI-F quits ruling coalition over Swati's dismissal", *Daily Times*, 15 December 2010.

<sup>87</sup> Constitution of the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam, November 2009 edition.

<sup>88</sup> Except for two provincial seats in Punjab, the party's success was limited to the NWFP and Balochistan, as it failed to extend its appeal beyond its traditional Pashtun constituencies.

<sup>89</sup> Pirzada, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>90</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>91</sup> Crisis Group interview, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>92</sup> Crisis Group interview, Asiya Nasir, Islamabad, March 2011.



other parliamentarians stood to observe a moment of silence for the minority affairs minister who was murdered by extremists in March 2011 for opposing the discriminatory blasphemy laws.<sup>93</sup>

Debate on these discriminatory provisions was renewed in November 2010, when Asiya Bibi, a Christian, became the first woman to be convicted and sentenced to death for blasphemy. While some JUI-F members acknowledge that a change to the law might be necessary to prevent its misuse, they also argue that the current “sensitive atmosphere” requires that such discussions should be shelved for the time being.<sup>94</sup> Others more openly support the law, denying any fundamental flaw in its substance or implementation.<sup>95</sup> Significantly, Fazlur Rehman remained silent until his party left the ruling coalition in December 2010, since when he has criticised proposals to amend the blasphemy law and particularly the late Punjab governor Taseer’s description of the provision as a “black law”.<sup>96</sup> Thus, while JUI-F members argue that their contribution to the blasphemy debate has been reasoned, particularly as compared to the “destabilising” efforts of the Jamaat-e-Islami,<sup>97</sup> their ultimate support for the measure shows that the party is unlikely to deviate too far from its orthodox Deobandi philosophy.

Like the JI, the JUI-F has attempted to gain popular support by condemning Pakistani cooperation in the U.S.-led “war on terror”. Given its close links with Afghan insurgents and Pashtun tribal militant factions, it is particularly critical of U.S. drone attacks in FATA. For example, following the 2 May 2011 U.S. raid in Abbottabad that led to Osama Bin Laden’s killing, the party convened a multi-party conference in its provincial secretariat in Peshawar, describing the affair as a violation of Pakistan’s sovereignty and an attempt to isolate the country; condemning the drone strikes; and calling on the government to end logistical support to NATO troops in Afghanistan.<sup>98</sup> Fazlur Rehman has also condemned U.S. pressure on Pakistan to act against the Haqqani network, reportedly urging the government to

play “the Taliban card” carefully,<sup>99</sup> while also offering to mediate any talks with the militant group.

Despite the JUI-F’s support for militancy, it has rarely shied from using any means possible to advance its political interests. For instance, Fazlur Rehman has attempted to curry favour with U.S. officials. According to U.S. cables made public by WikiLeaks, for instance, he held a lunch in honour of U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson in 2007 to elicit support for his bid to become prime minister.<sup>100</sup>

## 2. Internal organisation

The JUI-F is much less tightly managed than the JI, ensuring a more diverse range of opinions that often reveal divisions between hardliners and more relatively moderate members. But with limited mechanisms to ensure party discipline, this loose structure can also result in lack of communication between and within party levels. Hence many relatively junior party workers and officials are often unaware of the party’s policy and even its structures.<sup>101</sup>

The secretariat comprises four provincial bodies, representing each province and including entities at the district and *tehsil* (town) levels. The central and provincial levels each include a president, four vice presidents, a *nazim* (mayor) and seven other members. The party constitution requires elections to these offices every three years. At each tier, there are three distinct bodies: the Majlis-e-Amoomi (General Council), the Majlis-e-Shura (Consultative Council) and the Majlis-e-Amla (Central Working Committee). Their responsibilities break down as follows:<sup>102</sup>

- Majlis-e-Amoomi: internal decisions regarding the constitution and elections. It elects 30 members at the *tehsil* (town) level. These 30 then elect members for the district level, who in turn elect one member for the province. The provincial members elect one federal representative;
- Majlis-e-Shura: policy decisions pertaining to the JUI-F’s participation in government and domestic politics. Its members are chosen by the provincial *amirs* and must not exceed 45 in total (fourteen of whom are Majlis-e-Amla members), with at least 25 per cent *ulama* at the district

<sup>93</sup> Raja Asghar, “Gilani vows new strategy to fight extremism”, *Dawn*, 3 March 2011.

<sup>94</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Lahore and Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>95</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>96</sup> “JUI-F chief slams govt’s aim to amend blasphemy law”, *Express Tribune*, 26 December 2010.

<sup>97</sup> Crisis Group interview, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>98</sup> See “Stop logistic support to U.S., urges JUI-F convened moot”, *The News*, 16 May 2011. In late April 2011, the JUI-F and JI participated in a two-day sit-in led by Imran Khan’s Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaaf to block NATO supply routes through Pakistan. Riffatullah Khan and Kashif Aziz Khan, “PTI’s show in Peshawar”, *The Friday Times*, 29 April-5 May 2011.

<sup>99</sup> Azam Khan, “Maulana mouths off: Fazl urges govt to use ‘Taliban card’ carefully”, *Express Tribune*, 1 October 2011.

<sup>100</sup> “Ambassador discusses elections with Fazlur Rehman”, U.S. embassy Islamabad cable, 27 November 2007, provided by WikiLeaks to *Dawn* and reproduced in “2007: Fazlur Rehman’s votes were ‘up for sale’”, *Dawn*, 1 June 2011.

<sup>101</sup> For example, a JUI-F member claimed that the party did not endorse a separate women’s wing as a matter of Islamic principle, contrasting with the claims of other central party colleagues. Crisis Group interviews, Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>102</sup> Constitution of the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam, November 2009 edition, Crisis Group translation.

level and 50 per cent at the province and centre levels; and

- Majlis-e-Amla: policy implementation, with fourteen members.

According to the JUI-F constitution, “The provincial electoral boards will nominate the candidates of national and provincial assemblies on the recommendation of the district election board. The provincial board’s decision will be final. In case of any dispute, appeal can be made to the centre”.<sup>103</sup>

Despite a written constitution that establishes party structures and mechanisms, Fazlur Rehman’s “likes and dislikes”, according to a journalist who has extensively covered Islamic parties, determine the party’s directions and policy.<sup>104</sup> And despite internal elections and the official organisational set-up, the *amir* is the lynchpin for all major decisions. These include the choice of Akram Durrani, JUI-F provincial parliamentarian, as chief minister of NWFP under the MMA government in 2002, and more recently the December 2010 decision to leave the governing coalition.<sup>105</sup>

The mosque and madrasa network remains the main artery of JUI-F recruitment, with mosque leaders and *ulama* often using sermons to broaden the party’s outreach. The JUI-F requires a nominal fee from its members for the first three years. While the party does not have organised fundraising mechanisms, it relies on local donations countrywide by *ulama* and mosque leaders. Additionally, wealthy individual members, including some who have little connection to the Deobandi movement, cover major JUI-F events, trips and other expenses in return for important positions in the party, opportunities in government and even ministerial appointments.<sup>106</sup>

Like the JI, the JUI-F maintains a welfare wing, Al-Khair Trust, currently headed by Fazlur Rehman’s brother, Maulana Aatur Rehman. Its relief operations unit draws recruits from a militant jihadi group, Jamiat-ul-Ansar, the renamed Harkatul Mujahideen, which has maintained bases in KPK’s Mansehra and Kohistan districts since the early 1990s. Al-Khair had little previous history of humanitarian work in the region but provided relief to the victims of the 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods in Pakistan.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Crisis Group interview, Saleem Safi, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>105</sup> Crisis Group interview, Professor Qibla Ayaz, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, 16 March 2011.

<sup>106</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUI-F associate, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>107</sup> Crisis Group Briefing, *Pakistan: Political Impact of the Earthquake*, op. cit.

## C. JAMIAT ULEMA-E- ISLAM (SAMIUL HAQ)

Maulana Mohammad Abdullah Darkhawsti, the first leader of the JUI faction, appointed Samiul Haq the party *amir*. According to an inside account, “Maulana Darkhawsti handed Samiul Haq a gift of the Holy Quran and a Kalashnikov. This was indicative of God’s instruction and decision, as after some time, Russian imperialistic forces attacked Afghanistan, and the Afghan nation, under the leadership of *ulama*, fought against this aggression, and the entire strength was pledged to the mujahidin”.<sup>108</sup> Today, the JUI-S is seen as synonymous with Samiul Haq, whose experiences are key to understanding the party’s organisation and mandate.

Samiul Haq is commonly nicknamed the “Father of the Taliban”, due to his leadership of the Darul Uloom Haqqania madrasa in Akora Khattak, from where many of the top leaders of that movement, including Mullah Omar, graduated.<sup>109</sup> Serving as a member of General Zia-ul-Haq’s rubberstamp parliament, the Majlis-e-Shura,<sup>110</sup> he campaigned aggressively for the enforcement of Sharia and other Islamic legislation. The JUI-S claims credit for the Hudood Ordinances, *zakat* and the *Qisas* (retribution) and *Diyat* (blood money) laws, as well as anti-Ahmadi legislation. “Maulana Samiul Haq imbued (Zia’s) Majlis-e-Shura with echoes of Darul Uloom itself”, claims a JUI-S party publication.<sup>111</sup>

Retaining much of the original JUI constitution, the JUI-S has the same organisational structure as JUI-F, with the Majlis-e-Amoomi (general council) theoretically the top policy-making body, while real power is centralised with the *amir*. According to a member, when there are any differences between the party’s policymaking bodies and its *amir*, the latter’s view prevails.<sup>112</sup>

The JUI-S claims that it is far more committed to the goal of enforcing Sharia in Pakistan than Fazlur Rehman’s faction. According to the JUI-S KPK *amir* and former central information secretary, Maulana Yusuf Shah, it is more than just differences of leadership; the two major JUI factions also diverge on basic political questions – a “fundamental

<sup>108</sup> Syed Muhammad Yusuf Shah, “A Review of the Politics and Character of Maulana Samiul Haq”, JUI-S, p. 11 (in Urdu), Crisis Group translation.

<sup>109</sup> Walter Mayr, “The Taliban at the gates of Peshawar: Pakistan’s deal with the devil”, *Der Spiegel International*, 7 July 2008. Located 29km from Peshawar, the madrasa was founded by Samiul Haq’s father, Maulana Abdul Haq, in 1947.

<sup>110</sup> The Majlis-e-Shura was a 284-member body established in 1980 by Zia to replace the elected parliament dismissed by his military regime. The general appointed all its members.

<sup>111</sup> Shah, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>112</sup> According to journalist and former JUI member Saleem Safi, “there is neither accountability nor consistent organisational structure in the JUI”. Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 2 February 2011; Akora Khattak, April 2011.

difference in thinking and morals”.<sup>113</sup> JUI-S avowedly left the MMA because it claimed that the alliance’s mandate of bringing about an Islamic revolution through democratic means had been compromised. It especially opposes Fazlur Rehman’s willingness to ally with moderate ruling parties.

Stressing the JUI-S’s commitment to enforcing Sharia, KPK *amir* Maulana Yusuf Shah said, “on God’s earth, God’s system should be established”.<sup>114</sup> Yet JUI-S members argue that this cannot be achieved without the “ouster of foreign elements”.<sup>115</sup> The JUI-S has, therefore, ostensibly postponed efforts to bring about an Islamic revolution, calling first for the protection of Pakistan’s sovereignty through rallies, sermons and speeches that demand the removal of foreign, particularly American, influence from the region.

The JUI-S also continues, as in the past, to support, jihad against the foreign forces in Afghanistan, with the U.S.-led coalition now the target. Its role in the Afghan jihad is a matter of great pride for the party. Maulana Yusuf Shah said, “Who do you think defeated Russia? We, Darul Uloom Haqqania, defeated Russia”.<sup>116</sup> According to Samiul Haq, his party “advises jihad only against tyranny”, including that of foreign invaders, which may be resisted “by force, or by tongue or through democratic means”.<sup>117</sup> Of the three means, the JUI-S appears to rely the most on use of force, as evident in its political and material support for Afghan and Pakistani jihadis. It thus continues to play a major role in guiding and supporting militancy within the country and the region.

#### D. MARKAZ-E-JAMIAT AHLE HADITH

Like the other Islamic parties, the Markaz-e-Jamiat Ahle Hadith (hereafter Ahle Hadith) predates Pakistan’s creation. The All India Ahle Hadith Conference was established in 1906 to propagate Islam on the basis of the Quran and *Sunnah*, interpreting the words of the Prophet rather than relying on “indirect interpretations” or any specific school of jurisprudence.<sup>118</sup> According to the party constitution, “[t]he Jamiat will make every decision in accordance with Quran and *Sunnah* and workings of the four caliphs. Problems and their solutions

will also be sought similarly”.<sup>119</sup> The Ahle Hadith’s political mission statement remains vague, expressing support for “reform in Islamic societies and the beginning of religious education with a view to establishing an Islamic system of governance”.<sup>120</sup>

The party was not actively involved in politics until the first general elections in 1970. While it maintains its own mandate and religious interpretation, it is currently aligned with Nawaz Sharif’s centre-right PML-N. Although the Ahle Hadith formed a part of the MMA, its *amir*, Professor Sajid Mir, contested the 2002 polls on a PML-N ticket and is currently a PML-N senator.

Even while taking positions against religious extremism, the Ahle Hadith has not diluted a rigid and exclusionary ideology that encourages the very forces the party claims it opposes. For example, a May 2010 meeting of the Aalimi Majlis-e-Tahffuz-e-Khatm-e-Nubuwwat,<sup>121</sup> chaired by Mir, demanded the removal of Ahmadis from all important government positions.<sup>122</sup> Mir also continues to attend and address rallies and events by Jamaat-ud-Dawa, the renamed Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, which espouses the Ahle Hadith school of Islam.<sup>123</sup>

While Ahle Hadith’s charter stresses an internal democratic structure,<sup>124</sup> even citing a section from the Quran that “all decisions of Muslims must be in accordance with consultations and consensus”, it also provides a disclaimer that majority opinion is not binding on the *amir*. In practice, much like the JI and the JUI, the Ahle Hadith *amir* is clearly the centre of power, even though party leader Sajid Mir disputes this: “The supreme body is the Majlis-e-Shura. The

<sup>113</sup> Crisis Group interview, Akora Khattak, 11 April 2011.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Crisis Group interview, Akora Khattak, April 2011.

<sup>116</sup> Crisis Group interview, Akora Khattak, 11 April 2011.

<sup>117</sup> *Al Haq* magazine, October 2005, Crisis Group translation. *Al Haq* is a JUI-S publication.

