

## **Advisory Council of Swat State (1954-1969). An appraisal**

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### **Abstract**

*The princely State of Swat had very cordial relations with the Government of Pakistan since partition in August 1947. However, soon after independence there were voices for popular government and democratisation of Swat State. The ruler of Swat State had to respond to such demands and to take such steps that may appease the dissenting elements. In response to such demands within the State, an Advisory Council was introduced in Swat State in 1954 and it remained operative till 1969. The Council consisted of both nominated and elected members. The sessions of the Advisory Council were held regularly. In this article an attempt has been made to trace the historical background of the Council, conduct of elections to the proposed Council and its membership. Further, the proceedings of the Council have also been covered.*

**Keyword:** Advisory Council, Swat State, Pakistan, Election, Membership.

### **1. Background**

After the partition of the Indian Subcontinent on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947, the princely states that formed about one-third of the total area of Indian Subcontinent had either to accede to Pakistan or India. Out of the 560 odd princely states, very few states acceded to Pakistan and an overwhelming majority of States joined India. The rulers of the four Frontier States [Swat, Dir, Chitral and Amb] executed the Instrument of Accessions with the Government of Pakistan soon after partition. By virtue of these Instruments of Accessions, the rulers of princely states surrendered their sovereign rights with regard to defence, external Affairs, currency and communication to the Government and in this way these states became integral part of Pakistan (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), TARC Misc, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar). It is worth mentioning that after partition of Indian Subcontinent, the ruler of Swat State, Miangul Abdul Wadud (1881-1971) popularly known as Badshah Sahib, signed Instrument of Accession with Pakistan that was executed by him on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1947 and was accepted by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on 24

November 1947 (Bangash 2015: 132). In the Instrument of Accessions with princely states, 59 subjects were surrendered to the Federation of Pakistan (Sarfraz 2015: 256).

At the time of partition, Miangul Abdul Wadud was the ruler of Swat State (1917-1949). He initiated correspondence with the officials of Government of Pakistan in order to formulate the modalities of handing over the authority of the State to his son and Heir Apparent, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb, popularly known as Wali Sahib. Miangul Abdul Wadud wrote to the Political Agent, Malakand on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1949:

This is to state that I had applied to the Govt. [Government of Pakistan] that my son Jahanzeb [Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb] may be recognized as Wali-Ahd (Heir Apparent). The Govt. acceded to my wish and in 1933 recognized him as Wali-Ahd. I have been giving him the necessary training to shoulder the responsibilities of the administration of the State. I am very pleased with what he is doing. The entire public and myself are very pleased with his work. His work and administration is to my entire satisfaction so much so that I wish to hand him over all the powers of the State. I have lost all interest in administration, and I now wish to abdicate in his favour giving him the full ruling powers. I further wish to see that during my lifetime he takes up successfully the full responsibility of the State. I find further difficulty in language. I cannot give my full expression of view in any other language except Pashtu without being interpreted and I find Jahanzeb can better fulfill this deficiency and therefore wish to hand over all the ruling powers to him and make him the Ruler instead. My idea is to get this done some time in the middle of December on a date to be fixed later on. Kindly let me know what procedure to adopt for the handing over of the Ruling Powers to him and in what manner is the ceremony to be performed (Copy of D.O No.654, dated: 14.8.1949, File No. 133-STI, 1949, 433, TARC, Peshawar).

Accordingly, the modalities of handing over authority to Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb were finalised. The then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan visited Swat State and administered the coronation ceremony that was held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1949. The influential *Malaks* and *Khans* of various tribes also attended the ceremony and showed their confidence in the newly ruler of Swat State (Uddin 2019).

After his accession as ruler of the State, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb (also known as the last Wali of Swat, Wali e Swat and Wali Sahib respectively) gave new dimensions to the State's administration and its

resource management (Rahim and Viaro 2002: 81). He was a ruler with a vision and contributed a lot to the physical development of the valley on modern lines (Fleischner 2011: 2). His emphasis was mainly on development of infrastructure, dissemination of formal education and creation of health facilities in the State (Fleischner 2011: 2). The rule of the ‘enlightened despot’ and ‘benevolent autocrat’ was exemplary and his ruling era is still widely remembered and admired by all and sundry. His reminiscence and admiration is ‘not with just nostalgia’ but has ‘firm grains of reality’ (Bangash 2018). In Peter Mayne words, “In fact Swat State is an example of how very benevolent an autocracy can be.” (Mayne 1955: 187).

