

The Language Accord



“ . . . For official use in the province, the people of the province can choose any language they wish. This question will be decided solely in accordance with the wishes of the people of this province alone, as freely expressed through their accredited representatives at the appropriate time and after full and dispassionate consideration. There can, however, be only one lingua franca, that is, the language for inter-communication between the various provinces of the State, and that language should be Urdu and cannot be any other . . . ”

Extract from Quaid-i-Azam's Speech
March 24, 1948

THE LANGUAGE ACCORD

CONTENTS

	Pages
Text of President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's address to the nation on July 8, 1972	3
Text of the Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Act, 1972	5
Text of the President's address to the nation on July 15, 1972 ..	8
The Language Ordinance	14

The following is the text of President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's address to the nation over Radio Pakistan on July 8, 1972:

I am extremely pained to see that the language controversy in Sind has flared into a situation where blood is being shed. From the earliest of times this province has had the glorious tradition of extending its hospitality to all. It has been the heaven of Arabs, Afghans, Baluchs, Rajputs and multitude of other tribes and races from many ramparts. Its culture is so rich and abiding that within its soil it has absorbed all peoples without harm to its indigenous complexion. It is, therefore, all the more tragic that this trouble over language should have arisen between brothers living in the same province.

We are wedded to the concept of equality. We believe in the flowering of the people, of our society, of our cultures and of our languages. The country has already been irreparably damaged by domination and exploitation of one section over another. We are determined to see that this is corrected—we are equally determined to see that this is not done by causing, in turn, any injustice.

Urdu is the national language and its importance is undeniable. Sindhi is a centuries' old language, fully developed, but it has been denied its rightful place in recent times. The two languages must learn to live together in the province of Sind.

This problem is also not of our creation. It is a part of the terrible legacy we have inherited.

I have asked the Governor of Sind to submit the language bill to me for consideration. I have also asked the Governor to invite representatives of all sections to sit down together with me on the 10th of July to discuss the bill and to see if it allows for adjustment within the general framework of the bill adopted by the elected assembly.

Do I have to repeat yet again that Pakistan is facing its gravest crisis. At this time, every citizen must lend his hand and share responsibility to help to tide over these difficult days. I am sure that every Pakistani will agree with me that nothing should be done which will exacerbate feelings and sentiments between the people. With goodwill, we can surmount all our difficulties and find equitable solutions to all these issues. I ask for goodwill and understanding from all my fellow citizens and I am sure that no one will deny this to me.

Pakistan has to be rebuilt. There is a great deal of constructive work to be done. Let us all join together in this crusade. Let us not fight among ourselves. I appeal to all of you to attend to your work and to your duties, and stop shedding each other's blood. I am confident that this appeal will not go unheeded.

I repeat again that I have invited representatives of the province of Sind—both the old Sindhis as well as the new Sindhis—to meet me here in Rawalpindi on the 10th of July when I shall have discussions with them although on that day the National Assembly is also to meet to discuss another important matter. However, I will find the time: I must find the time to meet the leaders to discuss with them this problem and they must find a solution. I will keep them together: I won't let them go till they give me an agreed solution. I hope that they will act with a sense of realism and responsibility—thank you.

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PART IV

PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY OF SIND

The 3rd July, 1972

No. PAS/Legis-B-13/72.—The following Bill is hereby published for general information as required by Rule 73(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Provincial Assembly of Sind.

Bill No. 13 of 1972.

The Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Bill,
1972.

A

BILL

to prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion and use of Sindhi language.

Preamble

WHEREAS Article 267 of the Interim Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides that without prejudice to the status of the national languages, Provincial Legislature may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion and use of a Provincial language in addition to a national language;

AND WHEREAS the Sindhi language is used in the offices and departments of Government;

AND WHEREAS the Sindhi language was compulsory subject of study in educational institutions but this was discontinued by verbal orders of Martial Law Authorities;

AND WHEREAS it is the natural aspiration and desire of the Province of Sind to promote the teaching and use of the Sindhi language;

It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Short title commence- ment and extent

1. (1) This Act may be called the Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Act, 1972.

(2) It shall come into force at once and shall extend to the Province of Sind.

Definition

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the meaning hereby respectively assigned to them, that is to say—

- (a) "Assembly" means the Provincial Assembly of Sind;
- (b) "Government" means Government of Sind;
- (c) "Department of Government" means any department of Government and shall include an autonomous body, a local council or local authority;
- (d) "Institution" means School, College, University or any other educational institution.

