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**A Socio-Cultural Profile of Pakistani Diaspora in  
Hong Kong**

**By**

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## **Introduction:**

The Pakistanis' history in Hong Kong (Hong Kong means "Fragrant Harbour") can be traced back to the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> Century when Pak-India sub-continent was ruled by the British. Though at that time there was no country with the name of Pakistan, the people who came from the areas which now make parts of Pakistan are considered Pakistanis. Dr. Anita W. Weis, a scholar from Oregon University, USA also has suggested the same thing in her article on the Indians in Hong Kong. Another scholar, Barbara-Sue White in her book '*Turbans and Traders: Hong Kong Indian Communities*' has also used the term Indians for both Pakistanis and Indians while discussing their history and culture before the creation of Pakistan.

At that time Hong Kong was a small part of San On District of Kwan Tung Province (with a population of 5,000 only as compared to the present which is more than 7 million) but was handed over to the British Empire by the Viceroy of Canton (Guangzhou), China in January 1841. At that time Hong Kong was inhabited mostly by farmers and their families living in the valleys, and fishermen living on boats along the sheltered coast. The first British commercial ships sailed into Chinese waters under the flag of East India Company for trade between Pak-India sub-continent and Japan. The British extended their control over Hong Kong when they signed the Convention of Beijing in 1860 AD, which formally ended hostilities in the Second Opium War fought between 1856-58. The British government later signed another agreement with China in 1898 for a 99-year lease of the New Territories with the aim to protect Hong Kong in better way. It was this rule of the British, both in Hong Kong and Pak-India sub-continent, which paved the way for the arrival of people from the areas now in Pakistan. The early seamen mostly came from the shores of Malabar, Bay of Bengal, Attock, Hazara, Lahore, Gujrat and Faisalabad.

These early settlers had no proper accommodation or housing but somehow they remained well-connected with each other in an area known as Lower Lascar Row – in the Central area, better known to the old timers of Hong Kong as "Moro Kai" (Streets of the people of the Moors). The Muslim seamen held their first collective prayer (*Namaz ba-jamat*) in an open street at Lower Lascar Row, and continued to do so for a while until the first Mosque was constructed at Shelly street, Central in 1849. Along with the mosque quarters were also built for the residence of *Maulvi* and rest house for wayfarers. The first *Maulvi* was brought from Attock, Pakistan.

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Besides the seamen there were others who came as soldiers in the Hong Kong Singapore Battalion of the British Army. In addition to those who served in the British Army there were some in the police. Others were from different Government departments, banks, schools and other private organizations as well as traders. Before the establishment of Pakistan these people from the sub-continent had formed the Kowloon India Tennis Club in 1907 for their leisure times. After the creation of Pakistan the people of the country in Hong Kong found themselves without a club house or a representative body as the Indian Muslim Society had ceased to exist. Now the Pakistanis formed the Pakistan Muslim Society in 1950. The Pakistan Trade Commission opened its office in Hong Kong in 1957 and its first Senior Trade Commissioner played a very important role in uniting the Pakistani community. The Pakistanis officially registered themselves with the Hong Kong Government in 1960 as the Pakistan Association of Hong Kong.

Most of the Pakistanis who are living in Hong Kong came before 1969, when immigration to the island was freely allowed. The early immigrants mostly joined the Hong Kong Government departments, such as Police Force, Prison Department, PWD, Railway etc. Many Pakistanis also came here during the Korean War to work as textile labour, security guards in the security companies and government agencies. Later when the textile industry shrank and could not expand, these people joined private security agencies as security guards and watchmen. These people mostly belong to Attock, Azad Kashmir, Chakwal and Faisalabad. They have proved themselves as honest, trustworthy and dependable people in Hong Kong.

There are also some Pakistanis working in the multinational organizations including international Banks at different levels. Some of the Pakistanis have reached to the high echelons of power in the Hong Kong official circles, like one has become one of the three permanent judges of the Court of Final Appeal, while the other had become member of the Council of the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong (now Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing). A number of Pakistanis are also in business, while some of them are doing very well, some have modest set ups. These businessmen have their own Association by the name of Pakistan Traders Association, which came into existence in 2002.