Under the ‘Establishment of West Pakistan Act’ that was passed on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1955, all the Princely States in Pakistan were merged into the new West Pakistan Unit except the Frontier States and tribal areas. Thus, the Baluchistan States Union, Khairpur, and Bahawalpur were wiped out as separate States and their rulers lost all their powers retaining only personal privileges (Bangash 2015: 259). The four Frontier States [Swat, Dir, Chitral and Amb] along with Hunza and Nagar, survived the formal establishment of the One Unit on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1955. Under the Establishment of West Pakistan Act 1955, the Frontier States were designated as Special/Tribal Areas and were left as they were (Bangash 2015: 259). It is worth mentioning that when the Constituent Assembly (after One-Unit) was formed in July 1955, the Frontier States were allotted one Seat to which the ruler of Swat State was elected whereas the tribal areas were allotted two seats. In the Provincial Assembly of West Pakistan, Frontier States were allotted nine seats (Chitral 1, Dir 2 and Swat 6). The members of the Council of Elders (*jirgas*) in each of the States of Swat and Chitral elected their State’s representative to the Interim Legislature of West Pakistan. No election could take place in Dir State due to the old Nawab’s un-helpful attitude (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar).

In the following years, the relations of ruler of Swat State with Government of Pakistan developed very cordially and Wali Sahib was held in high esteem by officials of Government due to his enlightened policy towards the masses within the State (Uddin 2021: 65). The Government of Pakistan hence stayed aloof from indulging itself in the internal politics of Swat State for a period of seven years following independence. The officials were cautious while dealing with Swat State. According to historian, Yaqub Ahmad Bangash:

The relations of Swat State with the central government developed very differently compared to those of the other Frontier States. Swat was by far the most developed and progressive state on the Frontier and its ruler, Miangul Jahanzeb, who had taken over in 1949 after the abdication of his father, was very loyal to Pakistan. As a result, the Government of Pakistan wanted to strengthen his rule, rather than weaken it through democratisation. Nevertheless, reforms in adjoining states put pressure on the central government to press for the federation of Swat with Pakistan (Bangash 2015: 240).

It is worth mentioning that voices for democratic reforms in Swat State were raised in the early 1950s (Danishwar 2016: 189-190). In the changed circumstances and due to the voices of democratisation and responsible governments in Princely States, the last Wali of Swat was asked by the Government to take steps in this regard as well. The official also pointed out that it was in his own interest to introduce reforms in his State. It is also generally argued that "...the Government of Pakistan was not prepared to permit democratic reforms to weaken the control of a loyal ruler" (Bangash 2015: 241). About the changing scenario, the then Ruler of Swat State, Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb wrote:

In 1953 I was approached by the Pakistani Government, that I must sign some sort of constitution...it was formulated as "Supplementary Instrument of Accession" – but in practice it restated things as they already were, in most important respects... and I signed on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1954, in the Governor House, Peshawar...in other States – Bahawalpur, Khairpur, and the Baluchistan States – the Rulers was made a constitutional head and all the power was put into the hands of a Chief Minister. Whereas they did not impose any Chief Minister on me; I was President of the Council, Chief Minister, and Ruler. I think their idea was merely to bind me legally, for the future (Barth 1985: 109-110).