Provincial Language

3. Sindhi shall be used as the Provincial Language of the Province of Sind.

Teaching of Sindhi

4. (1) Sindhi and Urdu shall be compulsory subjects for study in classes IV to XII in all institutions in which such classes are held.

(2) The introduction of Sindhi as compulsory subject shall commence at the lowest level, namely, class IV and by stages to be prescribed, be introduced in higher classes upto class XII.

Promotion of Sindhi

5. Government may constitute and set up Academies and Boards for cultural advancement and promotion of the Sindhi language.

Use of Sindhi

6. Subject to the provisions of the Constitution, Government may make arrangements for progressive use of Sindhi language in offices and departments of Government including Courts and Assembly.

Power to make rules

7. (1) Government may make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for—

- (a) the introduction of the Sindhi language as compulsory subject for study by stages;
- (b) the constitution and setting up of Academies and Boards and their powers and functions;
- (c) the progressive use of the Sindhi language in *inter alia*, the offices and departments of Government, Assembly, Courts and institutions, etc.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Interim Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides in Article 267 that without prejudice to the status of the national languages a Provincial Legislature may by law prescribe measures for teaching, promotion and use of a Provincial Language in addition to a national language

It is the natural aspiration and desire of the Province of Sind to have business of departments of Government transacted in the Sindhi language. At present in most of the departments of Government business is transacted and correspondence made in the Sindhi language. It is, therefore, considered expedient that Government shall have the power to prescribe the extent of the use of the Sindhi language for the purpose of teaching and in the day-to-day business and correspondence of the departments of Government. This would naturally be without prejudice to the use of Urdu.

MUMTAZ ALI BHUTTO

Minister-in-charge

B. G. N. KAZI

Secretary to Government of Sind
Law Department

JAMALUDDIN ABRO

Secretary, Provincial Assembly of Sind

*Following is the text of the President's address to the Nation from
Radio and TV network on July 15, 1972 :*

I feel a sense of satisfaction in announcing to the people of Sind in particular and to the people of Pakistan as a whole that a mutually agreed solution has been found to the tragic language controversy. I had said that given goodwill and understanding an equitable solution could be found. I had said that if the representatives of the two sections adopted a positive and patriotic approach, there was no reason why the controversy could not be resolved. This goodwill and understanding has now been shown ; a positive and patriotic approach has been made. The result is the agreed formula which I am now announcing.

The Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Bill which was adopted by the Provincial Legislature of Sind on the 7th July shall be assented to by the Governor and promulgated as law. The provisions of the Bill are now well known and understood, and I need not dilate upon them here.

Although this Bill clearly provides that the use of Sindhi as the Provincial language would be without prejudice to Urdu, certain apprehensions were expressed that Urdu would be prejudiced.

In order to allay such apprehensions, an Ordinance is to be promulgated by the Governor to the effect that the application of the Sindhi Language Act shall be in a manner that shall not prejudice the use of Urdu. This Ordinance shall also provide that, for a period of 12 years, no person shall be discriminated against in the matters of appointment, promotion and continuance in the service of the Province of Sind on the ground only for want of knowledge of Sindhi or Urdu language.

This is the purport of the Ordinance to be promulgated by the Governor. It shall be issued immediately after he gives assent to the Sindhi Language Bill. The Ordinance shall be adopted as an Act in the next session of the Sind Assembly.

As a part of the outcome of the talks between the representatives of the two sections, certain administrative measures will be put into effect by the Government of Sind, which I am sure will inspire confidence in all the people of Sind. Once the situation settles down completely, there is no reason why the Sind Government should not take a lenient view of those detained in connection with the language controversy.

Precious lives have been lost, and property damaged, in the last few days. People have lost their breadwinners and means of livelihood. I am directing the Sind Government to take all measures to alleviate the hardships, suffering and misery of these unfortunate people. It shall be the endeavour of the Government to compensate and rehabilitate those who have suffered.

But let me ask you, fellow citizens, has all this hardship, suffering and misery really been necessary? Has not a solution been found through discussion and deliberations?

Fellow citizens, have we struggled these past so many years for the restoration of democracy to seek recourse now in street-fighting and fratricidal killing? Have we struggled for democracy to see it thus disgraced? Must we go about it in this way to thwart our long-cherished dream of democracy?

I say no, I have made every effort, strained every nerve, to see a flowering of our democratic institutions. I shall not be an idle spectator witnessing their destruction.

The people of Sind have an elected Assembly reflecting their will and aspirations. It was through this Assembly that the Sindhi Language Bill was passed by an overwhelming majority. It was not, as in 1958, done by the whim and fancy of a local Martial Law Administrator.

