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With a very long and deep commitment which remained unfulfilled for so many years, lately I started worrying what that would mean if death came and *dil dian gallan dil wich raih gayyan* or what had been in my heart remained in my heart! Obviously such thoughts continued to worry me during this work. Not only that the responsibility to connect this work with the people was always on my mind.

At certain stage, I became aware that I am illiterate in Punjabi language. This has to be understood. Although as part of a general illiteracy my parents were illiterate. And so were my grand-parents. And so was my village 'Mastiwal' where I was born, in District and Tehsil of Hoshiarpur of pre-Partition Punjab. This is a matter of general illiteracy, where all those who fall in this category are inevitably illiterate in their mother tongue too. Normally it goes without saying that one's literacy includes his/her literacy in his/her mother tongue also. As, for example 67.3 per cent literacy of Sikhs [1] is understood to include their literacy in Punjabi language also. This is not my case as this is not the case of Punjabis in Pakistan or Pakistani Punjab.

[1] First Report on Religion Data, 2001, released by Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India as reported by 'The Tribune Online' Edition September 9, 2004.

Our situation in Pakistan generally and West Punjab (Pakistani Punjab) particularly is very unique. Unlike in India or Indian Punjab particularly, Punjabis in Pakistan or Pakistani Punjab particularly are illiterate in Punjabi language. More simply put, all Punjabis in Pakistan are illiterate in Punjabi language. For example, being even a Ph.D. but illiterate in the Punjabi language is the reality of Punjabis in Pakistan. And on top of that, they are not aware of that. It is normal for them. There is no feeling of deprivation in them on this score. All media is in Urdu and some in English. After Partition, and I am witness to it, more and more Punjabi parents spoke Urdu with their children. So much that as villages got more and more facilities like cities, this trend entered villages too which was unimaginable in the past. Apparently, Punjabi is a 'lost cause' in Pakistan! Anyone who somehow finds himself or herself in love with Punjabi is amazed and perplexed and is unable to explain the situation he or she finds himself or herself in.

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I started work on this Manifesto in January 2012. But after about a year and half, I realized it would take considerable more time to complete than I thought in the beginning. As I went deeper into the work, at every stage study and thinking demanded more time. And that prevented me from doing political work. And as all my writings may be termed spade work for clearing the way for political work, not in the day- to-day politics only but basically in the broad historical sense, I wanted that as far as possible, the results of my inquiry should enter into the political arena as soon as possible. Another consideration was that if I do not have many years to live to complete the work comfortably and satisfactorily to my heart's content, at least I leave behind this work, even if short and brief but at least conceptually complete. Therefore I decided to complete the work at the earliest cutting things short upon which otherwise I would have spent more time to ponder.

But I could not stick to this decision consistently as I had thought. And therefore I believe I have ended up with more rather than less, but still more time indeed could have gone into this work to further enrich, enlarge and deepen its contents. At every stage, there was struggle between time and candidacy of a variety of texts and potential arguments to be written for inclusion in this manifesto. As I experienced this during my work, it gave me spiritual uplift so much so that I felt a sense of sacredness for Punjabi language - a new consciousness for me.

The case of Punjabi language is big and complex, rather very big and very complex. And as it has remained more unattended or partially attended, this increases its bigness and complexity still further. There is no other case of any language in the subcontinent remotely comparable to Punjabi's presently. As if left alone or last in the queue, this uniqueness tremendously increases our responsibilities.

As the cause of Punjabi language was already an integral part of my political work, the 'Sarab Punjabi Manifesto' would become, therefore, from the date of its completion my and my party's manifesto for Punjabi language and other linguistic issues of our region raised, discussed, and explained in this manifesto. And as given in the sub-title, the main and immediate linguistic tasks of our region are to dismantle and remove the roadblock of what they call 'Urdu', and in the process end the partitions of Punjabi, Hindi and Sindhi languages.

My party is 'Pakistan Al-Manshoor Party' based in Lahore where I live. My party is considered to have come into existence when I wrote its manifesto and made it public on 4-1-2009, giving it the name of 'Al-Manshoor'. The word 'Manshoor' is used for manifesto in Pakistan and 'Al' is from Arabic which means 'The' and is used as a prefix to a noun to make it specific.