<sup>118</sup> Crisis Group interview, Ahle Hadith member, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>119</sup> Ahle Hadith website, www.ahlehadith.org. Crisis Group translation.

<sup>120</sup> Ahle Hadith website, op. cit.

<sup>121</sup> According to its website, the Aalimi Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nubuwwat “is an international, religious preaching and reform organisation of Islamic *Millat* (nation) . . . . Its sole aim has been and is to unite all the Muslims of the world to safeguard the sanctity of Prophethood and the finality of Prophethood and to refute the repudiators of the belief in the finality of Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him)”. www.khatm-e-nubuwwat.com.

<sup>122</sup> “Qadiyanis should be immediately removed from official positions, demands Khatm-e-Nubuwwat”, *Jang*, 31 May 2010.

<sup>123</sup> “Hafiz Saeed rubs shoulders with party chiefs in Lahore”, *Dawn*, 14 June 2010.

<sup>124</sup> According to the constitution, party decision-making is divided among three distinct forums: Majlis-e-Shura, the supreme body, or general council, of which there are 507 members from all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir; the Majlis-e-Amla, or working committee, consisting of between 50 and 80 members, and focusing on communicating party policy decided by the Majlis-e-Shura; and a party cabinet, which is primarily concerned with day-to-day activities. Overall, according to Sajid Mir, there are currently a “few hundred thousand” party members and 500,000 *rukun*. Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 30 March 2011.

*amir* isn't supreme. Thus, if there are differences that arise between the two bodies, the Majlis-e-Shura has the final say".<sup>125</sup>

Aside from its student's wing, the Ahle Hadith Student Federation, there is an Ahle Hadith Youth Force to propagate the party's ideology among youth. In addition, the party oversees the Wafaqul Madaris Salafia, the board of Salafi madrasas, chaired by Sajid Mir.

## E. JAMIAT ULEMA-E-PAKISTAN

The Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP), a Bareilvi political party, was founded in 1948. Prior to the party's formation, the Bareilvi leadership had supported the Muslim League, and after Pakistan's creation, it lobbied that body and Muhammad Ali Jinnah for greater Islamisation in the new state. Failing to achieve this, it created the JUP for the "enforcement of Sharia as a confirmation and recognition of the Prophet and his deeds".<sup>126</sup> The party's manifesto calls for implementation of the Quran and *Sunnah*, with courts enforcing Sharia. In contrast to Maududi's JI, the JUP has not published any written history or other literature.

Owing to both internal differences and external interference since the 1980s, the JUP has lost much of its relevance and is divided into several splinter groups. The two main factions are the JUP-Noorani, named after the JUP's former head, Maulana Ahmed Shah Noorani, and the Fazal Karim group, named after the founder and leader.

Unlike leaders of other Islamic parties, Noorani supported Pakistan's formation. He was first elected to parliament from Karachi in 1970, when his party won more seats than the JI and as many as the JUI in the national assembly. It also won the largest number of seats in Sindh after the PPP. Noorani is credited with playing a key role "in preparing and evolving a consensus on the 1973 constitution".<sup>127</sup> He was, however, unable to build a robust party apparatus and to mobilise Bareilvi constituencies effectively, although the majority of Pakistanis belong to this Sunni sub-sect.<sup>128</sup> As a result, he failed to consistently translate public support into electoral success.

Zia's eleven-year rule rendered the JUP almost insignificant. The party staunchly opposed military rule, due in part to its pro-democracy stance, but also because of Zia's espousal of Wahhabi Islam. Nor did the JUP support the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. According to party members, Zia provoked its internal rifts in order to minimise its impact, including by inviting some members to join his Majlis-e-Shura and promising them lands in return for their support. JUP members even argue that the MQM's creation was primarily meant to corrode the JUP, rather than the JI vote bank in Sindh's urban centres, Karachi and Hyderabad.<sup>129</sup> The MQM did indeed eclipse an already diminishing party.

The party's ideological differences with Saudi Arabia also heralded an uphill fight for survival, as Saudi funding for Wahhabi-influenced political parties and sectarian groups dramatically altered Pakistan's sectarian landscape. During the Gulf Crisis of 1991, Noorani announced his support for Saddam Hussein, largely due to his opposition to the Saudis, but this stance had little impact on the standing of a party that had by then largely lost its relevance, within the context of both national and Islamic politics.<sup>130</sup> The JUP's suspicions of Saudi influence in Pakistan continue today. According to Pir Mohammad Akram Shah, the party's general secretary under Noorani and now a senior member of its Fazal Karim faction, "Saudi Arabia has played a very dirty role in Pakistan's internal politics. At least 90 per cent of the bloodshed in our country lies on its hands".<sup>131</sup>

The JUP split over a disagreement during a 1990 by-election in Lahore about the party's relationship with the PML-N.<sup>132</sup> As a result, Noorani's faction joined the Pakistani Awami Ittehad, while another JUP leader, Maulana Abdul Sattar Niaz, led a faction that chose to ally with Sharif and the military-created alliance, the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, discussed above.<sup>133</sup>

Noorani, however, did not oppose his faction joining another military-created alliance, the Deobandi-dominated MMA, in 2002. He died in December 2003, a year after the MMA came to power in NWFP and Balochistan. According to an obituary in a leading daily:

Even his political opponents acknowledged [Noorani's] decorum, asceticism and uprightness .... Yet, for him, in his own life, the bigger tragedy was that he presided

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUP member, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>127</sup> "Consensus on constitution attributed to Noorani: memorial meeting", *Dawn*, 28 November 2005.

<sup>128</sup> For details on Pakistan's sectarian landscape, see Crisis Group Report, *The State of Sectarianism*, op. cit.

<sup>129</sup> Crisis Group interview, Hasnat Ahmed, former spokesperson for Maulana Noorani and JUP-N secretary general, Islamabad, 27 March 2011.

<sup>130</sup> Sumita Kumar, "The role of Islamic parties in Pakistani politics", *Strategic Analysis*, The Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, May 2001, p. 275.

<sup>131</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 31 March 2011.

<sup>132</sup> Sharif's party wanted the JUP to withdraw its candidate, to secure a victory for its own. Noorani's faction opposed this.

<sup>133</sup> Rana, op. cit., p. 359.

over the loss of political power of the Barelvis, the dominant strand of Hanafi *fiqh* [jurisprudence] in Pakistan, a phenomenon for which he had no one but himself to blame ... he wrote his own epithet much before God reclaimed him.<sup>134</sup>

Noorani's death was followed by an internal leadership tussle from which the party has yet to recover.<sup>135</sup> Today, his faction of the JUP remains a skeleton organisation, with no written position on matters of foreign, economic or domestic policy, limiting its political involvement to occasional statements on religious issues. An internal democratic structure that existed to some extent under Noorani has also disappeared: only three members of the party – the *sadr* (president), *naib sadr* (vice president) and general secretary – are elected. These officials appoint a central executive committee of eight to ten members, who make all decisions on party policy. The party also lacks the necessary funding to be truly effective.

Sahibzada Haji Muhammad Fazal Karim, the *sadr* of the more influential faction, JUP-F, is currently serving a second consecutive term as a National Assembly member, although on a PML-N ticket. His relationship with Nawaz Sharif, however, has been strained since a July 2010 attack on Data Darbar, a major Sufi shrine in Lahore, after which Karim demanded the resignation of Punjab's PML-N Law Minister Rana Sanaullah, accusing him of ties to Punjab-based sectarian groups believed responsible for that attack, a demand rejected by the PML-N provincial government.<sup>136</sup>

The JUP-F has publicly declared its opposition to religious extremism. In 2009, it opposed the military-devised peace deal with the pro-Taliban and Deobandi Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) that resulted in the imposition of Nizam-e-Adl 2009 in KPK's Malakand region, including the establishment of Islamic courts (*qazi*). It condemned the "so-called moderate parties for joining hands with terrorists" and allowing

militant groups to "challenge the writ of the state".<sup>137</sup> In May 2009, its convention in Islamabad endorsed the anti-Taliban military operation in Malakand. In April 2011, the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), an alliance of eight Barelvi parties formed two years earlier, held an event in Lahore, at which speakers "condemned terrorist attacks, particularly on shrines, rampant inflation and the presence of American spies in the country, and urged the participants to follow the 'true Islam', but all ended their speeches with a plea for votes for 'Sunni candidates' in the next elections".<sup>138</sup> Fazal Karim said the SIC would fight for Islamic rule and against political dynasties, presumably targeting the PPP.<sup>139</sup>

The JUP-F's seemingly principled stance against religious extremism is belied by the SIC's espousal of ultra-orthodox and sectarian positions on the blasphemy law, as well as its campaign – also proclaimed during the April 2011 rally – for the release of Governor Taseer's assassin, Mumtaz Qadri, who belongs to the Barelvi sect. As the SIC's current head, and despite his avowed religious moderation, Karim has opposed a presidential pardon for Asiya Bibi, the Christian woman convicted of blasphemy, and strongly opposed any amendments of the blasphemy law.<sup>140</sup>

According to a senior JUP-F member, Barelvi groups representing Pakistan's majority sect have felt less inclined to mobilise politically in the same way as sectarian and ethnic minority groups.<sup>141</sup> This is beginning to change. While maintaining union council, district and provincial level party structures, the JUP-F is reorienting its focus from a traditional political party to a multi-party Barelvi alliance. But Karim's JUP faction could also contest future elections from the SIC's platform or opt to revive its alliance relationship with the PML-N.

## F. SUNNI TEHREEK

The Sunni Tehreek is a militant Barelvi organisation, formed in Karachi in 1990 under the leadership of Muhammad Saleem Qadri (no relation to Taseer's assassin), who as a member of the JUP had failed to win election to the Sindh Assembly in 1988. Created to counter Deobandi and Ahle Hadith antagonism and ascendancy, the Sunni Tehreek describes itself as a "purely religious movement of Ahle Sun-

<sup>134</sup> "Maulana Noorani's apolitical politics", *Daily Times* editorial, 14 December 2003.

<sup>135</sup> Noorani's son tried to take over from his father but faced strong resistance from many party members, who did not believe he had the necessary experience or following to lead the party.

<sup>136</sup> "PML-N Leadership seriously cross over Fazal Karim", *Daily Times*, 8 July 2010. Members of other political parties, too, have accused Sanaullah of these ties, especially after he was photographed campaigning with members of the banned Sipah-i-Sahaba in Punjab in March 2010. See, for example, "Punjab govt giving protocol to 'terrorists', says PML-Q MNA", *Daily Times*, 23 February 2010.

<sup>137</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUP-F member, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>138</sup> Rana Tanveer, "Istehkham-i-Pakistan Sunni Conference: Sunni Ittehad rallies support for elections", *Express Tribune*, 18 April 2011.

<sup>139</sup> The SIC also issued a decree against suicide attacks and expressed support for ongoing military operations in the tribal belt. "SIC's decree against suicide attacks", *Dawn*, 18 April 2011.

<sup>140</sup> Muhammad Akram, "PML-N decides to play safe with Fazl Karim", *Daily Times*, 1 December 2010.

<sup>141</sup> Crisis Group interview, Pir Mohammad Akram Shah, JUP-F, Islamabad, 31 March 2011.

nat” with a single goal: reclaiming and protecting Ahle Sunnat mosques, as well as shrines and mausoleums, that are currently under the supervision of the government’s Auqaf (Trust) Department.<sup>142</sup> It is part of the Sunni Ittehad Council. In 2009, the group’s leader, Ejaz Sarwar Qadri, also formed the Pakistan Inquilab Tehreek as a political wing.

Since its establishment, the Sunni Tehreek has tried to take over Ahle Hadith and Deobandi mosques forcibly in Karachi, resulting in violent retaliation from radical Deobandi groups. The Tehreek’s founder, Muhammad Saleem Qadri, was assassinated by the Sipah-e-Sahaba (SSP) in 2001. In April 2006, the SSP and the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi bombed the Sunni Tehreek party convention in Karachi’s Nishtar Park, killing 57, including the organisation’s chief, deputy chief, spokesman, and other senior leaders.<sup>143</sup> Consequently, the Sunni Tehreek has become more conspicuously armed, further raising intra-Sunni tensions and violence.<sup>144</sup>

In recent years, the Sunni Tehreek has been perceived as an ally by some political forces opposing religious extremism and militancy. In 2009, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi claimed that the Sunni Tehreek was focused on preventing the spread of Talibanisation.<sup>145</sup> In April 2011, after leaving the federal cabinet, Qureshi visited the Sunni Tehreek’s headquarters in Karachi and announced the creation of a working group of Ahle Sunnat clerics to propose ways to counter terrorism.<sup>146</sup>

Karachi’s affluent Memon and Gujrati communities provide financial support to the Sunni Tehreek, which has also clashed with the MQM that is bent on controlling Pakistan’s financial capital. However, the two parties appear to have achieved at least a temporary truce to oppose the common threat of Deobandi and Wahhabi extremist groups. Yet, the Sunni Tehreek has also found common cause with these very groups over proposed changes to the blasphemy laws, which, like the JUP, it opposes. At a rally in Lahore in January 2011, Fazal Karim announced that the Sunni Tehreek would pro-

vide legal assistance to Taseer’s assassin;<sup>147</sup> the party has even reportedly threatened Taseer’s daughter.<sup>148</sup>

## G. SHIA PARTIES

Following the Iranian revolution in 1979, Iran and Saudi Arabia became champions of their respective brands of Islam in Pakistan. Until then, Pakistani Shias had only moderate political aims, such as separate Islamic textbooks, and widely supported the PPP, including in the 1970 elections. It was Zia’s Wahhabi-influenced Islamisation drive, as well as the Khomeini revolution, that provoked Shia political mobilisation. “The Shia political awakening in Pakistan was a direct result of restrictions placed on Shia communities under General Zia”, said a Shia leader.<sup>149</sup>

Relying on Sunni political parties and organisations and a growing nationwide network of Deobandi and Ahle Hadith madrasas, Zia’s campaign not only served to legitimise his military regime but also to counter the perceived Shia threat. In response, a new generation of clerics, who had studied in Najaf and Qom (Shia centres of learning in Iraq and Iran, respectively), returned to Pakistan with fresh funding and ideas, which they used to establish their own sectarian madrasas.<sup>150</sup>

While the Iranian revolution also became a source of pride and political awakening for Pakistani Shias, who referred to it as a blueprint for a successful Islamic uprising, the proxy war of Iran and Saudi Arabia in Pakistan was further fuelled by the U.S.-supported anti-Soviet Afghan jihad. Saudi Arabia provided billions of dollars to the Pakistani military, most of which went to strengthening and arming Sunni groups on either side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.<sup>151</sup> As a result, Sunni madrasas increased significantly. In response, Shia groups and preachers went from discreet to aggressive. A major Shia party, the Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria

<sup>142</sup> Sunni Tehreek website, [www.sunnitehreek.com.pk/Home/Intro](http://www.sunnitehreek.com.pk/Home/Intro).