Democracy has yet to find a better forum than the floor of an Assembly elected through direct adult franchise. And where, in some cases, this forum may not give full satisfaction to all concerned, the answer is to mobilise public opinion through institutional means.

Even after the passage of the Sindhi Language Bill, I responded to the sentiment of a section of the people of Sind. I took the extraordinary step of calling for the Bill before the Governor could assent to it. I also called the representatives of the two sections for deliberations. In return, I had appealed to you to stop bloodshed and violence, to go back to your homes. Was this an unreasonable appeal?

But, instead, violence spread, the situation got from bad to worse. More lives were lost. I ask you, was this necessary? Could you not have awaited the outcome of the talks, the success of which I was hopeful?

Let us learn. Has not Pakistan already paid a sufficient price for its follies of the past? Must we continue with such folly in the future?

Time and again I have stressed that Pakistan is going through its most critical test—the test for its very survival.

But I still see hope. We must put aside the anguish and bitterness of the past few days.

Let us instead continue the goodwill and understanding, the positive and patriotic approach, demonstrated by the representatives of both sections in arriving at the mutually accepted solution which I have announced. Let us build upon this understanding. Let us build upon it so as never to repeat the tragedy that this Province has recently experienced. Let us work together for the greater glory of the Province of Sind. Let us work for the greater glory of Pakistan. Let us never forget our rich and proud heritage. Let us work together to see our Pakistan flourish and become a progressive and prosperous modern nation's state at the service of its people.

Continuing, President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made the following observations extempore, in Urdu and Sindhi:

My friends, my brothers and my sisters, this is the official announcement.

But I want to say a little more. You might say in your homes that you have heard these words before such as 'let us work together to build a progressive Pakistan, let us work together for the new Pakistan'.

But when I say these words believe me, I do not mean them as cliches. It comes from my heart.

Yesterday in the National Assembly of Pakistan, I spoke candidly because I do not want to fool our own people. I said things which would be liked and things which may not be liked; but I have to think of the future. I have to think of all of you. You have given me a colossal responsibility. You have given me a grave responsibility. I cannot fail in my duties. I have to maintain a balance. I cannot please all sides.

I have to try to decide matters on merit, taking into account the historical and legitimate factors. Sometimes one section will be annoyed, sometimes another section will be annoyed.

But I cannot think of one decision or of one section. I have to think of all sections, of all of you, of each and everyone of you. Everyone who has lost his life, has brought my end closer—my end not in terms of politics and power, but my end in terms of my own life; because the life of every citizen of Pakistan is precious to me. And when I hear that any person, young or old, Sindhi or Muhajir has fallen dead, it takes a part of my life away from me.

I don't want to say much more on these matters. You will undoubtedly read my speech in the National Assembly but I appeal to you, my friends, I appeal to you, my brothers, people of Sind, I appeal to everyone, living anywhere, in Liaquatabad, in Nazimabad, in Golimar, in Lyari, in Jacobabad, in Larkana, in Hala, in Sanghar, in Hyderabad, in Latifabad, anywhere.

Please exercise restraint. Let us not get carried away by emotions. Please do not fall a prey to propaganda. Please do not become a victim of party machinations.

We have too much to lose. We have seen how much we have already lost. When

I hear these words, these harrowing words like "Revenge" or "Shaheed Minar", I shudder.

I did not come to office to build "Shaheed Minar". I came to office to build a monument of peace, a monument of friendship, of brotherhood, not to ignite the forces of bitterness, of extremism, so please believe in me.

Today when I came to Karachi, what a sad feeling I had. When I came to this great city, a city whose streets I have walked, a city where, everywhere people have received me with acclaim, today there was tension.

Today there were people who were not happy. This is not my individual presence or my individual popularity which is at stake ; it is a whole future we have to build.

If I don't build it, someone else will build it. I don't know he can do it in the present circumstances ; but nevertheless I was most unhappy to see the feeling of the people, to see the expression on their faces.

On my last visit here, people clapped. They applauded. Their eyes were lit up with enthusiasm. Today, of course, I have my friends and supporters. They clapped but there was an expression of sadness in others. I have not disillusioned them. I have not disappointed them, I have not taken a decision which is incorrect.

History, time, future will tell you that I have taken a decision to save Pakistan, not to obliterate Pakistan.

You have been unfair to me, I would say. How can I ever, under any circumstances, take any steps that would go against Urdu? I cannot even dream of it.