Apart from being my party's manifesto for Punjabi language, Sarab Punjabi Manifesto should stand on its own, independently, as, for example, any Punjabi's or Sindhi's manifesto for their languages. Not only that, this is the manifesto for

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anyone belonging to Hindi or Urdu in India, Pakistan or anywhere else who can see the unaccomplished task this manifesto has brought forth in the open. Due to complexities of perceptions and other reasons, this u-accomplished task had remained so far unidentified, unnamed and hidden and thereby becoming cancerous for the whole region sapping the energies of more than a billion people. Such proved to be the dimensions of Punjabi's becoming a world class language that along with it the subcontinent would find itself out of the 'Dark Age' which started with the coming of the British. Peace is just one of its dividends. Moreover, now, as I see it, the future looks bright not only for Punjabi but for all other real languages of Pakistan.

My thoughts about Punjabi language, obviously, have a history. My first awareness about my mother tongue dawned on me when I went to Dhaka to study engineering in 1964 and had to write to my parents, illiterate and peasants, in a village of the then Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) district of Pakistani Punjab. Writing to my parents in 'Urdu'! The oddity struck me. The idea got precipitated and never left me. I remember this was the first time that I had to write to my parents.

But I also contemplate that earlier when I was in the village, letters (obviously in Urdu) used to come from my elder brother in Lahore and my uncle (*chacha ji*) in Quetta and who else did read them for my parents except me? And I recollect the address of my uncle very distinctly even today and remember writing it, ly, whenever my father asked me to write obviously in Urdu to his brother. It was: Ilahi Bukhsh, Painter, Loco Engine Shed, Quetta, Baluchistan. My uncle was a painter in the North Western Railway in Quetta. He was there, as I remember from my childhood memories, at the time of 1935 Quetta earthquake when my father's family and others were in our ancestral village. Anyhow this is how, I remember, and tend to believe it happened.

Why I could not work for Punjabi language earlier? And why this work at my advanced age? I try to explain the way how and why it happened. I remember I reacted within myself instinctively and felt bad when somebody told a lie. And, perhaps unlike other children, I could feel if somebody was telling a lie. With this temperament, I had got the feeling that something wrong had happened to us. There were the stories told off and on of the two attacks on our village in 1947. The first attack by Jinnah's *Phahiwals** were repulsed by our village. And guns were not used in this attack. In the second attack, they came with guns. My father and mother were in the fields. For them, the attack was sudden and there was firing. It was so sudden that my father could not pick his *saafa* (casual headgear of Punjabi villagers) lying nearby. They ran to the village. As they used to tell, men went to fight and women and children were told to evacuate. While retreating, my father was fired upon three times by a man who was known to him. [2]

[2] See Appendix 1. I had started work on this Manifesto in January 2012. Since the middle of 2012 there were moments, when I was able to write some poetry in Punjabi and Urdu. But much before that and even before writing my manifesto

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‘Al-Manshoor’ (4-1-2009), I do not remember why and how and definitely not knowing that sometime onwards I will be writing poetry also, I had written (2001) some verses in Urdu which betray the depth of my anguish over the happenings of 1947: *Banana na banana* (making not making).

Let me explain what I mean by Jinnah’s *Phahiwals*. Irrespective of the religion of those who were uprooted from their ancestral homes or killed in 1947 and irrespective of the religion of those who uprooted or killed them, apart from the British, who were outsiders and imperialists, Jinnah and his All India Muslim League which was led by Urdu Party who later in Pakistan named themselves as ‘Muhajirs’ were ultimately responsible for the uprooting and killings. Therefore for me, those who attacked our village Mastiwal were *Phahiwals* (executioners) sent by Jinnah. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, Jinnah’s acts were responsible for the attacks on our village to expel or execute us if possible. *Phahiwals* is a Punjabi word. The background of its being used here is Baba Farid Sahib’s verse in Punjabi:

*Sarvar pankhee haiykru phahiwals pachas
ayh tan lehireen gad thia sachay tairee aas*

The literal approximate translation is like this: There is a lone bird in the lake but fifty trappers. This body is caught in the waves, True Lord, you are the hope. And Punjabi words individually mean: *Sarvar* (lake) *pankhee* (bird) *haiykru* (one, lone) *phahiwals* (trappers) *pachas* (fifty); Second Line: *ayh* (this) *tan* (body) *lehireen* (in waves) *gad thia* (caught) *sachay* (True Lord) *tairee* (your) *aas* (hope).