<sup>143</sup> “Sunni Tehreek takes a hit”, *Daily Times* editorial, 13 April 2006.

<sup>144</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge*, op. cit.

<sup>145</sup> “Sunni Tehreek to take on Talibanisation: Qureshi”, *Daily Times*, 4 May 2009.

<sup>146</sup> “Pakistan must revisit war on terror policy”, *Daily Times*, 23 April 2011.

<sup>147</sup> Rana Tanveer, “Taseer murder: Sunni Ittehad warns against protests”, *Express Tribune*, 10 January 2011.

<sup>148</sup> Omar Waraich, “Why Pakistan’s Taliban target the Muslim majority”, *Time*, 7 April 2011.

<sup>149</sup> Crisis Group interview, Allama Amin Shaheedi, Shia leader and member of Majlis-e-Wahdatul Muslimen, 16 March 2011.

<sup>150</sup> “This created a rift between the old Shias led by the traditional ulama educated in Najaf for whom involvement in politics was a sin and the majority of new Shias, under the influence of these younger ulama educated in Qom who were soon accused by the conservative[s] of being Wahhabi Shias who wanted to destroy the religion”. Mariam Abou Zahab, “The Regional Dimension of Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan”, Christophe Jaffrelot (ed.), *Pakistan Nationalism Without a Nation?* (New Delhi, 2002), p. 117.

<sup>151</sup> Crisis Group Report, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, op. cit., p. 12.

(TNFJ), was founded by Allama Mufti Jaffer Hussein in April 1979.<sup>152</sup>

Allama Hussein had been a member of the Council of Islamic Ideology but resigned in protest against Zia's imposition of Hanafi jurisprudence as obligatory for members of all sects. Following Hussein's death in 1983, the party's leadership split. A meeting of Shia scholars in Rawalpindi elected Maulana Hamid Ali Moosavi as Hussein's successor, while another group, in Bhakkar, Punjab, elected Allama Syed Arif Al Hussein. Despite attempts at reconciliation, the schism proved permanent. Al Hussein's group soon became the stronger of the two factions, ushering in an era of more radical Shia politics.

There are currently three Shia parties, but their involvement in politics varies greatly.

### 1. Islami Tehreek-e-Pakistan (ITP), formerly TNFJ-Husseini

In July 1987, Al Hussein's group transformed from a religious pressure group to a political party.<sup>153</sup> Its 80-page manifesto asserted that "each recognised Islamic school of thought" should be governed by its own laws, but opponents alleged that TNFJ and its supporters – with Iranian support – were attempting to implement and enforce Shia jurisprudence on all. The TNFJ's call to revive the spirit of holy war through the creation of a Popular Islamic Army, requiring compulsory military training for men, reinforced these allegations. Hussein's proclamation that Iran should be a model for Pakistan also did little to allay Sunni concerns.<sup>154</sup>

Hussein's assassination in 1988 was another turning point for sectarian relations. On the one hand, his "aggressive and confrontational style of politics" was followed by a more "moderate, pacifist stance" by the other TNFJ factions.<sup>155</sup> On the other, a number of splin-

ter militant Shia groups emerged, espousing sectarian violence. Over the next two decades, Shia and Sunni extremists killed more than 2,000 people and maimed thousands more.<sup>156</sup>

Following Hussein's death, Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi took over the party and entered into a temporary alliance with the PPP. Naqvi's party, now called the Tehreek-e-Jafaria Pakistan (TJP), became part of the MMA in 2002. While it remains functional, it has largely fallen out of favour among Shias, primarily as a result of the community's condemnation of Naqvi's personal life (see below).<sup>157</sup>

The party's mandate is to protect the political and religious rights of Shias, but also to provide them with a voice in politics. In particular, it has called for the ban on *azadari* (formalised mourning for religious martyrs) to be lifted and for financial compensation to be paid to victims of sectarian attacks. Publicly, it condemns sectarian politics. Its Punjab president, Jaleel Naqvi, lamented the proliferation of thousands of small "1.5 inch mosques that are decorating Pakistan's landscape".<sup>158</sup> TJP leader Sajid Naqvi explained his party's program as follows:

Let us establish some laws as general laws that are applicable to all Muslims, because 95 per cent of all laws would be common to all schools of jurisprudence. Let us create separate personal laws for the remaining 5 per cent of the issues: members of each *fiqh* would be governed by laws according to their own *fiqh* in these matters.<sup>159</sup>

While the party is frequently alleged to be financed by Iran, members insist that it is funded through membership fees and donations from the Pakistani Shia community. The organisational structure includes a *quaid* (president), senior vice president, additional vice presidents, a general secretary and additional secretaries. The Marakzi Jafaria Council, the main policy-making body, appoints these officials. The *quaid* is appointed for life, explaining Naqvi's continuation in the position despite the fallout from a personal scandal.

In 1990, the TJP general secretary, Dr Mohammad Ali Naqvi, disagreed with Sajid Naqvi over the party's role in politics and formed his own splinter group, with support from a large segment of the prominent Shia student group, the Imamia Student Organisation (ISO). The ISO also accused

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<sup>152</sup> In July 1980, the TNFJ led a major march in Islamabad to demand that it be allowed to regulate its own religious affairs and be represented at the highest levels of the state, including on matters of Islamisation. These demonstrations were provoked by Zia's imposition of *zakat*, which was automatically deducted from personal bank accounts in contradiction of mainstream Shia jurisprudence that prohibits the state from imposing this title. The protests succeeded in eventually exempting the community from the state's *zakat*. Subsequent Islamic legislation, however, violated Shia interpretations of Islamic law.

<sup>153</sup> Maleeha Lodhi, "Pakistan's Shia Movement: An interview with Arif Hussein", *Third World Quarterly*, 1988, p. 806.

<sup>154</sup> Zaman, op. cit., p. 696.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid, p. 697.

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<sup>156</sup> For more detail, see Crisis Group Report, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, op. cit.

<sup>157</sup> Crisis Group interview, Shia leader, Allama Shaheedi, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>158</sup> "1.5 inch mosques" is a commonly used Urdu term to describe sectarian divisions. Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 14 April 2011.

<sup>159</sup> Afak Haydar, "The Politicisation of the Shias and the Development of the Tehrik-e-Nifaz-Fiqah-e-Jafaria in Pakistan", in Charles H. Kennedy (ed.), *Pakistan 1992* (Colorado, 1993), p. 86.

Sajid Naqvi of siphoning funds intended for it.<sup>160</sup> Sajid's standing sank further in 1994, when he secretly married a young model, who, by virtue of being in the fashion business, was regarded as immoral by the Shia community and ISO members. A Shia leader, Allama Shaheedi, explained: "In the Shia community, the *quaid* is central. Therefore, when a controversy involves him, it is taken very seriously".<sup>161</sup> Sajid's refusal in 1997 to publicly condemn the hanging of a Shia accused of a bomb attack that killed a Sipah-e-Sahaba chief completed his faction's fall.<sup>162</sup> In November 2003, Sajid was arrested on suspicion of involvement in the murder of SSP chief Maulana Azam Tariq the month before.<sup>163</sup>

Musharraf banned the TJP as a terrorist outfit in 2002, but like other banned groups, it has re-emerged under a new name, the Islami Tehreek Pakistan (ITP). Party members argue that, having banned the radical Deobandi SSP, Musharraf was forced to take an equivalent step against a Shia party in an attempt at "balanced politics".<sup>164</sup> In July 2006, the ITP Sindh chief, Allama Hussan Turabi, was assassinated in a sectarian attack.<sup>165</sup> After surviving an earlier attempt on his life, Turabi had publicly accused the SSP's militant wing, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, of being behind the attack.<sup>166</sup> Now struggling for its survival, party leaders acknowledge that the newly created Majlis Wahdatul Muslimeen, discussed below, which has the ISO's support, will likely split the Shia vote in the next election, but they insist that the party remains effective.<sup>167</sup>

## 2. Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria – Moosavi Group

The leader of what is still called the TNFJ, Agha Syed Hamid Ali Shah Moosavi, was elected in 1983. The TNFJ is headquartered in Rawalpindi and has avoided electoral politics. In a 1996 interview, Moosavi explained: "Ours is a purely religious party. We consider taking part in elections on [a] sectarian basis as an invitation

to death".<sup>168</sup> The TNFJ also eschews direct confrontation with the majority Sunni sect – most likely a survival tactic. According to Moosavi, "Islam is not a name of any one school of thought. There are two recognised schools of thought in Islam, Sunnis and Shias. These are the two arms, and absence of any one of them would mean that Islam is incomplete". He added: "Our aim was not to enforce *Fiqh-i-Jafariya* [the Shia legal and religious system] on others, we only wanted to safeguard our beliefs and rights".<sup>169</sup>

The party's main purpose is to lobby the government for increased protection of Shia rights. In 2005, it presented a fourteen-point charter of demands dealing primarily with Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, during which Shias commemorate, through public displays of mourning, the battle of Karbala (680, in Iraq), in which the Prophet's grandson, Hussain, and his family were killed.<sup>170</sup> The demands included honouring a 1985 agreement in which the government promised the Shia community to permit processions and other rites during Muharram, and preventing sectarian violence. The party has been victim to sectarian attacks: for example, TNFJ leaders were assassinated in Dera Ismail Khan in February 2007<sup>171</sup> and in Peshawar in August 2008.<sup>172</sup>

## 3. Majlis-e-Wahdutul Muslimeen

Established in 2008, the MWM emerged from divisions within the Shia community after Sajid Naqvi's perceived "fall from grace"<sup>173</sup> and considers itself Al Hussein's true successor. According to its deputy secretary general, it was established to protest repeated human rights violations against the Shia community, including targeted killings of Shias and the blockade by Sunni militant groups of Parachinar's main highway, linking FATA's Kurram Agency to the rest of the country. This blockade has prevented the predominantly Shia residents' travel outside Kurram since 2009 and restricted food and other necessary supplies as well as humanitarian aid during military operations in the Agency.<sup>174</sup>

Instead of a single president, the MWM has a Shura-e-Nazarat (Consultative Council) that consists of ten *ulama* and is responsible for overseeing party functioning. The policy-making body, the Shura-e-Alia, comprises fourteen *ulama*, seven technocrats, and four provincial *amirs*. The Shura-e-

<sup>160</sup> Rana, op. cit., pp. 408-409.

<sup>161</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>162</sup> Rana, op. cit., p. 411.

<sup>163</sup> In 2006, an Anti-Terrorism Court acquitted him due to lack of evidence.

<sup>164</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>165</sup> "Bomber kills Hasan Turabi", *Dawn*, 15 July 2006.

<sup>166</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism*, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>167</sup> "The MWM was created by a group of emotional youth", Jaleel Naqvi claimed, adding that Sajid Naqvi, refusing to get involved in divisive issues, had not prevented them from forming their own party. Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 14 April 2011. The ISO played a critical role in transferring mass Shia support from Naqvi's party to the MWM.

<sup>168</sup> "Interview with TNFJ Quaid", *Daily Aaj*, 21 April 1996. Available on TNFJ website, <http://tnfj.org.pk/>.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> "TNFJ presents 14-point charter of demands", *Dawn*, 5 February 2006.

<sup>171</sup> "TNFJ leader shot dead in D.I. Khan", *Dawn*, 15 February 2007.

<sup>172</sup> "TNFJ leader shot dead", *Dawn*, 17 August 2008.

<sup>173</sup> Crisis Group interview, MWM member, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>174</sup> Crisis Group interview, Amin Shaheedi, MWM deputy secretary general, Islamabad, 22 March 2011.



Nazarat selects a secretary general for a three-year term, who in turn appoints a sixteen-member cabinet. The party's organisational set-up is about "75-80 per cent" complete, according to a member.<sup>175</sup> Like other Islamic parties, the MWM insists that there is no separation between the personal and the political and that Islam provides guidance for both. The party has a three-point agenda: ensuring Pakistan's stability, particularly defending it against foreign interference; preventing sectarian infighting and insisting on a united *umma* (Islamic community); and ending injustice. While it argues that foreign meddling undermines sovereignty and aggravates instability, it also focuses on domestic terrorism of which Shias are often victims.<sup>176</sup>

The MWM receives its funding primarily from Shia households that contribute 100 rupees (just over \$1) monthly. While cities such as Lahore and Karachi have generated adequate funds, fundraising has been less successful in rural areas. Nevertheless, party members contend that the positive response in urban areas reflects the Shia minority's aspirations for political representation.<sup>177</sup> The party denies receiving money from Iran, insisting that while there are ideological links, "Pakistan is who we are, and this is what we'll protect".<sup>178</sup> Despite the emphasis on its Shia identity, the MWM has consulted Jamaat-e-Islami leaders about a possible electoral alliance, according to members of the Shia student party, ISO, which supports the MWM.<sup>179</sup> Party officials, however, claim that the shura has yet to take a final decision about contesting the 2013 elections.<sup>180</sup>

## IV. POLITICAL IMPACT AND INFLUENCE

### A. THE LEGACY OF MILITARY RULE

#### 1. Legal reforms

As seen, the Islamic parties have exerted influence on legislation and government policy even during civilian rule, for example using pressure tactics to obtain the Objectives Resolution of 1949, the 1974 constitutional amendment declaring Ahmadis non-Muslim and the introduction of prohibition in 1976. While these measures emboldened Islamic parties to agitate for further reforms, their most significant impact on the polity resulted from their alliance with Zia's military regime. The influence of the parties and *ulama* today is largely owed to the manner in which that regime fundamentally altered the structure of the constitution and legal system, giving Islamist forces new sources of influence and a political role disproportionate to their popular support. A large part of the Islamic parties' contemporary agenda is to prevent a rollback of those reforms.

It was under Zia that the Objectives Resolution was upgraded from the preamble to become a substantive part of the constitution. Article 227, part of the Third Constitutional Amendment Order of 1980, stipulated: "All existing laws shall be brought in conformity with the Injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Quran and *Sunnah*, in this Part referred to as the Injunctions of Islam, and no law shall be enacted which is repugnant to such Injunctions". In 1979, the Hudood Ordinances were promulgated to introduce Islamic punishments for theft, alcohol consumption, sexual intercourse outside marriage ("fornication") and, until the Women Protection Act of 2006, rape.<sup>181</sup>

In 1982 and 1986, the regime added discriminatory blasphemy provisions to the Pakistan Penal Code. While the original blasphemy law, based on colonial India's penal code, prohibited "deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs", a new clause called for life imprisonment for anyone who "wilfully defiles, damages or desecrates a copy of the holy Quran ... or uses it in any derogatory manner". Another imposed the death penalty<sup>182</sup> on anyone who, "by words, either spoken or written, or by visible represen-

<sup>175</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>176</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge*, op. cit.