I have tried hard, tried very hard to find a solution, a device, some means to settle this question. Others before me never made any efforts. You can see the results. The cancer spread and spread and spread. Have you ever considered how many decisions I have to take? If there was one decision I would have said, "alright", but there are thousands of decisions which I have to make—Constitution, Martial Law, democracy, autonomy, Kashmir, the Biharis, India, Bangladesh, and so on.

All these problems have fallen into my lap. I do not want to run away from these problems. I can never run away from them. I am not the one to run away.

For God's sake never think for a moment that I can work against the interests of Pakistan. I hear it being said that we should have a Pakistani President. Where will you find a Pakistani President? I have been elected by the people. From my childhood I have striven for Pakistan. My life and my record is for you to see. When have I been a traitor to Pakistan?

Even my worst enemy cannot lay this charge. What sins have I committed except that I have struggled for the emancipation of the disinherited. This is my only sin. I want an end to the iniquitous system of capitalism.

I want to give the poor people of Pakistan a better life, houses to live in, improved wages, a brighter future, respect for their sweat. This is my only offence.

My friends, those whom you hear today are no friends of Urdu. They have no love for Urdu. They only hate this Government. They want to finish this Government. They want to finish the new egalitarian order which we are trying to bring. Look at their records. At first they said 'bring the POWs back immediately'—as if the POWs were my captives. Then they said 'bring the Biharis over'—as if the Biharis were in my hands.

This was followed by labour trouble. You will recall that I called it the 'LLL formula', meaning Labour, Language, Lawlessness. I said it in Karachi. Now look at the Language Bill. Analyse it dispassionately, examine it. Is there a single clause in it which is anti-Urdu? But those who have attacked the Bill never looked at it. They were not interested in the Bill. They were motivated by the prejudice, disruptionist tendencies and they wanted the people to suffer. They hate this Government because this Government is trying to bring justice and decency to the country.

I beg of you in the name of God to consider how on earth can I or my Government be your enemy. I have risen through your help. The chair in which I find myself today, I owe to you. I am tall because I stand on your shoulders. I speak to you because you have made sacrifices for me.

Let us end this strife. Let us get together. I am prepared to listen to you, to talk to you, to take your advice. My doors have always been open to you. My Urdu-speaking brothers and sisters, please do not be misled. Those who pose themselves as your leaders only want to maintain capitalistic hold on you. They want to perpetuate injustice.

I have documentary evidence that to incite the present trouble as much as rupees thirty lakh were thrown about by capitalists. They talk of the funeral of Urdu. I ask them which funeral? When did Urdu die? How can Urdu die? That can never happen. Before Urdu dies we will all be dead.

Look at the newspapers. They are operated by capitalists, by those who symbolise social injustice and exploitation. What do they care if the poor perish? It is not their sons who are being cut down. They never had any respect for the poor. Was there an occasion when they did not suck the blood of the working classes to fatten themselves? Even now they want to use and are using poor for their own unholy end.

All their allegations are false. I have tried hard, I tell you. I have placed everything on the table. I have told you the truth. Let me tell you, I shall not run away. Why should I run away? I will go to Lalukhet, Nazimabad and Golimar. Why should I not go there? I am not Ali Kauser that I did you injustice or exploited you. I am not a dictator's stooge. Tell me which Muhajir brother of mine can say that Ayub Khan should be brought back? Could the Muhajirs have forgotten that in Hyderabad Ayub Khan had said in a public speech that all Muhajirs were disloyal to Pakistan and should be thrown into the Arabian Sea? I had at that point stood up and taken him on. I had told him "how can you say a thing like that?".

It is the same Ayub Khan whose son led a victory parade through the streets of Lalukhet, a parade studded with bullet shots at the Muhajirs. So how can the Muhajirs say today that Ayub Khan should be brought back. This is a conspiracy. I tell you this country has never seen a more depraved and corrupt man like Ayub. He sucked the blood of his country. Show me a single word uttered by me against the Muhajirs.

How can I even imagine going against my brothers and friends. Some people in my own family have married among the Muhajirs. We have lived together in the same village, in the same city all these years. If we do not put an end to this prejudice and forget the trouble through which we have been all this while, then it will be easy for the enemies

within and without to destroy Pakistan. These people have no love for Pakistan. They care only about their factories, their capital and vested interest.

My Muhajir brethren, I am coming to you. I shall meet you. I have held meetings even today. Let us pull down these barriers of prejudice and get together to build a prosperous Pakistan.