Therefore, somehow, it became my duty to find out why it went wrong and who was or were responsible for it? This did not leave politics optional for me. But which politics? It was not a question of career for me. It was the question of Right and Wrong. It was the question of my life to be spent the right way. Therefore, the struggle for truth, to be at the right place and in the right direction started. Now when I look back, I shudder at the jungle of ideologies I was in and about which at that time I could not have been aware. I had to come out of them mentally and physically safe; but not clearly being conscious of it as I am stating it now. It was a constant struggle, going into ideas and rejecting them. Ultimately this struggle led me to history. And it was a continuous and long struggle to reach the point, after substantial writing in English and Urdu, that it became possible for me to take in hand the writing of the manifesto ‘Al-Manshoor’ and launching the party, Pakistan Al-Manshoor Party. This work has practically consumed my life. I always felt I was late for the political work I saw in front of me. Because theoretical work on which political work should stand was so staggering and therefore it took most of my time. In the given circumstances, perhaps, it is difficult for many to appreciate what I am saying. Jinnah’s politics uprooted us from our ancestral homes about which, it seems now, there was nobody who could do anything. And

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then we were pitted against India. In these hurricanes of history, everything genuine was pushed to the background. And as I discovered Punjabi language became victim even more deeply than before.

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And by this time there was nothing going on for Punjabi which could satisfy me. But before I proceed further, I find it reasonable that you have some idea about the parameters of my thoughts. Therefore a couple of excerpts from the Foreword (written before 4-1-2009) of *Al-Manshoor* here would be appropriate:

“The problems mankind confronts today far surpass the confines of any framework actually in place or ideologically embedded in the minds of its believers anywhere in the world. Face to face with this situation, the world is rich in knowledge and there can hardly be any excuse on anybody’s part of its non-availability. But knowledge exists in pieces. It is sectional and sectarian. Making a whole out of it, after the fall of Communism, is now overdue. We need to define once again what the present world is and why it is what it is. We need to define once again the general direction of our journey. [3] In trying to do my part of these tasks, I continue to ponder, what else is the path except *Satyagraha* – our “holding onto truth”? But for that – to hold onto “truth” – it has to be discovered, perhaps more often again and again, as it does not always lie ready made on the shelf. All these considerations, apart from if any others, have determined what I have written in this manifesto. ... It is the time of defeat and end of Western/American imperialism. It is the time of defeat of Israel and the end of Zionism. It is the time of defeat of capitalism but not the victory of any known ideology and therefore of ‘socialism’, for example. And here, at home, in the subcontinent, it is the time of defeat of the ideologies built on the Hindu-Muslim Divide. Anti-India Pakistan is an abnormality. An abnormality, in nature’s scheme of things, must vacate the stage for normality. Therefore by being anti-India, Pakistan loses its right and justification to exist. But the British and American imperialisms have been the basic cause for the transformation of Pakistan into what it is today.”

[3] ‘We need to define once again the general direction of our journey.’ was originally ‘We need to define once again our destination – our *manzil*.’ I feel more comfortable with my afterthought. Thinking of reaching a fixed destination or *manzil* seems mechanical when this is not the way life is; therefore, the change.

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Another factor as part of the delay was my idea to practically tie up the promotion of Punjabi language with my political work. But I found out later that that was not sufficient. And then busy myself, I was always expecting that somehow some platform would emerge for Punjabi. But nothing such happened. Moreover, by this

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time, I had not studied the issue of Punjabi language specifically. But I had opinion(s) on the issue. So, in the beginning of 2012, I decided to go into the whole issue - past, present and the future which we should build - with earnestness and urgency. After about four years' work, I hope this manifesto will be of help to all those who wish well, respect, and work for the flowering of their languages in Pakistan, be it Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto or Baluchi. And I believe that with this discovery in Lahore that Urdu is not a language and it is in fact Hindi written in Persian script, Hindi should start getting its remaining due space which the Partition denied it suddenly in 1947. Moreover, I believe it is profoundly significant and perhaps the most important breakthrough in removing the roadblock of 'Urdu' from the path of the real languages of Pakistan. Due to historical background, habits and practices, the discovery will prove to be a quantum jump in particular for Punjabi and Sindhi languages, if not Hindi. The right moves by Punjabi and Sindhi will by default make Pushto and Baluchi move too in the right direction with more confidence. In fact we are at the threshold of a linguistic revolution in the region.

I know and am very conscious that more work is needed on this manifesto. Anyhow, apart from that there are few other questions on my mind. For example, a popular and engaging study of Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, and Baluchi and their relationships with each other is needed. Further, work is needed on the linguistic borders between Punjabi and Hindi, Punjabi and Sindhi, and Punjabi and Pashto, for example. There is need to understand how Bengali language escaped Persian script. It will be interesting if somebody takes up the work about the chances of Hindi losing the battle against Urdu in an extended Mughal or British rule.