<sup>177</sup> Crisis Group interview, MWM members, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>178</sup> Crisis Group interview, Amin Shaheedi, MWM deputy secretary general, Islamabad, 22 March 2011.

<sup>179</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>180</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>181</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Reforming the Judiciary*, op. cit., p. 10. The Ordinances did not differentiate between *zina* (adultery) and *zina bil jabr* (rape), making women who could not prove rape under new, stricter evidence standards liable to a fornication charge. The amended Evidence Act, renamed Qanoon-e-Shahadat, requires four witnesses to prove rape.

<sup>182</sup> Under the original clause, introduced in 1986, a person convicted of violating this section could also be sentenced to life imprisonment. Pursuant to a Federal Shariat Court directive, Nawaz Sharif's government made the death penalty mandatory in 1991.

tation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad".<sup>183</sup> These changes strongly discriminate against religious/sectarian minorities, moving Pakistan away from international standards of justice.

Police officials admit that religious groups pressure them into lodging blasphemy charges.<sup>184</sup> Lower courts especially propagate narrow and discriminatory Islamic jurisprudence. Most blasphemy and Hudood cases result in convictions at the trial-court level, although they are often overturned on appeal to a high court. Radical clerics and extremist outfits such as the Sipah-e-Sahaba have exploited blasphemy cases to promote their sectarian agenda,<sup>185</sup> frequently appearing at hearings to pressure judges into pronouncing guilty verdicts. Intimidation also occurs at higher levels of the justice system. In October 1997, a Lahore High Court judge who acquitted a teenager accused of blasphemy was shot dead in his chamber.<sup>186</sup> After awarding the death penalty to Mumtaz Qadri, Governor Taseer's assassin, the anti-terrorism court judge was forced into a leave of absence and virtual exile due to death threats from Qadri's supporters. The government should ensure a high level of protection not just to judges but also to prosecutors, witnesses and the accused in such cases.

Zia also introduced and/or strengthened a number of Islamic bodies, such as the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII), a constitutionally mandated entity that advises the legislature on whether a law is repugnant to Islam. During its early years, lawyers and judges, but only a few members of the clergy, predominantly staffed the CII. Under Zia, it was reconstituted and expanded to include more orthodox *ulama*.<sup>187</sup> In 1980, a Federal Shariat Court (FSC) was established and empowered not only to strike down laws that were considered un-Islamic, but also to

direct parliament on the content of specific legislation. In 1981, for example, it endorsed the punishment of death by stoning.

Such reforms gave the *ulama* opportunities to translate idiosyncratic interpretations of Sunni Islam into state policy even after Zia's death in 1988 and the end of his military government. In 1990, the FSC ruled that a blasphemy conviction should carry a mandatory death penalty, with no possibility of pardon. In 1992, it ruled that the *Qisas* and *Diyat* laws, which allow a party to seek monetary compensation from another when bodily harm has occurred, should also allow the immediate relatives of a murder victim to pardon the perpetrator. The Nawaz Sharif government passed legislation complying with these decisions. In November 1991, the FSC held that the interest-based financial system was un-Islamic and that laws regarding interest would cease to have effect from 1 July 1992, a decision that was upheld by the Supreme Court's Shariat Appellate bench in December 1999.<sup>188</sup> Also in 1991, the FSC ruled that land reform was contrary to Islam and the teachings of the Prophet.

## 2. Militant wings

If the major Sunni Islamist parties were able to parlay military support into significant legislative gains, their ability to defend these gains through violence, intimidation and street power reflects a committed hardcore base, as well as the mainstream moderate parties' failure to exploit their own much larger popular bases to support their reform agendas.

The JI and JUI, in their pursuit of jihad in Afghanistan against not only the Soviets but also the Soviet-backed Najibullah government, advanced new tactics for attacks against other Muslims, a precursor to the inward-oriented extremism of militant outfits such as the anti-Shia Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Pakistani Taliban groups.<sup>189</sup>

Although Article 256 of the constitution prohibits private militias, a number of major militant groups are either offshoots of an Islamic party or receive (or have received) material, logistical and ideological support from one. Such support includes providing financing, rank-and-file recruits, shelter to high-profile terrorists and mediation between militants and the state. After the 11 September 2001 attacks in the U.S., for instance, several high profile al-Qaeda operatives

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<sup>183</sup> Section 295-C, Pakistan Penal Code.

<sup>184</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Reforming the Judiciary*, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>185</sup> For example, in July 2002 an inmate belonging to the SSP murdered a scholar convicted of blasphemy by a Lahore district court.

<sup>186</sup> The Lahore High Court is widely believed by lawyers to be the most conservative high court bench. In November 2010, it blocked President Zardari's move to pardon Asiya Bibi on the implausible grounds that the verdict was being appealed, although Article 45 of the constitution empowers the president "to grant pardon, reprieve and respite, and to remit, suspend or commute any sentence passed by any court, tribunal or other authority". Human Rights Watch senior South Asia researcher Ali Dayan Hassan described the decision as a "clear case of judicial overreach". Ali Dayan Hasan, "An assassination in Pakistan", *The New York Times*, 6 January 2011.

<sup>187</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Masud, former chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology, Islamabad, February 2011.

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<sup>188</sup> Interest-based banking continues, but a parallel Sharia-compliant banking system was created. For more detail on the government's policy changes following the ruling, see "Islamisation of Financial System in Pakistan", Annual Report FY02, State Bank of Pakistan, chapter 10, pp. 189-198.

<sup>189</sup> Saleem Safi, "The Taliban and our hypocrisy", *Jang*, 10 February 2009.

were arrested at the homes of JI officials.<sup>190</sup> In 2006, after a JI member was arrested alongside two senior al-Qaeda operatives (including Khalid Sheikh Mohammad), Interior Minister Makhdoom Faisal Saleh Hayat said, “all of the activists and terrorists who have been apprehended in recent months have had links to the Jamaat-e-Islami, whether we have arrested them in Lahore or here or Karachi. They have been harbouring them”.<sup>191</sup>

The Hizbul Mujahideen, formed in November 1989 as a Kashmir-oriented outfit, is the JI’s militant wing, waging violent jihad for Jammu and Kashmir’s integration into Pakistan and Islamisation of the disputed state. It also has close links to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s Hizb-e-Islami. Analysts believe that the Hizbul Mujahideen’s leadership is decided in consultation with the JI.<sup>192</sup> The JI also helps recruit and train combatants for the cause, including through its student wing, and provides funding through various domestic and international foundations.<sup>193</sup> Both JUI factions have backed other India-oriented Deobandi militant groups, particularly the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and its offshoot, the Jaish-e-Mohammad, with JUI madrasas providing recruits for them.<sup>194</sup>

The JI condemns violence to achieve Islamic goals, and its members are often quick to resort to conspiracy theories, denying the involvement of Muslims in terrorist acts and instead naming “foreign elements”, specifically the U.S., India and Israel, as adversaries attempting to destabilise Pakistan. JI members also argue that Pakistan’s creation was meant to establish an Islamic state, as later reflected in the Objectives Resolution, and imply that Islamist militants are in fact demanding what all citizens were promised. In the words of a JI member, “religious extremists aren’t demanding something people don’t want – the people want an Islamic state”.<sup>195</sup>

In March 2007, militants from various outfits such as the Jaish-e-Mohammad and SSP, along with female militants from a women’s madrasa, the Jamia Hafsa, occu-

pled the premises of Islamabad’s Lal Masjid (Red Mosque). The mosque’s leader, Maulana Abdul Aziz Ghazi, and his brother, Abdul Rashid Ghazi, established their own Sharia court and demanded that Islamic law be enforced in the capital. A months-long standoff with the state culminated in the Musharraf government’s belated, heavy-handed operation to retake the mosque in July 2007, which anti-terrorism officials and other observers believe marked a turning point in the escalation of terrorist attacks in the country.<sup>196</sup>

Initially, the JI and the JUI-F argued that the general premise of the Lal Masjid protests was legitimate but that citizens should not challenge the government’s writ and take state policy into their own hands.<sup>197</sup> Subsequently, however, JI leader Qazi Hussein termed the events a “positive step” toward the enforcement of Sharia in Pakistan.<sup>198</sup> A JI investigative report, outlining the events leading up to the siege, expressed sympathy with Jamia Hafsa students and mosque clerics, arguing that their actions were a “natural” reaction to demands by community members to help clear their area of un-Islamic influences and behaviour.<sup>199</sup>

Despite the JUI-F’s close ties to the Ghazi brothers, the party claims that its leadership counselled them against their illegal actions and told them that the JUI-F would not support their cause. According to a scholar, “the Deobandis’ calculation was simple: they were afraid that one high-profile case of vigilante Islamism would tarnish all of the Deobandi madaris and were therefore willing to break openly with one of their own”.<sup>200</sup> A JUI-F member said, “it was election season, and the atmosphere was charged. Due to our principled stance, we had to deal with loss of some support”.<sup>201</sup>

The stance of the JUI-F and the JI toward Talibanisation in KPK and FATA is equally marked with contradictions. TNSM leader Sufi Mohammad, who has headed the violent campaign to impose Sharia in the Malakand region since the mid-1990s, was a JI member until 1988. While the JI endorses the TNSM’s ideological thrust of imposing Sharia, it disputes Sufi Mohammad’s position that constitutional democracy is anti-Islamic. “How can the constitution, which says that sovereignty lies in Allah, be un-Islamic?” asked a JI

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<sup>190</sup> In January 2003, for example, two al-Qaeda operatives were arrested in the house of a leader of the JI women’s wing in Karachi. The same year, two key Pakistani al-Qaeda allies were arrested at the home of a senior Jamaat leader in Lahore. See Crisis Group Report, *Karachi’s Madrasas and Violent Extremism*, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>191</sup> Gretchen Peters, “Al Qaeda-Pakistani ties deepen”, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 6 March 2006.

<sup>192</sup> See Nicholas Howenstein, “The Jihadi Terrain in Pakistan: An Introduction to the Sunni Jihadi Groups in Pakistan and Kashmir”, research report 1, Pakistan Security Research Unit, 5 February 2008, p. 14.

<sup>193</sup> Grare, op. cit., p. 77; and Rana, *A to Z*, op. cit., pp. 448-449.

<sup>194</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, op. cit.

<sup>195</sup> Crisis Group interview, Peshawar, March 2011.

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<sup>196</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge*, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>197</sup> For analysis on the Islamist parties’ response to the Lal Masjid events, see Joshua White, “Vigilante Islamism in Pakistan: Religious Party Responses to the Lal Masjid Crisis”, *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology*, 2008. According to White, the JI was more willing to directly partake in vigilantism, while the JUI-F, perhaps as a result of its diffuse structure, took a more indirect approach.

<sup>198</sup> “JUI-F, JI differ over Jamia Hafsa issue”, *Daily Times*, 12 April 2007.

<sup>199</sup> JI White Paper on the Red Mosque (undated), obtained by Crisis Group.

<sup>200</sup> White, op. cit.

<sup>201</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

member.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, Fazlur Rehman publicly questioned TNSM's methods but added that deviation from Islamic legislation and unresponsiveness of democratic institutions had provoked the group's actions.<sup>203</sup> The leader of the other JUI faction, Samiul Haq, reportedly congratulated Sufi Muhammad on taking "thousands of people for jihad, which was a commendable action".<sup>204</sup>

Most Afghan Taliban leaders and commanders, including Mullah Omar, were graduates of JUI madrasas, which formed jihadi networks across Pakistan's urban centres during and after the anti-Soviet jihad. Government attempts to regulate the madrasa sector having failed, these seminaries continue to operate unchecked, many with known or suspected links to militant groups, and to preach local, regional and transnational jihad. The JUI-F, as well as JUI-S strongly back the Afghan Taliban, with their madrasa network in the Pashtun majority belts of KPK and Balochistan providing foot soldiers for the cause. The JUI-F, and JUI-S, also maintain links with Pakistani Taliban groups, many of whose leaders are, like their Afghan counterparts, associated with their madrasas.

Portraying itself as the only capable mediator between the state and militants, the JUI-F has played a major role in brokering ill-conceived peace deals between the military and militants in the tribal belt.<sup>205</sup> In 2004, two JUI-F national parliamentarians from South Waziristan arranged a deal with the Pakistani Taliban leadership there. Known as the Shakai agreement, this deal, in the words of an analyst, "legitimised the status of the local militants as power-brokers".<sup>206</sup> The JUI-F also helped broker a similar deal – with similar consequences – in North Waziristan in September 2006,<sup>207</sup> after which the JUI-F's parliamentarian in the agency declared: "Misunderstandings between the administration and [Pakistani] Taliban led to unpleasant moments, but we are happy that a new beginning starts today".<sup>208</sup> While those peace deals have only expanded the militants' space to operate, JUI-F leader Fazlur Rehman is attempting to negotiate similar agreements not just between the Pakistani Taliban and military but also between the Afghan Taliban and the U.S.

Moreover, the JUI actively encourages sectarianism as a basic point of principle, linking Shias to anti-Islamic foreign forces. As early as 1978, for example, an editorial in *Al-Haq*, a publication of JUI-S's Darul Uloom Haqqania, declared:

We must also remember that Shias consider it their religious duty to harm and eliminate the *Ahle-Sunnah* ... the Shias have always conspired to convert Pakistan into a Shia state .... They have been conspiring with our foreign enemies and with the Jews. It was through such conspiracies that the Shias masterminded the separation of East Pakistan and thus satiated their thirst for the blood of the Sunnis.<sup>209</sup>

The Sunni extremist Sipah-e-Sahaba, formed in 1985 with a one-point anti-Shia agenda, was the logical extension of the JUI's sectarian politics, and also represented a Pakistani military and Saudi-sponsored campaign against what they perceived as an Iran-friendly Shia minority. In response, newly radicalised Shias created a militant organisation, the Sipah-e-Mohammad Pakistan (SMP), believing that their political parties were insufficient to protect them.<sup>210</sup> Since the early 1990s, the SMP has been involved in anti-Deobandi violence, particularly in Punjab and in Sindh's capital, Karachi. Its relationship to Shia political parties is unclear, with some analysts claiming that ITP maintains a "discreet distance" from the group without "explicitly condemning its militancy".<sup>211</sup>

Successive assassination attempts on Fazlur Rehman in March 2011 indicate that while some extremist groups see the JUI-F as an ally, others believe it an extension of the enemy. Thus, a faction of the North Waziristan-based Pakistani Taliban condemned these attacks: "Attacks on true religious scholars are part of a series of conspiracies to create hatred about the jihad, mujahidin and Muslims in the world".<sup>212</sup> But, an ex-Taliban official, highlighting Fazlur Rehman's political inconsistencies and alleged overtures to the U.S., said, "Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who has been an ally of the Pervez Musharraf regime and is also a partner in the present ruling coalition, had strong contacts with militant groups in Afghanistan as well as Pakistan but nobody ... even imagine[d] until now that he is constantly in touch with the Americans also".<sup>213</sup> Another argued: "Fazlur Rehman brokered a deal with the royal family of Saudi Arabia and pledged to help arrest the wanted Arabs through militants

<sup>202</sup> Crisis Group interview, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>203</sup> "Procedure of enforcing Sharia in Swat incorrect, says Fazl", *Pakistan Tribune*, 21 April 2009.