My Sindhi brothers, clear all suspicions in your minds. I shall never be a traitor to Sind, to Pakistan, to anyone. I am son of the soil. My party will do justice to all sections of population in Sind.

I made a promise to you before elections that I shall be fair and just to Sindhis. So do not have any misgivings. During my address to you at the Sind University in Hyderabad I had said that I shall make all sacrifices for the restoration of the rights of Sindhis but it does not mean that I shall do any injustice to Punjab, or any other part of the country.

The land of Sind has been kind to me and to my family. My family has served Sind and my father struggled for the creation of Pakistan. So do not forget this. If you demand I shall give up my office but I shall not do injustice to any group, to anybody. And what is this talk about Raja Dahir? Whoever talks of Raja Dahir is an enemy of Sind, is an enemy of Pakistan, is an enemy of Muhajirs. He is nobody's friend. We have to serve Sind, we have to serve Punjab, we have to serve Baluchistan, we have to serve Pathans, we have to serve Pakistan. Punjab has supported me and I can never forget them. I contested from D. G. Khan. I went to Simla, I saw people from twenty-two Provinces of India at one table. I feel very ashamed that even four provinces of Pakistan can't stay together. The fifth we have already lost.

For God's sake go to work. Send your children to schools. Many people have not been paid their wages for the last month. So go back to work, increase production, build the country. I hear a lot about black flags. What are these black flags about? Have we forgotten the national flag of Pakistan?

But we are a simple people. We are easily misled. The newspapers have done a great injustice to us. Their role has been very dirty in this tragic episode. This is not democracy. This is not the way to sell the paper and increase circulation. But this is all over now.

An agreement has been reached. The old and new Sindhis have arrived at this decision. This is their decision and I think it is a correct one.

I appeal to all of you to go back to work and go about your daily work in a normal way.

But I should caution disruptionists. If they refuse to see reason then I must be forgiven for some unpleasant consequences that may arise. Many such papers may have to be closed down and many individuals may have to be sent to jails as they have a hand in these disturbances.

But there will be no need, Insha Allah, for resorting to this line of action. I have faith in the common man and the poor of the country. I call upon all of you to strengthen my hands. I need your support much more today than I ever did before.

PAKISTAN PAINDABAD.

LANGUAGE ORDINANCE

The Government of Sind has released an Ordinance on July 21, 1972 which was promulgated by the Governor of Sind on July 16, 1972.

The Ordinance is in accordance with the settlement arrived at between the representatives of Sindhi and Urdu-speaking delegations before the Committee appointed by the President of Pakistan.

Following is the full text of the Ordinance:

AN

ORDINANCE

To make certain provision in relation to the application of THE SIND (TEACHING, PROMOTION AND USE OF SINDHI LANGUAGE) ACT, 1972.

Preamble

WHEREAS clause (2) of Article 267 of the Interim Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan provides that without prejudice to the status of the National languages, a Provincial Legislature may by law prescribe measures for the teaching, promotion and use of a Provincial Language in addition to a National language;

AND WHEREAS Urdu is a National language and is spoken by a substantial section of the people;

AND WHEREAS it is considered expedient for the purposes of clarification and removal of doubts to make certain provisions in relation to the application of the Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Act, 1972 (Act II of 1972), hereinafter referred to as the Act;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Assembly of Sind is not in session and the Governor of Sind is satisfied that conditions exist which render it necessary for him to take immediate action;

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the power conferred on him by clause (1) of Article 135 of the Interim Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Governor of Sind is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance, namely:—

Short title extent and commencement

1. (1) This Ordinance shall be called the Sind (Teaching, Promotion and Use of Sindhi Language) Act, (Application) Ordinance, 1972.
- (2) It extends to the whole of the Province of Sind.
- (3) It shall come into force at once.

No discrimin- ation on linguistic basis

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Act, for a period of twelve years from the commencement of this Ordinance:—

(a) No person, otherwise qualified for appointment or promotion to any civil service, or a civil post in connection with the affairs

of the Province of Sind, shall be discriminated against only on the ground of want of knowledge of Sindhi or Urdu Language;

- (b) No person who, immediately before the commencement of this Ordinance, was serving in the civil service, or a civil post in connection with the affairs of the Province of Sind, shall be removed from service only on the ground of want of knowledge of Sindhi or Urdu Language.

*Application of
the Act to
eliminate
discrimination
against Urdu*

3. Application of the Act shall be in a manner that shall not prejudice the use of Urdu.

Sd/-

Karachi ;

(MIR RASUL BUKSH KHAN TALPUR)

Dated the 16th July, 1972.

Governor of Sind

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