The Governor of the then North West Frontier Province, Mr. Shahab-Ud-Din, Chief Secretary, his Political Secretary and Political Agent Malakand held a meeting with the last Wali of Swat at the scenic valley of Kalam. Miangul Jahanzeb wrote about these negotiations:

We sat down around the table – it was August 1953 – and the Governor wanted to speak first. I said: "No, I will speak first: He said: "No, I will speak!" Then his Chief Secretary and the others told me to please let His Excellency speak first – at the time he used to be called His Excellency;

after 1956 this Excellency business was abolished. I said: “No. Let me speak. If I can say it all, why have two speeches?” So he agreed and said: “Oh, all right, you have your say.” I said: “It is quite simple. You want to convince me. I am already convinced. And now you want to make a big story of it, how in Kalam after intricate negotiations we did this and we did that. If I wanted to refuse, I have in fact some very good arguments. Number one: Ask the people of Swat.” – At that time, in 1953, my people were so devoted to me, because of the development I was making. – “But I am not going to say that you must ask the people. Number two: I can make another excuse – that if the Nawab of Dir signs it, then I will sign it.” – “No, no” they said, “if you sign it then Dir will sign it!” – Though he never signed. – “But I am already convinced. I am a loyal Pakistani, a patriot, I am goi–g to sign it. but show me what you have brought, and allow me half an hour to go to my tent and read it first, before signing.” So they gave me the document they had already drawn up, in writing, and I read it, and I said: “O.K., finished”. And I signed on the 12th February 1954, in the Governor's House, Peshawar (Barth 1985: 109-110).

Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb thus surrendered his administrative authority to a greater extent by signing the Supplementary Instrument of Accession in 1954 (Bangash 2015: 132). The Supplementary Instrument of Accession of 1954 authorised the Federal Legislature of Pakistan to make laws and to exercise executive authority in Swat State on the same lines as in the rest of the country (Bangash 2015: 255-257). Under the provisions of the Act, Miangul Jahanzeb was asked to form an Advisory Council (Barth 1985: 109-110). The main features of the Supplementary of Instrument of Accession were:

1. There should be an Advisory Council of 25 members, 15 elected and 10 nominated by the Wali of Swat.
2. The proposed Advisory Council was to advise Miangul Abdul Haq Jahanzeb in the matters of general policy, administration, legislation, development, implementation, and finance.
3. The Ruler of Swat State was to act as the President of the Advisory Council.

4. The Council was not eligible to advise on matters for which the Ruler of Swat/ President had the power of discretion or individual judgment.
5. The State had the power to make laws on the subjects enunciated in Part III of the Schedule appended with the Supplementary Instrument of Accession.
6. The office of the Ruler of Swat State was declared as hereditary.
7. The Ruler was made the Chief Executive of the Administration of the State.
8. There was a whole time Chief Secretary to the Advisory Council and other Secretariat Staff who assisted the Ruler in the affairs of the administration.
9. The Ruler had the power to dissolve the Advisory Council.
10. The Ruler had full powers to grant pardons, reprieve, respite or remit punishment.
11. The Ruler was immune from Civil and Criminal Proceedings.
12. All rights, authority and jurisdiction vested in the Ruler.
13. All the expenses on account of the running administration were met out for the State Revenue (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar).

Furthermore, under the provision of the same Act, the Government of Pakistan got control over some matters of Swat State. Now they could interference certain matters like:

1. Directions could be issued to guide the Ruler in exercise of his discretion and individual judgement.
2. In case of dispute whether any matter legitimately fell within the discretion or individual judgement, the decision of the Government was final.

3. On request of the Ruler, any officer of the Government could attend the meeting of the Advisory Council to explain and give the benefit of his advice on the matter under consideration.
4. On request of the Ruler, the Government of Pakistan could constitute a High Court for the State or declare any court in any province of Pakistan to be the High Court for the State (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar).

The Act further stated that the Government of Pakistan had full powers to make laws and to extend any of the existing laws on the subjects included in Part I and part II of the Schedule appended to Supplementary Instrument of Accession. For the execution of authority of Pakistan, the Ruler of Swat was to serve on behalf of Pakistan or through a representative of Government of Pakistan (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar). The Supplementary Instrument of Accession and the Interim Constitution came into force in September 1954. (Bangash 2015: 321-322). According to a Government Report, an agreement was executed with the Wali of Swat on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1954 whereby he was appointed as Administrator of Kalam to run the administration with the help of an Advisory Council (File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar). It is pertinent to mention here that besides, the Advisory Council of Swat State, Wali Sahib also nominated members to the system introduced by Ayub Khan after taking power in the shape of Basic Democracies (Rahim and Viaro 2002: 280).