<sup>204</sup> Imtiaz Ali, "Father of the Taliban: Interview with Maulana Samiul Haq", *Spotlight on Terror*, May 2007.

<sup>205</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Appeasing the Militants*, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>206</sup> Zulfikar Ali, "Militants agree to surrender", *Dawn*, 23 April 2004.

<sup>207</sup> For more detail on this accord, see Crisis Group Report, *Appeasing the Militants*, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

<sup>208</sup> Quoted in *ibid*.

<sup>209</sup> Translated from the monthly *Al-Haq*, 3 December 1978; quoted in Mumtaz Ahmed, "Revivalism, Islamisation, Sectarianism and Violence in Pakistan", in Craig Baxter and Charles H. Kennedy (eds.), *Pakistan 1997* (Delhi, 1998), p. 109. See also Crisis Group Report, *The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>210</sup> Abou Zahab, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>211</sup> Zaman, op. cit., p. 698.

<sup>212</sup> Tahir Khan, "Taliban to trace, punish Fazal attacks' planners", *The Frontier Post*, 5 April 2011.

<sup>213</sup> Mazhar Tufail, "Fazlur Rehman getting isolated after WikiLeaks exposure", *The News*, 8 December 2010.

loyal to him in the tribal belt. But the Taliban got wind of it and before Rehman's men did anything, the Arab militants were alerted".<sup>214</sup>

The JUI-F blames KPK's left-leaning Awami National Party-led government and the Americans' CIA for the attacks on Rehman, reinforcing members' suspicions that Western forces are responsible for such terrorist activity in Pakistan.<sup>215</sup> At the same time, the party refrains from criticising the Pakistan Taliban and other militants for their acts or denouncing militancy, although some JUI-F members argue that this is "out of fear".<sup>216</sup>

The smaller Islamist parties, too, have close links to militant outfits, most notably the Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith. Its leader, Sajid Mir, frequently attends and addresses Jamaat-ud-Dawa rallies and events. This relationship is consistent with the Ahle Hadith's strong support for jihad in Indian Kashmir. In 2000, a Kashmir jihadi outfit, the Tehreekul Mujahideen, formally became part of the party. According to a prominent Ahle Hadith member, Maulana Shahbuddin Madani, "it is the military wing of Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith and symbolises us".<sup>217</sup>

## B. DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLITICS

### 1. Parliament and the political mainstream

Even during civilian dispensations, the Islamic parties have been able to parlay small victories into political gains in parliament, largely because governments led by the two major mainstream parties, the PPP and the PML-N, have often had to rely on fragile coalitions to maintain a majority. This is particularly the case with the JUI-F, which retains pockets of support in KPK and Balochistan. For instance, during Benazir Bhutto's second government (1993-1996), Fazlur Rehman served, with the PPP's support, as chairman of the parliamentary standing committee for foreign affairs.<sup>218</sup> More recently, after the breakup of the PPP-PML-N coalition in August 2008, the JUI-F leveraged its support to a now-fragile PPP-led majority to protect its political interests but also to advance its ideological interests.

In return for supporting Asif Ali Zardari's presidential election in August 2008, the JUI-F successfully demanded that the government reopen the Jamia Faridia madrasa, closed in 2007 for its role in the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) affair, and transfer the land of the associated female madrasa, Jamia Hafsa, to the Lal Masjid Action Committee.<sup>219</sup> The PPP-led government also appointed Maulana Sherani, an ultra-orthodox JUI-F senator with questionable academic credentials and track record as chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology in 2010, replacing a moderate religious scholar. This was done despite a conflict of interest, since Sherani makes recommendations to the Senate on laws as the CII chairman, while as a senator he espouses his party's political agenda.<sup>220</sup> Sherani has repeatedly called for Pakistan to be ruled by Sharia and a vaguely defined Islamic *nizam* (system). "Islam applies to the state, just as it applies to individuals", he argues. "It is not possible to relegate Islam only to the personal sphere".<sup>221</sup> Criticising the appointment, the independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) stated:

The reported decision to relieve the widely acclaimed scholar [Dr Khalid Masud] for rational interpretation of Islamic Injunctions as chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology and replace him with an office-bearer of a religious political party will cause widespread concern among the democratic sections of the people" ... [Such a move] deserves to be censured, as it is too heavy a price to pay for the passage of the federal budget, or even the survival of the federal government. In the long run, neither economic planning, nor the status of the present government will escape the consequences".<sup>222</sup>

As long as the CII remains in place, the government should prohibit serving parliamentarians from becoming its chairperson. It should also abide by the letter and spirit of the CII constitution and ensure a diverse and representative membership, including judges, scholars and women.

In April 2011, the PPP reportedly tried to persuade the JUI-F to return to the governing coalition in Islamabad, but the party's conditions, including ending military operations against militant groups in FATA and imposing Sharia, were unacceptable.<sup>223</sup> Yet, even on the opposition benches, the JUI-F remains a force in the legislature, largely because of posts given to it by the PPP when it was a coalition partner. For example, a JUI-F senator, Talha Mehmood Aryan, chairs

<sup>214</sup> Tahir Ali, "Why Pak's shrewdest politician is being hunted", *Rediff*, 4 April 2011.

<sup>215</sup> "JUI-F blames CIA, KP government for suicide attack", *Dawn*, 31 March 2011.

<sup>216</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Peshawar, March 2011.

<sup>217</sup> Rana, op. cit., p. 307.

<sup>218</sup> JUI-F members accuse JUI-S of joining hands with a military ruler (Zia), while the JUI-S accuses Fazlur Rehman's faction of forgetting its Islamic ideology by allying with "secularists" and supporting a female leader (Benazir Bhutto). Crisis Group interviews, Peshawar, March-April 2011.

<sup>219</sup> The government reopened Jamia Faridia on 1 September 2008.

<sup>220</sup> Crisis Group interview, Khalid Masud, former chairman, Council of Islamic Ideology, Islamabad, 20 February 2011.

<sup>221</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>222</sup> "HRCP alarmed over likely choice to head CII", Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, press release, 14 June 2010.

<sup>223</sup> Amir Wasim, "PPP bid to woo Fazl draws blank", *Dawn*, 16 December 2010.

the Senate's standing interior committee, while Fazlur Rehman chairs the Kashmir committee.

Other Islamic parties have also relied on alliances with the two major mainstream parties to influence parliamentary politics. For example, the Ahle Hadith, while maintaining its own mandate and religious agenda, is currently aligned with the PML-N.<sup>224</sup> An analyst describes it as PML-N's "B team".<sup>225</sup> Even when it was part of the MMA, its *amir*, Professor Sajid Mir, contested the 2002 polls on a PML-N ticket; he is currently a PML-N senator. The party manifesto, too, references this partnership:

Markazi Ahle Hadees raised the voice of truth against female rule [Benazir Bhutto's government] and, for the greater good of the country, considered forming a coalition with [the] Muslim League (N) .... It is the reason why Mian Nawaz Sharif has repeatedly appreciated the organisation's efforts. In fact, Mian Nawaz Sharif, who keenly desired the support of Jamaat-e-Islami, has now forgotten the way to Mansoor [where the JI headquarters are located].<sup>226</sup>

The rationale for alliance with the PML-N is clearly the potential for becoming part of a national government. By contrast, alliance with the Islamic parties, as the Ahle Hadith *amir*, Sajid Mir, contends, would indicate a narrow focus on the theoretical aspects of Islam rather than on the "problems of the masses".<sup>227</sup> The Ahle Hadith is apparently keeping its electoral options open, however, as Mir suggested in November 2010, when arguing that "the restoration of MMA can also play a pivotal role to counter the menace of terrorism and extremism".<sup>228</sup> Nevertheless, members suggest, it is more likely that the relationship with the PML-N will endure than a decision will be made to join a resurrected form of the MMA.<sup>229</sup>

The PML-N's concessions to the Islamic parties have undermined its credibility and record in office in the past. The first Sharif government, for example, made the death penalty mandatory in blasphemy cases in 1991, albeit following a Federal Shariat Court judgment on the issue. In 1997, the second Sharif government passed the *Qisas* and *Diyat* laws that allow a murder victim's heirs to pardon the culprit in return for financial compensation. It also introduced the Fifteenth Con-

stitutional Amendment bill in 1998, which called for Sharia to become the basic law of the land but failed to gain parliamentary approval because of the PPP-led opposition.

These concessions to and alliances of convenience with the Islamic parties, including the allocation of electoral seats to members of parties such as the Ahle Hadith, might bring short-term electoral gains but are short-sighted, with the party risking losing credibility with its core supporters. Moreover, since groups like the Ahle Hadith oppose key PML-N objectives such as peace with India, conceding space to them limits the party's policy options.

Similarly, the PPP's concessions to Islamist forces have resulted in inconsistent messaging that damages the party's standing and restricts its policy choices. These include the imposition of Sharia through the Nizam-e-Adl 2009 in KPK's Malakand region. Such policies of appeasement have only served to empower the militants further, as their comeback to the region amply demonstrates.<sup>230</sup>

As the ruling party,<sup>231</sup> the PPP should adopt a policy of zero tolerance toward all forms of religious discrimination that feeds sectarian violence and undermines the rule of law, at the same time undercutting constitutionalism and fundamental rights. Its government should rigorously prosecute anyone, including clerics and politicians, who violates the law by encouraging or glorifying violence and militant jihad, disseminating militant jihadi literature or uttering hate speech against religious and sectarian minorities. Invoking Article 256 of the constitution, the government should also require Islamic parties to disband their militant wings, and take strong action against those that refuse, including disqualifying them from participating in elections. Likewise, it should introduce strict punishments for false accusations of blasphemy or of crimes under the Hudood Ordinances and act, under existing laws, against all forms of vigilantism.

## 2. Mass mobilisation

PPP national assembly member Sherry Rehman<sup>232</sup> argues that the Islamic parties have sought the benefits of state patronage while adopting the language and methodology of an opposition.<sup>233</sup> At the same time, they have disproportionately influenced domestic policy, not just through alliances with military regimes, but also through the use of street power and violence, often successfully pressuring civilian governments into abandoning promised reforms or making concessions that forward an Islamist agenda.

<sup>224</sup> Crisis Group interview, Rana Shafiq Pasroori, Ahle Hadith deputy general secretary, Lahore, 10 March 2011.

<sup>225</sup> Rana, op. cit., p. 304.

<sup>226</sup> Quoted in *ibid*, p. 305.

<sup>227</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, 30 March 2011.

<sup>228</sup> Syed Adnan Farooq, "Religious leaders stress MMA restoration", *The Nation*, 8 November 2010.

<sup>229</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Islamabad and Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>230</sup> "Mullah Fazlullah vows new war", *The Express Tribune*, 22 October 2011.

<sup>231</sup> Under the Eighteenth Amendment, criminal justice remains a federal subject.

<sup>232</sup> Sherry Rehman is now the ambassador-designate to the U.S.

<sup>233</sup> Crisis Group telephone interview, 4 March 2011.

Their reliance on such means to gain power and influence is largely dictated by their lack of a popular support base that extends beyond a limited hardcore constituency. Nor is this base likely to expand at present, given their current focus on a narrow anti-Western platform or appeals to orthodox Islam. Such an agenda has little mass appeal, not just with the growing numbers of urban lower-middle and middle class voters, but even more importantly with those of modest means, for whom economic concerns are and likely will remain the highest priority in the next general election. "The two issues of concern that we hear from our constituents [are] the power crisis and inflation", said a Punjab-based senior PPP member.<sup>234</sup> These are issues that the Islamic parties have failed to tap into.

Some Islamic groups are addressing middle-class concerns without engaging economic issues directly. In May 2011, for example, the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) held demonstrations in Punjab against extremist attacks on Sufi shrines and the government's inability to stop them. It drew some support from trade unions in urban and semi-urban districts, including Lahore, Gujranwala, Jhelum, Faisalabad and Rawalpindi, as well as in small towns like Gojar Khan and Sheikhpura, where businesses have been affected by sectarian violence. Yet, the SIC was far more successful in drawing its core constituents on to the streets when it held protests against reforms to the blasphemy laws and in support of Taseer's assassin.

Indeed, the Islamic parties are most successful in galvanising street power when the goal is narrowly linked to obstructing reforms to discriminatory religious laws that often provoke sectarian violence and conflict and undermine the rule of law and constitutionalism. Just as major JI-led street demonstrations prompted Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to declare Ahmadis non-Muslim in 1974, today's protests centre on preventing the PPP-led government from reversing discriminatory laws.

In the aftermath of Asiya Bibi's blasphemy conviction in November 2010,<sup>235</sup> Sherry Rehman introduced a private member bill in the National Assembly to amend the blasphemy law, including eliminating the death sentence. Senior leaders, including President Zardari, Governor Taseer and Minister Bhatti, supported such changes. The following month, however, a conference of major Islamic parties, including JUI-F, JI and Ahle Hadith, launched the Tahafuz-e-Namoos-e-Risalat (Protection of the Sanctity of the Prophet) movement, opposing repeal or amendment. The movement has since held sever-

al large demonstrations and strikes, while Islamic party leaders insist that the death penalty is the only appropriate punishment for blasphemy.