However having said that I presently feel satisfied that for the first time the question of Pakistani languages has been taken up in an integrated manner and the truth about 'Urdu' dug from the debris of the history had been brought face to face with the peoples of the subcontinent and especially of Pakistan to whom falsehood was sold by the 'Urdu Party' many a generations ago. And absent-mindedly and in innocence they continue to believe it.

Now, while my party is working in Pakistan, Sarab Punjabi Manifesto should go wherever a Punjabi lives. We should request and persuade people to know, remember and respect their ancestors and find and repair their lost or broken connection with them. This is civilized behavior. All those who have Punjabi roots and have gone out or found themselves out should be persuaded to come back into the Punjabi fold. When a mistake is widespread, perhaps it is inevitable. But when realization comes, it has a great and deep spiritual reservoir to undo the mistake and if it is not literally undoable then to build better in the future thus contributing to civilization.

It was a mistake of historical proportions by many Punjabi families to leave Punjabi behind or not pass their mother-tongue to their children. Strange may it look, I am one of them and am repenting this mistake more and more as years are passing by.

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And from my own experience of unawareness, I can say it really was widespread, normal and therefore unavoidable. Of this phenomenon, I have direct experience in Pakistani Punjab and Pakistan.

I have tried to understand the pre-1947 Punjab and Punjabi scenario as well as update myself. I have learnt Gurmukhi and Devanagari scripts. Being Punjabi and knowing Urdu (in fact Hindi in Persian script), it was obviously not like learning two new languages. It was painful for me to experience more closely during this work the partitions of Punjabi and Hindi languages about which our people are in almost complete darkness. Such are the walls of separation built by cultures that you don't even see them. But they are there.

I had studied Bengali for about 6 months in Bangla Academy, Dhaka when I was there as a student of engineering. At the end of which, I was able to read Bengali newspapers. I remember, it was 1967. I studied Arabic in 1966 in the Islamic Academy, adjacent to Baitul-Mukarram Masjid, Dhaka. My teacher was Abul Hashim Sahib who was Secretary General of Bengal Provincial Muslim League in 1943. I did not know at that time about his political background. I remember him mentioning his friendship with Ayub Khan. With deep respect, I want to remember him here. It is due to him that I have a fundamental understanding of Arabic which is now helpful to me. At that time he was white haired and blind. We were given cyclostyled notes of Arabic lessons and while we read them aloud, Hashim Sahib used to explain to us. The medium was English. I remember he used to wear white *kurta* and white *dhoti* and had his piped *hukka* with him in his office where he used to teach us. He was the Director of the Academy. I continue to refresh my Bengali and Arabic off and on. Also, I am trying to reasonably acquaint myself with Sindhi and Pashto languages. The idea is to have insight so that I should have some ability to look into these languages, too.

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Why Hindi and Sindhi in the Sarab Punjabi Manifesto? This is because their issues are so intimately connected that they are parts of the one, the whole problem in totality, which the peoples of our region confronted in 1947. And then, after all, this manifesto stands firmly against the partitions of Punjabi, Sindhi and Hindi languages. Therefore, I believe, it is justice of history that Punjabi, Sindhi, and Hindi languages are together here and are in helpful mode to end each other's partition.

From about 1200 to 1947 - about 800 years - two powers, Muslim and British, remained dominant in India. In round figures, Muslims were dominant from about 1200 to about 1750-1800 and the British from about 1750-1800 to 1947. But for Punjab, Muslim rule had started around 1020. The rulers of both powers spoke their own languages, Persian and English respectively, and obviously Indian languages were new to them. In the case of Muslims due to their long stay, small numbers, not united under one command, no home country to return to, and having