## **2. Conduct of Elections to the Advisory Council**

Under the Supplementary Instrument of Accession, the last Wali of Swat took measures for conducting the elections of the Advisory Council (Shahab, 104). Accordingly, elections for the first Advisory Council were held on 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1954 respectively. Prior to the conduct of elections, the standard procedure of preparation of electoral rolls, its publishing, appointment of Returning Officers, list of Polling Stations, filing of Nomination Papers, Scrutiny of Nomination Papers and withdrawal of Nomination Papers was followed. For the delimitation of the Swat State into electoral constituencies, Wali Sahib appointed a Delimitation

Committee. The Delimitation Committee included Ataullah Khan, Chief Secretary, Swat State as its President and Sher Mohammad Khan, *Wazir e Mal*, Swat State, Amir Said, *Mushir*, Swat State and Ihmadud Din Khan, Asst: Sam Ranizai, Malakand, as its Members (No. 2089-C/St/15, Dated: 30th July 1954, B.No. 59, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, NWFP).

In delimiting the constituencies in Swat State, consideration was given to the population, the geographical position and the tribal affinity of the people. Thus, after all this process, the following 15 Constituencies were formed.

1. Chamla and Totalai Amazai (Buner)....1
2. Daggar, Salarzai and Gadezai (Buner)....1
3. Chakesar and Besham (Shangla)....1
4. Puran and Martung (Shangla)....1
5. Indus Kohistan ....1
6. Shamuzai, Barikot, Aba Khel and Barat Khel (Swat)....1
7. Saidu, Mingora and Charbagh (Swat)....2
8. Azikhel and Fatehpur (Swat).....1
9. Madyan and Bahrain (Swat)....1
10. Bar Swat (Swat)....2
11. Nikpi khel valley (Swat)....2
12. Gagra and Chagarzai (Buner)...1

For the conduct of elections to the proposed Advisory Council, the ruler of Swat also set up an Election Board comprising of Ataullah Khan, Chief Secretary to ruler of Swat, Purdil Khan, Secretary to the Ruler and Ihsanuddin Khan, Asst; Swat Ranizai (No. 2089-C/St/15, Dated:30th July 1954, File No. 37-S/54, Bundle No. 59, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, NWFP).

David Ditcher wrote in 1967, “The Wali maintains an Advisory Council consisting of 25 members, 15 of whom have been elected by male adult franchise, while the remaining 10 are appointed directly by the ruler” (Dichter 1967: 51). Akhtar Ali contended in 1963 that the elections to the Advisory Council were held on the basis of an adult franchise. He further stated that the elected members to the Council were the representatives of the people and that these institutions were aimed at introducing democratic institutions in the State. The elections of the Council were held on a regular basis and without any rigging on the part of the ruler of Swat State. The

election process was conducted in a peaceful way without any traditional hue and cry (Ali 1963: 62).

The procedure followed for voting to the Advisory Council was very interesting in nature. The supporters of contesting were asked to gather in a wide-open space and vote for their candidate. The voters were then counted, and the winning candidate was announced (Uddin 2019). The Council was elected for a period of four years. Wali of Swat served as the President of the Council and presented the annual budget of the State before the Council. The members had the right to speak on the various aspects of the budget and had freedom to express their views (Ali 1963: 63).

### ***Membership***

The Council consisted of 25 members that included fifteen elected members and ten nominated members by the ruler of the State (Ali 1963: 63). The elected members to the first and inaugural Swat State Advisory Council included:

1. Ahmad Khan, Chinglai, Tehsil Khudu Khel, Swat
2. Zarin Khan, Kalpanai, Tehsil Gagra, Buner
3. Ghoray Malik, Illai, Tehsil Daggar, Buner
4. Sayed Rahim Shah, Qambar, tehsil Abakhel Baratkhel, Swat
5. Kamran Khan, Mingora, Tehsil Babuzai, Swat
6. Sayed Abdul Jabbar, charbagh, tehsil Charbagh, Swat
7. Abdul Qudus, Nawikali, Tehsil Azikhel, Swat
8. Hazrat Ali, Gornai, Bahrain, Swat Kohistan
9. Mian Nurul Hadi, Kanju, Tehsil Nikpi Khel, Swat
10. M Afarin Khan, Chakesar, Tehsil Chakesar, Shangla
11. Faiz M Khan, Bingalai, Puran, Shangla
12. Alimullah, Duber, Tehsil Duber, Indus Kohistan
13. Adalat Khan, Jura, Bar Swat, Swat
14. Dost M Khan, Kana, Tehsil Kana, Shangla
15. Jamshed Khan, Bandai, Nikpi Khel, Swat