Rather than resisting this pressure through debate and mobilising its own sizeable PPP activist base, the government backtracked publicly, pledging in December 2010 to neither repeal nor amend the blasphemy law.<sup>236</sup> Assuring the *ulama* on this, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said, "religious leaders must not have any fear and apprehension that anything would be done contrary to Islam or its teachings by the present government".<sup>237</sup> Such statements contradict the PPP's longstanding position on the blasphemy law and risk alienating moderate voices and the party's liberal base, while they empower religious extremists.<sup>238</sup>

The fear of violent retribution, more than evident in the Taseer and Bhatti assassinations, has understandably caused policymakers to proceed cautiously. Moreover, the judiciary might very possibly obstruct any attempt to amend or repeal such laws, as it has done in the past.<sup>239</sup> Nevertheless, the mainstream parties should not say things or take actions in defence of discriminatory laws that not only contradict their stance on human rights and embolden hardliners but also limit their options to amend or repeal these provisions in the future.

Zia's discriminatory legislation remains one of the biggest tests for the PPP, a party that has repeatedly pledged to uphold the basic rights of all citizens and curb religious extremism. Benazir Bhutto's second government, for instance, had decided to amend the blasphemy law so as to require a judicial magistrate's authorisation before any case could be registered or arrest made. It had also planned to prohibit and punish false accusations of blasphemy. Although Bhutto succumbed to the pressure of religious extremists and failed

<sup>234</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, November 2011.

<sup>235</sup> She was sentenced to death by a district judge, the first woman to receive such a sentence.

<sup>236</sup> "In making such a dramatic reversal", said Human Rights Watch's South Asia researcher, "the government publicly isolated Taseer, Zardari's close friend, and Rehman, who had co-authored the Pakistan Peoples Party's election manifesto". Hasan, op. cit.  
<sup>237</sup> "Government not amending blasphemy law, PM says", *Dawn*, 18 January 2011.

<sup>238</sup> Under pressure from her party's leadership and facing death threats from extremists, Sherry Rehman withdrew the bill in February 2011.

<sup>239</sup> In addition to blocking President Zardari's pardon of Asiya Bibi discussed earlier, in 2008 the Supreme Court, upholding the Lahore High Court's decision, blocked the government's move to commute death sentences to life imprisonment, arguing that under Islamic law only the heirs of victims were authorised to revise a punishment for murder. While all decisions of that bench, comprising judges who illegally took an oath under Musharraf's November 2007 emergency rule, were later struck down, the ruling deterred the PPP-led government from pushing ahead with the reform. In December 2010, the Federal Shariat Court ruled that sections of the 2006 Protection of Women Act which repealed some of the most egregious parts of the Hudood Ordinances violated Islamic provisions.

to follow through, she did direct district magistrates to release those accused under the blasphemy law until a proper investigation was conducted into their cases.<sup>240</sup>

The PPP also kept human rights and the repeal of discriminatory religious laws high on its agenda while in opposition. In July 2007, the PPP senator, and current Senate chairman, Farooq Hameed Naek, said, “the blasphemy law is used against political opponents and minorities, but there have been no moves in parliament to do away with it”.<sup>241</sup> In its 2007 manifesto, the party vowed to review “statutes that discriminate against religious minorities and are sources of communal disharmony”.<sup>242</sup> PML-N leaders have also, in principle, supported repealing the penal code’s discriminatory provisions.

The PPP and PML-N should counter the threat of violence and intimidation from the Islamic parties and their sympathisers by generating broad public debate and support for repealing discriminatory legislation on the basis of citizens’ fundamental rights and exploiting their own considerable human and other resources. That they are more than capable of mobilising their bases and can have a far greater impact on public opinion than the Islamic parties was amply demonstrated in their movement to oust the Musharraf regime. What is required in the particular context of discriminatory legislation, however, is far more regular engagement with their respective party memberships, including by organising local activist groups to build support for reforms at the grassroots level, as well as by stimulating national-level debate through the media and other forums.

Some PPP leaders argue that, given a fragile democratic transition and a slim parliamentary majority, any controversial reforms could be exploited by the opposition inside and outside parliament to oust the government and destabilise the political order.<sup>243</sup> Such caution is understandable to some extent, but it should not be used to justify an indefinite postponement of vital democratic reforms.

While their agenda and hence their popular appeal remain limited, the Islamic parties could indeed benefit from destabilisation of the democratic transition. Moreover, with the PML-N in opposition and shifting from parliamentary to street politics in an attempt to oust the PPP-led government before the March 2012

Senate elections,<sup>244</sup> an increasingly acrimonious political environment is giving the Islamic parties new opportunities to mobilise on the streets. The PML-N certainly has the democratic right to protest, but when it marshals street power, it should do so to strengthen democracy and constitutionalism, as it successfully did against the Musharraf regime. Appearing to advocate or at least condone violence and unconstitutional actions, as Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif did when he called at an October 2011 rally for President Zardari to either step down or “be hanged upside down at Bhatti Chowk [a major Lahore intersection]”,<sup>245</sup> will only serve the interests of undemocratic forces and spoilers.

### C. STUDENT POLITICS

Student unions have played an important and constructive role in Pakistan’s political history. Military rulers have tried to neutralise this potentially powerful pro-democracy lobby and forestall domestic opposition with frequent clampdowns on political activism on the campuses. At the same time, military governments have allowed Islamic parties, particularly the JI but also military-backed ethnic entities such as the MQM, free reign in colleges and universities. This suppression of democratic dissent has resulted in the student wings of Islamic parties gaining ascendancy on campuses to the disadvantage of parties such as the PPP and the PML-N.<sup>246</sup>

Most student groups were established soon after independence and spearheaded democratic protests in both east and west Pakistan. Student protests, for instance, energised the popular movement that led to the ouster of Pakistan’s first military government, that of General Ayub Khan, in 1969. In 1984, Zia banned student unions, ostensibly to counter growing violence on campuses but largely to prevent the student wings of the moderate parties from galvanising opposition to military rule. While Benazir Bhutto’s first government removed the ban, General Musharraf reimposed it on elected student unions, with activists having to sign affidavits that they would not participate in political activities.

The moderate mainstream parties were thus prevented from grooming a new generation of potential political leaders, but the military-backed parties benefited from the ban. The security agencies allowed their student wings, particularly the JI’s Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT) and MQM’s All Mohajir Students Organisation (APMSO), to dominate campus political activity and conduct their own bitter and violent rivalry

<sup>240</sup> After the president dismissed Bhutto’s government in 1996, Nawaz Sharif’s government overturned Bhutto’s order.

<sup>241</sup> Crisis Group interview, Karachi, 18 July 2007, quoted in *Reforming the Judiciary in Pakistan*, op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>242</sup> Quoted in *ibid*.

<sup>243</sup> Crisis Group interviews, Islamabad, October-November 2011.

<sup>244</sup> With half the Senate seats contested, the PPP could win a comfortable majority in the upper house of parliament.

<sup>245</sup> See Yasir Habib, “Step down or be hanged, Shahbaz tells President Zardari”, *Pakistan Today*, 29 October 2011.

<sup>246</sup> See Crisis Group Report, *Authoritarianism and Political Party Reform in Pakistan*, op. cit.



to control campuses in urban centres such as Karachi.<sup>247</sup> In March 2008 and following a vote of confidence in the National Assembly, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani announced the restoration of student unions.<sup>248</sup> Progress has, however, been slow. Though some private universities do hold student body elections, public universities are still awaiting an official notification to restore the unions. The government should issue it without delay, so they can begin to counter the pernicious influence of violent Islamic factions on the country's campuses.

Most of the politically active Islamic student groups are unofficially linked with a parent party. As those parties splinter, so too do the related student unions. The JUP-affiliated Anjumana Talaba Islam, for instance, has members that support JUP-N and others that support JUP-F.<sup>249</sup> In some cases, support from a student group can determine which party faction will be the most influential, as was the case with the Imamia Student Organisation's support for the Majlis-e-Wahdatul Muslimeen over the original Islami Tehreek-e-Pakistan. The JI's IJT remains the most powerful student group; many of its alumni hold leadership positions in the JI or, having left the party, even within mainstream parties like the PPP and PML-N.<sup>250</sup>

### 1. The JI and the Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba (IJT)

Although its relationship to the JI is not officially recognised, in practice the IJT functions as the party's student wing and a breeding ground for its future members and leaders. Nearly all senior JI officials were once IJT activists. The IJT was founded on 23 December 1947 in Lahore by 25 students, most of whom were sons of party members, with the aim of helping to implement Maududi's "revolution from above" by attracting the best and the brightest and influencing the next generation of leaders. A Muslim Brotherhood member living in Karachi developed its administrative and organisational structure.<sup>251</sup> While the group's primary aim was to spread information through university campuses, it soon became more overtly political, as left-leaning stu-

dent groups such as the Democratic Student Federation began to grow in strength and membership. The women's equivalent of the IJT, the Islami Jamiat Talibat, was created in 1969 in opposition to the emergence of a women's rights group at Lahore's Punjab University.

The IJT began to view itself as a "soldiers' brigade",<sup>252</sup> fighting for Islam against its enemies both within and outside government. As the JI's mandate changed to embrace political activism more directly, it no longer sought to confine the IJT to campus politics, but expanded its role to fight national-level causes.<sup>253</sup> While the party had mobilised the IJT to campaign against the Ayub regime on college campuses, the IJT worked closely with the Yahya regime in 1971, forming two paramilitary counter-insurgency units, Al-Shams and Al-Badr, to counter Bengali dissent and secessionism.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the IJT played a central role in translating Maududi's Islamist philosophy into political action, and its activities were in large part responsible for the JI's political visibility.<sup>254</sup> In 1977, it participated in the riots against the Bhutto government that enabled Zia's coup. It subsequently "collaborated closely with the Zia regime in suppressing the PPP".<sup>255</sup> In 1984, however, it led nationwide protests against Zia's ban on student unions, compelling the JI president, Mian Tufail, to appeal to Zia to lift the ban. The IJT's anti-Zia stance, however, soon disappeared, as it was allowed in practice to dominate campuses, including by violence against left-leaning student groups such as the National Students Federation at Karachi University.<sup>256</sup> Left-leaning academics were also purged and university and college facilities stacked with JI members and sympathisers. In the 1980s, the IJT played a vital role in recruiting students and other youth to the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. Since the 1990s, it has been as significant in enrolling members for the militant jihad in Kashmir as for its on-campus control.<sup>257</sup>

The IJT's organisational structure is based on the JI's. It is led by a central *Nazim-e-Aala* (head), a secretary general and two assistant secretaries general and has a Majlis-e-Shura.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>248</sup> Raja Asghar, "Gilani wins unanimous vote: student, trade unions restored", *Dawn*, 30 March 2008.

<sup>249</sup> Crisis Group interview, JUP members, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>250</sup> For a Punjab University professor and former IJT member, this is indicative of the weakness of the JI in politics, as prominent IJT members believe the JI has limited political prospects. Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>251</sup> Seyd Vali Reza Nasr, "Students, Islam, and Politics: Islami Jami'at-i Tulaba in Pakistan", *Middle East Journal*, 1992, p. 66.

<sup>252</sup> Nasr, *Vanguard*, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>253</sup> Nasr, "Students, Islam, and Politics", op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>254</sup> According to the scholar Vali Nasr, the "Jami'at (IJT) generally grew more independent of Jama'at-i Islami, and Jama'at-i Islami became more dependent on its student affiliate, with the rise to power of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in December 1971". While the JI had been defeated in the 1970 national elections, the IJT had defeated the PPP's Peoples Student Federation in campus elections in Punjab and Karachi. Ibid, p. 66.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid, p. 67.

<sup>256</sup> The IJT's armed enforcers in Karachi University were known as "thunder squads".

<sup>257</sup> The IJT's website says that it is "a consequence of the Jamiat's endeavour that many of its accomplices have presented their immolation in Kashmir", [www.jamiat.org.pk](http://www.jamiat.org.pk).

Each province, in turn, has its own *Nazim-e-Aala*, elected for a one-year term. Membership has five levels: *hamis* (supporters), *karkuns* (workers), *rafiqs* (friends), *umidvars* (candidate members), and *rukuns* (members).<sup>258</sup> A member's ideological conformity and adherence to party policy determine the chances of rising through the ranks.

Familial links and personal contacts form the core of IJT's recruitment network. New recruits attend training and study circles on Maududi's ideology, the organisational structure and issues in Islam, as well as practical matters such as how to initiate conversations with potential recruits. An IJT member explained:

The training even instructed us to carry snacks, such as peanuts, at all times. We were told that it would enable us to easily start conversations with fellow bus passengers, as we could simply offer them the snack and then begin telling them about IJT's work. I, myself, did that on a number of occasions, once following someone to his home village and speaking with him about the IJT for over three hours.<sup>259</sup>

The IJT's influence on a young student's life is all encompassing. A former member who joined the student group after finishing the eighth grade in the late 1980s said that:

It had been my life-long dream to attend Islamic College in Peshawar. After I was accepted, I was informed by the local IJT *nazim* that the central shura would determine final placement of IJT students in colleges around the country. This was to ensure an equal distribution of IJT students across the country. I was told to attend a local school in Mardan instead, and my dream was shelved.<sup>260</sup>

The student wing is well known for violence on campus, particularly at Lahore's Punjab University (PU). In November 2007, IJT activists assaulted and detained Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaaf chief, Imran Khan, on the campus.<sup>261</sup> In 2009, the PU administration proved unable to control the IJT after a series of violent incidents, including an attack on the university's emergency centre and the residence of a former Punjab University adviser, hijacking of two university buses, assaults on senior faculty members, and kidnapping of three employees of

the Physics Centre for Excellence.<sup>262</sup> In January 2010, IJT activists assaulted members of the rival Insaaf Students Federation after the latter launched a membership drive at the College of Commerce.<sup>263</sup> In April 2010, IJT students assaulted the chairman of the PU disciplinary committee for actions taken against them.<sup>264</sup>

PU officials argue that they are unable to end this violence without adequate government or police support. Yet, the clout of the IJT on campus also owes much to the presence of JI and IJT members and sympathisers in the administration and faculty. A member of the Shia Imamia Student Organisation explained: "IJT sympathisers are everywhere in the administration and faculty. The university is therefore not willing to reprimand or limit the activities of this student group".<sup>265</sup> According to an article in an influential daily, "insiders maintain that teachers and other PU administration staffers had been recruited allegedly under JI's influence during General Zia-ul-Haq's era. Nowadays, these teachers and staffers are working in key positions".<sup>266</sup> Recent news reports have suggested that the current PU administration is taking a harder line with IJT activists, including by sealing their offices.<sup>267</sup> Yet, the group's activities continue, albeit more furtively; for example, in July 2011 the IJT was widely believed to have anonymously organised a campus-wide essay and poetry contest to eulogise Osama bin Laden.<sup>268</sup>

Despite the recurring involvement of its members in violent and unlawful student activity, JI members defend it against critics. They argue that its bad reputation is unjustified, as it is the largest student group, so bound to have a few "emotional youths" who get carried away.<sup>269</sup> University administrations and law-enforcement officials should reject such justifications and take effective action against any student group inciting or resorting to violence.