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converted locals to Islam thus enlarging their social base, they started entering the domain of local language/languages. It is obvious that when Muslims started writing an Indian language, it was natural for them to write it in Persian script which they were already using. For example, at quite an early stage, Baba Farid Sahib (1173-1265) wrote Punjabi in Persian script. Writing Punjabi in Persian script did not make Punjabi a different or a new language. By the time the British had captured Delhi, the Muslims had become Hindi-speaking and had started calling Hindi language 'Urdu'. It was a new name and had no historical background of Indian origin. And they were writing it in Persian script. The use of Persian was becoming more and more inconsistent with the realities on the ground. Therefore, its use must have been decreasing and becoming more and more restricted. As yet, things seem natural and no mischief is visible on the horizon. And languages have dialects and not necessarily one script. Was not Hindi being written in its real (Devanagari) script as well as the adopted Persian script? Without mischief, the deliberate attempt to usurp and occupy Hindi by Urdu flag-bearers, whose inheritors later became what in this manifesto I have called the 'Urdu Party', Persian script would have faded away with the passage of time. There would have been no so called 'Hind-Urdu controversy'. The subcontinent would have been in peace. But at the same time we must understand that we are not talking about static things. Historical development and evolution do not have straight paths in front of them.

In those times, the real owners of Hindi, the Indian people, the Hindus, were struggling to grapple with new developments and trying to find their way forward. Their rulers had changed from Muslims to British. Although the downfall of Muslims at the central level was complete, they ruled regionally, here and there, all over India, held property and were active politically. During the nineteenth century, under the British, one witnesses by and large Muslim players, whether opponents or collaborators, on the stage of India. Syed Ahmad Brelvi's movement which started about 1822-24 under the British and continued to exist and harass the British India from their sanctuaries in the tribal regions of the present Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa up until 1891-92.

Then, there was the Mutiny of 1857 which was planned and led by Muslims whose focal point was the Muslim King or Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar in Delhi. So far, the idea was the restoration of Muslim rule in India. And immediately after the Mutiny, the process of reconciliation was started, again a Muslim project led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Now the idea was to accept the British rule, become their allies and get whatever was possible. But all Muslim endeavours were exclusive. The behaviour was as if Hindus, the real owners of the land, did not exist. With this state of mind and supportive British presence, they wanted that their 'Urdu' should prevail in India. It was a sort of 'adoption' or 'occupation' of Hindi not as what it was but disconnecting it from the land and the people it belonged to by giving it their own name 'Urdu' and 'disfiguring' its face (script) to make it look like Persian.

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And what did the British do with Hindi? Like Muslims, they too gave it their own name, but unlike Urdu the name given by the Muslims, the British name - 'Hindustani'- sounded connected with Hindustan and in the sense that the language of Hindustan was called 'Hindustani' by some outsiders at some time therefore the argument ran that 'it' pre-existed in India and was not new. But as the peoples of Hindustan were not using this name, the argument seems to be far-fetched. It was as if to create a reality from something non-existent thus creating hurdles in the path of Hindi. Anyhow, they ended up perpetuating its 'disfigured face', the Persian script by supporting Urdu. This process continued for about 100-150 years, from about 1800 to the partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

Therefore, Hindi language had to face, bear and fight back these two onslaughts whose origins were from outside India. Hindi's British sponsored 'Hindustani' distraction is over but Muslim initiated and inspired 'Urdu' distraction is still around. And, this development in history had the most adverse effects, after Hindi, on Punjabi and Sindhi languages.

When I took up the issue of Punjabi language, in earnest, I found these issues staring at me. And I concluded that it was not possible to fight Punjabi's case in isolation and in particular without clarifying Hindi's case. With this state of mind, it was natural for me to look all around. This led me to focus on Sindhi language and found it too in an adverse situation. And I worked for Sindhi with a state of mind that I am Sindhi and have to fight Sindhi's case too. In fact what I have written about Sindhi language, therefore for me, it is 'The Sindhi Manifesto'.

Anyhow, the overall conclusion is that all three languages – Punjabi, Hindi and Sindhi – stand partitioned. Each case is specific as well as part of the whole bigger scenario. This explains the sub-title of this manifesto.

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The manifesto has III parts. Part I: The Partition of Hindi Language; Part II: The Partition of Sindhi Language; and Part III: The Partition of Punjabi Language.

As like Hindi, the questions of Punjabi and Sindhi languages are also basically political, therefore the way has been cleared for right politics for both languages. And lastly, the *present* political situation in South Asia, existing borders, and dispute(s) on any ground etc. did not in any way affect this inquiry.

If in the title the order is Punjabi, Sindhi and Hindi; inside it is reversed and is Hindi, Sindhi and Punjabi.

First Hindi because it was the basic and the biggest linguistic issue of North India or 'Hindustan'. Understanding Hindi's case is central to understand the cases of other languages, in our case Punjabi and Sindhi, in particular. And for giving respect to Sindhi, it has been placed before Punjabi. ■