The Nominated Members to the Advisory Council of Swat State included:

1. Sayed Sikander Shah of Malka, Buner
2. Ahmad Khan of Chagharzai, Buner
3. Rahamdal Khan of Kota (Musa khel), Swat

4. Dost M Khan of Manglawar, Swat
5. Mukaram Khan of Dakurak, Charbagh, Swat
6. Muhammad Afzal Khan, Bar Swat, Swat
7. Fateh M Khan of Sher Palam, Bar Swat, Swat
8. Mir Alam Khan of Patan, Indus Kohistan
9. Mir Akhtar Khan of Kotkai, Shangla
10. Amir Said Khan, Musheer ul Mulk, Swat (Bundle No. 59, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar, North-West Frontier Province).

According to Saranzeb Khan Swati, Swat State Advisory Council was formed in the era of Shahab Uddin, the then Governor N.W.FP. The members of that particular Advisory Council included Abdul Matten (Chamla, Buner), Abdur Rahim (Badkata, Buner), Sikandar Khan (Gadezai, Buner), Safdar Khan (Chakisar), Faiz Muhammad Khan (Puran), Aleem Ullah (Dubair), Sayed Hussain Shah (Tindodog), Sohrab Khan (Mingora), Abdus Sattar (Jahan Abad, Babozai), Qubad Khan (Jano), Nishan Mian (Shahgram, Madyan), Muhammad Adalat Khan (Jura, Upper Swat), Rahim Ullah Khan (Ronyal), Aziz Ur Rehman (Nikpi Khel), Dost Muhammad Khan (Kana), Abdullah Khan (Totalai, Buner), Sherdad (Bazargay, Buner), Raifa (Pattan), Amir Bacha (Lilonai), Sharafat Ali (Sher Palam), Malak Nawab (Durush Khela), Jamshed Khan (Bandai, Nikpi Khel), Umara Khan (Shamozai), Sayid Karim Bakhsh (Mingora) and Anat Khan (Chamgarai, Behrain). Further Union Council Members included Raham Dal Khan (Chariman Kota, Tehsil Barikot), Sayyid Sikandar Shah (Chairman Malka, Tehsil Khadu Khel), Farid Ullah (Chairman Garahai, Behrain), Rangeen (Chairman Maira, Besham) and Mahmood Khan (Chairman Fateh Pur, Jinki Khel). The State nominated members included Miangul Aurangzeb (Wali Ahd), Attaullah Khan (Chief Secretary), Amir Saeed Khan (Wazir e Mulk), Mohammad Majid Khan (Masheer), Kishwar Khan (Masheer), Taj Mohammad Khan (Masheer), Umara Khan (Naib Salar), Dr. Najib Ullah (Director Health), Sayid Yousaf Ali Shah (Director Education) and Sarfaraz Khan (Commander). Saranzeb Khan Swat gave the Council the name of 'State Assembly' that could make recommendations to the Ruler of Swat State on financial matters. Interestingly, Saranzeb's father applied to the ticket of Council but was rejected by the Ruler of Swat State (Swati 1984: 194).

### **3. Proceedings of the Council**

After the conduct of elections to the Advisory Council from the 20th to the 22nd of December 1954, the Wali of Swat intimated the Chief Secretary to the Government of North-West Frontier Province on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1954. He stated:

The list of 15 successful candidates is enclosed for the information of the Local Administration. The list of 10 Members nominated... is also enclosed. According to the programme, the first session of the Advisory Council is due to the beginning of January 1955. As this is a first step in the State towards the introduction of Constitutional reforms, it is highly desirable that the proceedings of the opening ceremony may be presided over by His Excellency the Governor, NWFP (No. s3088, dated 26th December 1954. File No. 37-S/54, Bundle No. 59, Provincial Archives, Peshawar, NWFP).