## 2. Imamia Student Organisation (ISO)

The ISO's ability to recruit and mobilise Shia youth provides Shia political parties a dependable support base. It was formed in 1972, allegedly with financial support from Iran, in an effort to offset the influence of student wings support-

<sup>258</sup> Crisis Group interviews, IJT and JI members and former members, Islamabad and Lahore, March 2011. See also Nasr, "Students, Islam and Politics", op. cit., p. 69.

<sup>259</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, February 2011.

<sup>260</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, February 2011.

<sup>261</sup> Intikhab Hanif, "JI students' wing hands over Imran to police", *Dawn*, 15 November 2007.

<sup>262</sup> "Jamiat's mayhem at PU remains in spotlight during 2009", *Daily Times* editorial, 15 February 2010.

<sup>263</sup> "IJT 'thrashes' ISF students for membership drive at PU", *The News*, 27 January 2010.

<sup>264</sup> "IJT Hooligans' put PU professor in hospital", *Daily Times*, 2 April 2010.

<sup>265</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>266</sup> Ali Waqar, "Student protests shake PU administration-IJT nexus", *Daily Times*, 19 November 2007.

<sup>267</sup> Mansoor Malik, "Fairer sex gives Jamiat the jitters", *Dawn*, 27 June 2011.

<sup>268</sup> See Salman Masood, "Eulogies for Bin Laden, shrouded in mystery", *The New York Times*, 27 July 2011.

<sup>269</sup> Crisis Group interview, JI members, Islamabad, February 2011.

ed by the JI, Deobandis and Barelvis. Most founding members were from lower-middle class and rural backgrounds.<sup>270</sup> Many had received scholarships to study in Iran and later participated in Khomeini's revolutionary movement.

ISO members claim that their membership includes between 50 and 70 per cent of all Shia students.<sup>271</sup> The group is divided into divisions and units that cover all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Twelve to fourteen *rukun* are chosen to represent each unit at the college/university level. The *sadr* is elected annually at a convention.

Although members stress that they are non-political and that their primary role is to ensure Shia youth follow the true Islamic path, the organisation exercises significant clout. ISO support largely determines which Shia party is most politically influential. After the TNJF's split in 1983, for instance, ISO support was crucial to Al Hussein's ITP prevailing over Moosavi's faction, which had the backing of Shia scholars. According to an analyst, "there is no doubt that ISO ran the [ITP] for quite some time and also prepared the outline for its manifesto".<sup>272</sup> Relations between ISO and the Sajid Naqvi-led ITP (now renamed TJP) are, however, tenuous according to former ISO President Syed Nasir Shirazi: "We have our independent identity. Allama Naqvi didn't prove himself a Shia leader, and Shias suffered due to his political policies".<sup>273</sup> To remain viable at the national level, Naqvi's TJP will need continued support from the student organisation, but an ISO member explained: "After students graduated and left the ISO, they used to join the TJP. Now many of them will join the Majlis-e-Wahdaul Muslimeen".<sup>274</sup>

The ISO addresses larger national problems, particularly perceived foreign interference, and takes similar positions to other Islamist student groups.<sup>275</sup> In March 2011, it held a large rally in Lahore protesting the release of Raymond Davis, the CIA contractor who had killed two Pakistanis in January 2011. While the ISO calls for greater unity among and equality between the different Islamic groups and sects, it has not been immune to the escalating sectarian attacks on Shias. In December 2010, a number of its members were killed in the first-ever bomb attack at Karachi University; three IJT activists were charged with planting a bomb where Shia students

were about to pray. So long as the law is not enforced, violent student groups such as the JI's student wing will continue to poison the atmosphere of Pakistan's campuses.

### 3. Anjuman Talaba Islam (ATI)

Although the Barelvi JUP has lost most of its political significance, the affiliated Barelvi Anjuman Talaba Islam (ATI) student group has support on many university and college campuses.<sup>276</sup> Established in Karachi in January 1968 in response to the growing campus influence of the Deobandi parties and the JI, its mandate reads: "We light the candle of love for the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) in the hearts of the students and awaken the true spirit of Islam in their hearts".<sup>277</sup> It holds events around religious issues and occasions such as the Prophet's birthday.

The ATI president is elected annually. The membership process is rigorous, with the workers (*karkun*) made to demonstrate their commitment by passing a test and interview. To become a *rukun*, of which there are 350, members must take another test, for which they study a syllabus stressing knowledge of religion and of the ATI.<sup>278</sup>

The group emphasises the differences between its mandate and actions and those of student organisations linked with other Islamic parties.<sup>279</sup> Its members claim that all group decisions are made by the students themselves, with minimal JUP interference, and that the parent party is a mere support system.<sup>280</sup> This, and the parent party's internal rifts, explains why the JUP has been unable to exploit the ATI's relative success, largely the result of growing antipathy of the Barelvi youth to Deobandi and Salafi extremism. According to Hasnat Ahmed, a JUP-N member and former spokesperson for Maulana Noorani, the JUP and ATI worked closely together until the mid-1980s, and most ATI members joined the party after graduation. Leadership tussles and factionalism in the party, however, have also created rifts within the ATI, dividing it between supporters of different splinter groups.

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<sup>276</sup> Crisis Group interview, Punjab University professor, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>277</sup> Anjuman Talaba Islam website, [www.atipak.org/default.asp](http://www.atipak.org/default.asp).

<sup>278</sup> "We put considerable thought into who we accept as *rukun*. Not everyone can become one", a former ATI president explained. Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>279</sup> Crisis Group interviews, ATI members, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>280</sup> A student gave the example of a disagreement between members of IJT and ATI, concerning which the JI's leader, Qazi Hussein Ahmed, and the JUP's Maulana Noorani were contacted to help facilitate a compromise. While IJT students accepted Ahmed's role, ATI refused to accept Noorani. Crisis Group interview, ATI member, Islamabad, March 2011.

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<sup>270</sup> Abou-Zahab, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>271</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>272</sup> Rana, op. cit., p. 405.

<sup>273</sup> Amir Rana and Waqar Gillani, "Iran not funding ISO: Shirazi", *Daily Times*, 24 November 2003.

<sup>274</sup> Crisis Group interview, Lahore, March 2011.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

As a result, many ATI activists have chosen not to enter politics.<sup>281</sup>

#### D. THE MADRASA SECTOR

Benefiting as they have from the military's support on campuses, the Islamic parties also have an advantage over the moderate mainstream parties through their ability to recruit from madrasas.<sup>282</sup> A scholar observed that "much of the political activism of the four major religious-political parties in Pakistan [is] integrally linked with and draws strength from the madrasas affiliated with their respective schools of theological thought".<sup>283</sup> While the JUI-affiliated student wing, the Jamiat Talaba Islam (JTI), is not particularly active on university campuses, it commands considerable influence in Deobandi madrasas. Acknowledging the JI-affiliated IJT's dominant influence in mainstream student politics, a JUI-S member pointed out that the JTI plays an important role where it matters – in the madrasa sector.<sup>284</sup> As a result, both factions of the JUI remain unaffected by the ban on student unions.

There are five distinct madrasa networks, divided along sectarian lines: Wafaq Al Madaris Al Arabia (Deobandi); Tanzeem Al Madaris (Barelvi); Wafaq Al Madaris Salfia (Ahle Hadith); Tanzeem Shia Wafaq Al Madaris (Shia); and Rabata-ul Madaris (Jamaat-e-Islami). Zia's military rule proved a turning point for the madrasa system. In the first years of Zia's Islamisation (1979-1982), only 151 new madrasas were established but in the next six years, another 1,000 were established. According to an official estimate in 1995, 2,010 new madrasas were registered since 1979, the majority affiliated with the Deobandis, although Ahle Hadith madrasas also grew significantly. Reflecting rising sectarianism, Shia madrasas likewise grew, from 70 in 1979 to 116 in 1983-1984.<sup>285</sup> Musharraf's half-hearted pledges to reform the madrasa sector after the 11 September 2001

attacks unsurprisingly produced few tangible changes, given his regime's alliance with the Islamic parties.<sup>286</sup>

Madrasas were crucial for mobilising opinion and recruiting and training militants for the anti-Soviet jihad of the 1980s. The JI's Jamiat Talaba Arabia (JTA) madrasas and the JUI's Deobandi madrasas were particularly fertile grounds.<sup>287</sup> Today, the two JUI factions run over 65 per cent of all madrasas, mainly in the Pashtun-majority KPK and the Pashtun belt of Balochistan, from which the majority of their party workers and leaders graduate.<sup>288</sup>

Samiul Haq's Darul Uloom Haqqania is one of the foremost madrasas supporting militant regional and international jihad. As noted, the majority of the Afghan Taliban leadership, including Mullah Omar, attended it. Students study for free and are awarded government-recognised graduate qualifications after eight years. Party leaders claim that money for the madrasa comes from "common Muslims" and supporters, but informed observers, including law enforcement officials, maintain that the Gulf States and Saudi Arabia continue to provide significant funding.<sup>289</sup>

The curriculum covers Islamic philosophy and logic, Quran, *Hadith* and *fiqh* and Arabic grammar. In recent years, English, geography and computer science have been introduced as part of Musharraf's donor-supported madrasa reform endeavour.<sup>290</sup> However, graduates leave with little knowledge of English or world events.<sup>291</sup> Indeed, the primary purpose of madrasas such as the Darul Uloom Haqqani is not to educate students in professional skills but to train generations of jihadis and ultra-orthodox mullahs. The Haqqania madrasa graduates 3,000 students each year, who leave with one central lesson: to carry out jihad in the name of Islam. Those from influential families often go into politics, while those with limited economic prospects are encouraged to join militant groups, teach at Deobandi madrasas or open new madrasas.<sup>292</sup>

<sup>281</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>282</sup> For extensive reporting on the links between extremist groups and the madrasa sector, see Crisis Group Reports, *The Militant Jihadi Challenge; Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism; The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan*; and *Madrasas, Extremism and the Military*, all op. cit.

<sup>283</sup> Mumtaz Ahmed, "Continuity and Change in the Traditional System of Islamic Education: The Case of Pakistan", in *Pakistan 2000*, op. cit., p. 135.

<sup>284</sup> Crisis Group interview, Akora Khattak, April 2011.

<sup>285</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Madrasas, Extremism and the Military*, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

<sup>286</sup> For analysis on Musharraf's madrasa reforms, see Crisis Group Report, *Pakistan: Karachi's Madrasas and Violent Extremism*, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>287</sup> Crisis Group Report, *Madrasas, Extremism and the Military*, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>288</sup> Crisis Group Report, *The Mullahs and the Military*, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>289</sup> Some classrooms at Haqqania have inscriptions indicating that Saudi Arabia donated the building material. Husain Haqqani, "Islam's Medieval Outpost", *Foreign Policy*, November/December 2002.

<sup>290</sup> Crisis Group interview, Maulana Yusuf Shah, Akora Khattak, 11 April 2011.

<sup>291</sup> A graduate explained: "After eight years at the madrasa, none of us could speak any English. Their entire system of teaching is ineffective". Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>292</sup> Haroon Rashid, "The 'university of holy war'", BBC News, 2 October 2003.

Teachers at Darul Uloom Haqqania have a cult-like following. Students kiss instructors' hands, follow their instructions blindly and, as in many Pakistani public and private schools, do not question the veracity of what they are taught. They live extremely confined lives, without newspapers or permission to watch television. Although the campus hosts a large library, it is off-limits to students.<sup>293</sup> Samiul Haq has been quoted as saying, "young minds are not for thinking. We catch them for the madrasas when they are young, and by the time they are old enough to think, they know what to think".<sup>294</sup>

A Darul Uloom graduate alleged that the madrasa has strong links to terrorist groups, to whom it can even put requests for extra-judicial killings when required.<sup>295</sup> A 2010 Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) report claimed that former students of this madrasa planned Benazir Bhutto's murder in Akora Khattak, the town that hosts the madrasa.<sup>296</sup>

The JI madrasa network is considerably smaller and less influential than its student affiliate, the Islami Jamiat Talaba, but is not insignificant. Established in 1975, the Jamiat Talaba Arabia is the IJT's madrasa equivalent. While the two organisations are distinct, they maintain a mutually reinforcing relationship, and both receive support and guidance from the parent party.<sup>297</sup> The JTA is structured similarly to the JI, with a *muntazim-e-aala* (president), a secretary general, shura (central council), and yearly elections. Its membership tiers are the same as the IJT's.

Given Maududi's strong criticism of madrasas,<sup>298</sup> and because the JI's main source of support is from more educated urban constituencies, JI leaders are more likely to come from the IJT than the JTA. According to a graduate of the Jamaat madrasa system, IJT members

consider themselves superior to their madrasa counterparts.<sup>299</sup> The precise number of Jamaat-affiliated madrasas is unclear but is thought to be approximately 850, the majority in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>300</sup> Unlike Deobandi or Ahle Hadith madrasas, the JI's permit members of any religious *fiqh* to attend and emphasise the need for Muslims to unite and refrain from divisional politics. But JI-affiliated students often have difficulty attending madrasas affiliated with other schools of thought, as these remain suspicious of Maududi's ideology.<sup>301</sup>

Ji-affiliated madrasas are not necessarily any better than their Deobandi and Alhe Hadith counterparts. A former JTA member said, "the view by which madrasa students judge the world is a result of the static, outdated and narrow material made available to us. All students believe that Islam has provided the political system to us. Everything else, including political parties, is therefore antithetical to the system bestowed upon us by Allah".<sup>302</sup> Thus, students are generally encouraged to oppose non-theocratic parties and governments.<sup>303</sup> Students at JI madrasas are used to campaign in mosques for JI election candidates on a platform that conflates a vote for the JI with a vote for Islam.

The PPP-led government should create mechanisms to better regulate the madrasa sector, including their finances and enrolment. Provincial authorities should be given the powers to regularly conduct inquiries into the functioning of madrasas in order to identify those with clear links to militant jihadi groups and to take action against their clerics and, where appropriate, students. Madrasas suspected of links with such jihadi groups should be kept under close surveillance, while those that provide militant jihadi training should be closed down.

## E. ISLAMIC PARTIES AND THE MEDIA

The mushrooming of privately-owned cable and satellite channels in the early 2000s has resulted in more diverse and vibrant media commentary. This provides opportunities for all political parties to enhance their messaging, and to strengthen or undermine democratic functioning. Indeed, the electronic media was a major factor in the nationwide movement to oust Musharraf's military regime in 2007.

Like politicians from all major parties, Islamic party leaders and sympathisers regularly appear on talk shows and panel

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<sup>293</sup> Crisis Group interview, Darul Uloom Haqqania graduate, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>294</sup> Haqqani, "Islam's Medieval Outpost", op. cit.

<sup>295</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, April 2011.

<sup>296</sup> Shahnawaz Khan and Asad Kharal, "Baitullah ordered Benazir's murder, reveals FIA report", *Daily Times*, 19 June 2010.

<sup>297</sup> Crisis Group interview, Hafiz Sajid Anwar, former JTA head, Mansoorah, 10 March 2011.

<sup>298</sup> "The most devastating critique of the madrasa system", said one analyst, "has come from neofundamentalist revisionists like Maulana Abul Ala Maududi. He decried the system as based on the uncritical study and memorisation of antiquated texts utilising a perfunctory and mechanical methodology .... According to Maududi, graduates of madrasas can neither correctly represent Islam, nor can they apply Islamic teachings to the problems of the modern life .... On the contrary, they have become a major source of sectarian strife and disunity in the *umma*", Ahmed, op. cit., p. 136.

<sup>299</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>300</sup> Crisis Group interviews, JI members, Islamabad and Lahore, February and March 2011.

<sup>301</sup> Crisis Group interview, JI madrasa system graduate and former JTA member, Islamabad, February 2011.

<sup>302</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, March 2011.

<sup>303</sup> Crisis Group interview, JI madrasa system graduate, Islamabad, March 2011.

discussions in the mainstream electronic media, even if less frequently than their secular counterparts. “I don’t often call religious party figures on my program because their presence in parliament is very limited, so I don’t feel it pertinent”, said a senior journalist who hosts current affairs programs in both Urdu and English on an independent TV channel.<sup>304</sup> Yet, according to another prominent talk show host, “many television producers, anchors and paid commentators are not directly affiliated with the JI, but either they have been in the past, or have been members of the IJT and still have very clear sympathies”.<sup>305</sup>

For example, a well-known commentator, Zaid Hamid, was formerly an IJT member and, while not an official JI member, frequently emphasises JI’s political and historic role in Pakistan.<sup>306</sup> Hamid criticises “Darwinism, liberalism, secularism, freedom of speech, women’s liberation, democracy and capitalism” as having “enslaved humans”,<sup>307</sup> condemning Pakistani Taliban groups while praising the India-oriented Lashkar-e-Tayyaba.<sup>308</sup> Pirated DVDs of his popular television show, “Brass Tacks”, are produced and distributed widely by Karachi’s Rainbow Centre.<sup>309</sup>

There are also dozens of specifically religious channels, some operated by Islamic parties. According to a major monthly, “religious TV programming has increased rapidly over the past few years and clerics, who previously preached morning, noon and night in mosques, now sermonise on the airwaves. Many of the country’s top channels have cultivated their own stylised clerics for prime time television”.<sup>310</sup> For example, in 2010 Ahle Hadith established Paigham (Message) Studios, airing programs to spread Quranic teachings.

Various Islamic parties have also embraced social media. Since August 2010, Ahle Hadith’s Paigham (Message) Studios uploads video clips to the Youtube.com website, including prayers, sermons and speeches by party leaders, footage of Ahle Hadith-led protests and slide-shows of the party’s flood relief efforts. Similarly, JI *amir* Munawar Hassan’s Youtube channel, established in November 2009 with hundreds of uploads, is updat-

ed several times a week.<sup>311</sup> The videos include Hassan’s press conferences, speeches and visits to flood-hit areas. A related JI-affiliated channel was created in April 2010, with videos including clips of party leaders participating in talk shows in the mainstream electronic media and coverage of JI-led anti-U.S. protests. The Namoos-e-Risalat movement opposing repeal or reform of the blasphemy laws launched a Facebook page, as well as a website.

With another national election cycle nearing,<sup>312</sup> and anti-incumbency sentiment high at the central as well as provincial level, the mainstream parties, too, are considering using social media. The PML-N, for example, is reportedly planning to use Facebook, Twitter and other social networking tools to expand outreach, particularly for the youth vote. The party’s deputy secretary general, Ahsan Iqbal, admitted that: “The PPP and PML-N have both relied on their traditional voters and ignored the emerging force of young people”.<sup>313</sup> The PPP likewise aims to use social media in its next national election campaign.<sup>314</sup>

It is still too early to gauge the impact of these relatively embryonic methods on the electorate or the broader political process. Unlike mobile phone usage, internet penetration grew relatively slowly from 2002 to 2008. While it has expanded considerably since then, estimates place it at around eighteen to twenty million users, while an estimated 83 million will be legible to vote in the next general elections.<sup>315</sup> A journalist and blogger commented: “People using social media are the same as those who have access to English newspapers; this is a very small fraction of our population”.<sup>316</sup> Although “there are increased numbers of Pakistanis active on various social media networks”, a PPP parliamentarian said, “the real impact ... can only be judged after the elections. Whether [social media websites] have become game changers is yet to be seen”.<sup>317</sup>

<sup>304</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, November 2011.

<sup>305</sup> Crisis Group interview, Islamabad, October 2011.

<sup>306</sup> See, for example, “Only Jamaat-e-Islami has shed blood for Pakistan: Zaid Hamid”, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M7Qc5Fu5l8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M7Qc5Fu5l8). Clip taken from a broadcast on Dunya channel.

<sup>307</sup> “Preachers on prime time”, *Newsline*, October 2011.

<sup>308</sup> See Zain Ali, “Questionable preachings”, *Newsline*, October 2011.

<sup>309</sup> Crisis Group observations, Rainbow Centre, Karachi, October 2011.

<sup>310</sup> “Preachers on prime time”, op. cit.

<sup>311</sup> See [www.youtube.com/user/pakjamaat](http://www.youtube.com/user/pakjamaat).

<sup>312</sup> General elections are due in early 2013.

<sup>313</sup> Abdul Manan, “Discovering Facebook: PML-N prepares new plan to win youth vote”, *Express Tribune*, 2 November 2011.

<sup>314</sup> See Maham Javaid, “Virtual politics”, *Herald*, November 2011.

<sup>315</sup> Mumtaz Alvi, “Voters’ numbers could swell to 83m”, *The News*, 19 July 2011.

<sup>316</sup> Quoted in Javaid, op. cit. For example, the JI’s Twitter accounts collectively have only a few hundred followers.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

## V. CONCLUSION

In present-day Pakistan, Islamic parties, particularly Sunni orthodox parties, are still the main beneficiaries of the political space provided by military regimes, including Zia's Islamisation process that distorted the legal and judicial systems and Musharraf's ceding of two of four provinces to the MMA through the rigged 2002 elections.

While the Islamic parties do bid for political power within a parliamentary framework, there are limits to the pragmatism they can allow themselves if they are to retain their hardcore base, as the MMA's five years in power in NWFP demonstrated. Even as they condemn violent attacks on the Pakistani state and citizens, political expediency has not tempered extreme positions and rigid ideologies that promote sectarian violence and militancy and deny fundamental rights.

Sectarian politics are, in fact, becoming increasingly violent, as more Islamic parties and groups espouse militancy as the most effective method to promote their interests. Indeed, the majority of Islamic parties are far from abandoning the concept of militant jihad or cutting their ties to local and regional militants, including sectarian extremists, the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked jihadi outfits.

Attempts by the PPP and the PML-N to appease them through concessions or on the grounds of political (including electoral) expediency, come at a high cost, setting back efforts to curb intolerance and extremism in Pakistani society. The current democratic transition may be flawed and fragile, but the mainstream moderate parties still retain support in the electorate. Absent massive rigging by the military, the electoral prospects of the Islamic parties remain limited; after any free, fair and democratic election, either the ruling PPP or the opposition PML-N is likely to form the next government.

Instead of conceding space to the mullahs for short-term gain, the next government should assert control over sensitive policy areas, including by rigorously prosecuting anyone, including clerics and politicians, who violates the law by encouraging and glorifying violence and militant jihad, disseminating militant jihadi literature or uttering hate speech against religious and sectarian minorities. The government should also require Islamic parties to disband their militant wings, reform discriminatory religious legislation, clamp down on banned extremist outfits and reform the madrasa sector. By doing so, it would stem extremist violence, and by also restoring the letter and spirit of the 1973 constitution help to stabilise the democratic transition on which Pakistan's stability depends.

**Islamabad/Brussels, 12 December 2011**

## APPENDIX A

### MAP OF PAKISTAN





## APPENDIX B

### GLOSSARY

#### **Ahmadis**

A minority Sunni sect, declared non-Muslim by the second constitutional amendment, 1974.

#### **Alim**

Religious scholar, singular of ulama.

#### **Amir**

President.

#### **ATI**

Anjuman Talaba Islam, affiliated to the Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP).

#### **Eighth Amendment**

A constitutional amendment package, passed in November 1985, validating reforms by Zia-ul-Haq's military regime, including discriminatory Islamic laws and measures to centralise power with the military and its civilian proxies.

#### **Seventeenth Amendment**

A constitutional amendment package passed by the Musharraf-backed parliament in December 2003 to centralise power with the military and its civilian allies. Repealed in April 2010 by the Eighteenth Amendment.

#### **Eighteenth Amendment**

A constitutional amendment package passed unanimously by both chambers of parliament in April 2010 amending over 100 provisions of the constitution to repeal the Musharraf-era Seventeenth Amendment, restore parliamentary sovereignty and strengthen civilian institutions.

#### **FATA**

Federally Administered Tribal Areas, comprising seven administrative districts, or agencies, and six Frontier Regions bordering on south-eastern Afghanistan.

#### **Hizbul Mujahideen**

One of the first Kashmiri militant jihadi groups, affiliated with the Jamaat-e-Islami.

#### **HRCP**

The independent Human Rights Commission of Pakistan.

#### **Hudood Ordinances**

A set of four Ordinances passed by Zia-ul-Haq's military regime on 16 February 1979, prescribing punishments in accordance with ultra-orthodox Sunni Islamic law, including amputation of limbs, flogging, stoning and other forms of the death penalty for crimes ranging from theft, adultery and fornication to consumption of liquor. Although slightly amended in 2006, it remains in force.

#### **ISI**

Inter-Services Intelligence directorate, the military's main intelligence body.

#### **ISO**

Imamia Student Organisation, a Shia student organisation.

#### **IJI**

Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, an electoral alliance forged through army patronage and headed by Nawaz Sharif's PML as the main opposition party to Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party in 1988.

#### **IJT**

Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba, the Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing.

#### **JD**

Jamaat-ud-Dawa, the renamed Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), a militant Ahle Hadith group responsible, most recently, for the November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai, India. Ostensibly the LeT's charity wing, the JD was banned after Mumbai, and its headquarters in Muridke, Punjab was taken over by the Punjab government.

#### **Ji**

Jamaat-e-Islami, the vanguard of modernist political Islam and the most organised and politically active religious party.

#### **Jaish-e-Mohammed**

A Deobandi jihadi group headed by Masood Azhar, an offshoot of Harkatul Mujahideen (HUM) and Harkatul Ansar, whose manpower comes from Sipah-e-Sahaba cadres and JUI madrasas. Originally operating in Kashmir, it is implicated in terrorism across Pakistan and abroad.

#### **JUI**

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, the main Sunni Deobandi political party and successor in Pakistan to the Jamiat Ulema Hind in pre-partition India. The party's two main factions, denoted by the initials of their leaders, are JUI-Samiul Haq (JUI-S), and JUI-Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F). The two factions control most Pakistani madrasas.

#### **JUP**

Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, a Bareilvi political party founded in 1948. In 1990, it splintered into two main factions, JUP-Noorani and JUP-Fazal Karim.

#### **KPK**

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, formerly Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP).

#### **LeT**

Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, an avowedly militant Ahle Hadith group based in Muridke, Punjab, and focused on militant jihad in Kashmir. It runs training camps in Punjab and Pakistan-administered Kashmir, mainly in areas along the Line of Control.

#### **Lashkar-e-Jhangvi**

An offshoot of the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan and more militant in its actions against Shias. LJ has strong links to al-Qaeda, the Taliban and training camps in FATA and inside Afghanistan. It has been implicated in major terrorist attacks across Pakistan and has also bred many smaller terrorist factions.

**Markaz-e-Jamiat Ahle Hadith**

An ultra-orthodox Sunni party with origins in the All India Ahle Hadith Conference, established in 1906, to propagate Islam on the basis of the Quran and Sunnah, interpreting the words of the Prophet rather than relying on “indirect interpretations” or any specific school of jurisprudence.

**MMA**

Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, an alliance of six major religio-political parties dominated by the JUI-F and JI. During Pervez Musharraf’s military regime, it formed the NWFP provincial government and was the major partner in the pro-Musharraf ruling coalition in Balochistan. While officially still in existence and maintaining a small presence in parliament, a parting between the JUI-F and JI practically ended the alliance.

**Mohajir**

Urdu-speaking migrants and their descendants from India.

**Nazim**

Mayor.

**Nizam-e-Adl**

Regulation Act passed by parliament in April 2009 to establish Sharia (Islamic law) in the Malakand region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

**NWFP**

Northwest Frontier Province.

**PML**

Pakistan Muslim League, the founding party of Pakistan, originally called the All India Muslim League. Many politicians claim to be leaders of the “real” Muslim League in Pakistan and have their own factions. Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif heads the Muslim League’s largest faction, known as PML(N). PML (Quaid-i-Azam), a pro-Musharraf party, formed the central government during military rule from 2002 to 2007.

**PPP**

The Pakistan Peoples Party, founded by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1967 with a socialist, egalitarian agenda. Since Benazir Bhutto’s assassination in December 2007, the party is headed by her widower, President Asif Ali Zardari, and son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and currently leads the coalition government in the centre.

**PPC**

Pakistan Penal Code.

**Qisas and Diyat**

Islamic laws on murder.

**Rukun**

Member.

**Sadr**

President.

**Shura**

Council.

**Sunnah**

The way of the Prophet.

**Sunni Tehreek**

A militant Barelvi organisation, formed in Karachi in 1990.

**Tehsil**

Sub-district.

**TJP**

Tehreek-e-Jafaria Pakistan, a Shia political party.

**TNFJ**

Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria (Movement for the Preservation of the Shia Legal System), a Shia political party founded in April 1979 by Allama Mufti Jaffer Hussein. Its offshoots include the Islami Tehreek-e-Pakistan, TNFJ-Moosavi Group and Majlis-e-Wahdutul Muslimeen.

**TNSM**

Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi, a Swat-based Sunni radical group.

**Ulama**

Religious scholars.

**Zakat**

Islamic tithe on income and wealth.