As mentioned before, the sessions of the Advisory Council of Swat State were held regularly. The annual budget of Swat State was presented before the Council. The budget copies were provided to the members before the session so that they may read it and express their opinion on it during the session (Uddin 2020). Similarly, the members of the Council were asked to provide their resolutions to the Secretary of the Council prior to the session (Uddin 2019). There were also instances when two sessions were held in a single year. Besides the budget's approval, the members also presented important matters of their constituencies to the ruler of Swat State and he responded to the suggestions and demands on the spot. The proceedings of the Council were recorded in Urdu language and were communicated to the higher authorities in the country as well. The recorded proceedings show that the members of the Council came up with their demands before the last Wali of Swat and attended the meetings in maximum number. The important State's officials were also called by Wali Sahib to take part in these sessions and put before the members the various schemes that were undertaken by him. The key officials of the education department, health department and construction department highlighted the various ongoing projects in the State (Uddin 2020). Interestingly, the members were paid Rs. 200 per session by the State for attending the session.

According to a Government report, the "Rulers specifically declared in these Supplementary Instruments of Accession that the constitution of Pakistan when framed would be the constitution of their States and shall be enforced in their respective territories. No such Instrument of Accession

was executed by the Ruler of Dir.” (File No.235-246, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar). The Report further added that with the signing of the Supplementary Instrument of Accessions with Princely States, the pending enactments of the Constitution of Pakistan were extended to the States. The Rulers with the exception of Nawab of Dir introduced reforms and promulgated the Interim Constitution Acts. Under the provisions of these Interim Constitution Acts, Advisory Councils, comprising both elected and nominated members, were constituted to advise the Rulers concerned on general matters of administration including development and finance. Further, unlike the other acceded States to Pakistan in 1954, no merger agreements were executed with the rulers of Frontier States. The rulers of Swat State and Chitral State also signed the agreement regarding privy purse, private property, Rights and Privileges. Even this time no agreement was signed by the Ruler of Dir (The North West Frontier of Pakistan, 1960-1961, File No.235-246, Bundle No.16 (A), TARC Misc, Directorate of Archives and Libraries, Peshawar).

#### **4. Critical Appraisal of the Advisory Council**

Yaqoob Khan Bangash argues that through the Government of Swat Act 1954 (Interim Constitution), the authority of Miangul Jahanzeb was not disturbed much as no advisor or *Wazir* was imposed on him as was in the case of other Princely States in Pakistan. He was left undisturbed at the helm of affairs and the Advisory Council had not any substantial authority (Bangash 2015: 240). He adds:

The English daily, Dawn clearly saw the wool this Act had pulled over the eyes of the people of Swat as it only further consolidated the power of the Wali, now with the official blessing of the central government. In a scathing editorial Dawn noted: the Council is only advisory and can only advise on matters on which the Wali is pleased to refer to it. Even then, since Wali will be the President of the Council, he will be in the position of advising himself on matters chosen by himself (Bangash 2015: 240).

Interestingly, the Act was seen as a measure of representative government in the State and the general public in the State welcomed it. It also “took some steam out of the agitation of Muslim League workers for the time being” (Bangash 2015: 321-322). Wali Sahib judged the Supplementary Instrument of Accession in pragmatic and tactical terms and not in the support of legitimization of his rule (Barth 1985: 175).

It is worth mentioning that the other Frontier States of Chitral and Amb had advisory councils by 1954 with minor changes in the number of elected members and its advisory powers. These councils were seen as a token gesture towards democratic reforms; however, these lacked any real power and influence. There was a mindset prevailing in the official circles of Pakistan that Princely States in the North West Frontier were not yet ready for democratisation and any drastic reforms in the State would fail to work (Bangash 2015: 390). The views of Wali Sahib about the Advisory Council were:

In fact, the formal system they created made no difference. They stipulated that there should be a State Council, with 15 elected members and 10 members nominated by me, and that I would be the President of the Council. And then the Government fixed my Privy Purse - from the revenue of my own State. It was ample and provided what I needed to spend on myself and my family. The Council had no real power. I collected them twice a year, and always told them what to do. Some people would make suggestions that were important for their village. So I generally said I would do it, but that they must always look to the State's overall priorities and needs. Other people just praised me and said: "You are doing everything, so what can we suggest?" Then in June I presented the budget of the State and discussed it with them. In some ways, this Supplementary Instrument of Accession strengthened me, in some ways it limited my power. Now suppose I had changed the constitution of the State without the permission of the Government, giving people more rights and so on, then the Government would have thought that I was encouraging an idea among my people of independence from Pakistan. SO, I could not dare to do that. From the point of view of Pakistan, I became a sort of caretaker administrator. Though they did not interfere in my internal affairs, everybody knew that I could be removed and the State could be merged. Politicians might also start their agitation here - a few of the parties did (Barth 1985: 110-111).

Fredrik Barth argued that the most notable fact in Swat State era was the marked concentration of power and initiative in the person of the Ruler of Swat State and that at no time during the existence of Swat State, his authority was balanced or otherwise curtailed by any other formally constituted body. The "State Council" imposed by the Pakistani authorities never exercised any substantial influence as could be seen from the

composition and organisation of the Council and Wali of Swat gave it little importance (Barth 1985: 161).

However, Akhtar Ali maintained that due to the elections to the Advisory Council, the masses got awareness about the importance of the voting system and the democratic norms were observed in the state. The State was now following the democratic norms in the State (Ali 1963: 63). Interestingly, Taj Muhammad Khan Zebsar, who was a close associate of Miangul Jahanzeb and served as a member of the Council, argued that though the Council was formed but had no usefulness for the State. He was of the opinion that Wali Sahib established the Council due to the needs of the time and he merely presented the State budget before it (File No. Swat State Budget, 1967-1968, 201-ST5 (A)-I, office of Commissioner (FR), Peshawar, 88/Swat (21 Swat), TARC Peshawar.). The members have been given the right to give suggestions and put their demands before the ruler in the Council (Zebsar 1955: 78). Taj Muhammad Khan Zebsar predicted that Wali Sahib will have to face difficulties in the training and educating these members and making them aware of their responsibilities (Zebsar 1955: 78). In support of his assertion, Zebsar added that a member of the State Advisory council asked the Wali of Swat to give favour to his native village. Wali Sahib advised the member not to merely advocate the extension of facilities to his native village but rather act as a representative of the whole constituency that had elected him (Zebsar 1955: 79). Similarly, a member of the Council demanded that a cannon may be installed in his constituency so that it can be used for informing the people in the evening, in the holy month of *Ramadan* (fasting month). The ruler of Swat State responded that the practice of firing cannon during *Ramadan* was only prevailing in the capital of the state (Saidu Sharif) for a long time. He further argued that if a cannon was installed in the constituency of the member, then there will be an increasing demand from the other members of the Council. The demand was thus put down (Zebsar 1955: 79). Zebsar asserted that the members of the Council were not fully trained and were unaware of their true responsibilities. Their suggestions were not up to the required standard and that the Wali of Swat was intelligent enough to decide on his own rather than consulting those inexperienced members (Zebsar 1955: 80; Barikoti 1955: 248). James W. Spain rightly asserts that though the Advisory Council was in place since 1954, yet “the reins of government remain almost entirely in the Wali’s hands (Spain 1985: 223).”

## **5. Conclusions**

So, it can be concluded that the Advisory Council of Swat State was an effort on the part of the Government of Pakistan to introduce democratic reforms in Swat State. The Council was composed of elected and selected members that mainly approved the State's budget and discussed its various aspects. However, it did not possess any real powers. The Council provided a forum for the members where they could put their grievances and demands before the ruler of Swat State. The ruler responded to the queries on the spot and decided on the genuineness of a particular demand. The forum, though devised by the authorities in Pakistan to introduce democratic reforms in the State, could not appease the critics of the State. The ruler's discretion to select ten members of his own choice further strengthened his authority within the State. The institution of the Advisory Council served till the merger of the State in 1969.

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