For the welfare of Pakistanis living in Hong Kong there are also working many non-governmental organizations, such as the Pakistan Islamic Welfare Union, which was established

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in 1998 with the aim to look after the interests and welfare of large labour force working in Hong Kong. It holds few functions for the Pakistani Community every year. It also runs a child community centre and coordinates with district welfare offices of the Government of Hong Kong. Another important welfare organization of Pakistanis is the Pakistan Student Association Hong Kong, which aims to uplift the educational and socio-economic status of Pakistani youth and community in Hong Kong, and encourages and promotes multicultural society in Hong Kong. Pakistanis also actively participate in other welfare organizations, which are not focusing exclusively on Pakistanis but Pakistanis play a dominant role in these organizations.

### **Geography of Hong Kong:**

Hong Kong is located in the Southeast of People's Republic of China and is part of Peoples Republic of China. However, the city state has been granted special status called Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. It covers a total of 1,102 Km<sup>2</sup> areas and is consisted upon the following areas:

The present Hong Kong territories are spread over four main areas, viz. 234 outlying islands including Lantau, Hong Kong Island, Kowloon, and New Territories. Amongst the 234 outlying islands, covering an area of 178.67 km<sup>2</sup>, Lantau Island is the largest where Hong Kong International Airport is also located. Hong Kong Island covering an area of 80.4 km<sup>2</sup> is the financial nerve center of Hong Kong where many old Hong Kong buildings can also be found. Kowloon peninsula covering an area of 46.93 km<sup>2</sup> is comparatively less upscale as compared to Hong Kong Island but its districts are heavily populated and is also the main center for tourists. New Territories, the largest area of Hong Kong, covering 796 km<sup>2</sup> is close to Chinese borders and currently half of Hong Kong population lives here. All these areas of Hong Kong are well connected through road and rail network and are reachable within less than an hour time.

(Gordon Mathews 2011: 5 & Spanish Chamber of Commerce, <http://www.spanish-chamber.com.hk/pages/viewfull.asp?CodArt=44>, accessed on 26 January 2014).

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(Map showing four parts of Hong Kong)

### Categories of Pakistanis in Hong Kong:

Pakistanis have arrived in Hong Kong at different periods of history. Accordingly their feelings towards the country are varied. Those who have arrived after the creation of Pakistan has a clear identity as Pakistanis but those who have come to Hong Kong before the creation of Pakistan from the present day Pakistani territories have a different situation. Sindhis, who now identify themselves with India, many of them were originally living in the territories now make Pakistan. The most prominent amongst them is the Harilela family, whose forefather, Mr. Naroomal Harilela (who was the first in the family to come to Hong Kong) and his family was living in Hyderabad, Pakistan before the Partition. One of his aunts continued to live there even after the creation of Pakistan. (Laila Harilela, written information 2014 & Iqbal Khan, Interview 2013)

There are also many Sindhis (from today's Pakistani territories) who migrated to Hong Kong at the time of Partition, before moving to Hong Kong they had spent time in Bombay and even now have houses or relatives there. There are Muslim Indians who have married Chinese girls and

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identify themselves with India, however, when the question of resettlement after the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997 arises, then their clear preference is Pakistan rather than India.

(Barbra-Sue White 1994: 8)

Two other very important business Pak-Indian sub-continent communities are Bohras and Ismailies, both are considered split away branches of the Shia Muslims. Their identity in Hong Kong is different from each other. The Bohras consider themselves Indians though there are many of them who have married to Pakistani girls. The Ismailies consider themselves Pakistanis.

(Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013 & Zoheir Tayab, Interview 2013)

On the legal basis in Hong Kong, Pakistanis can be divided in many categories. There are those who are known as Hong Kong's British Dependent Territories Citizens (BDTC). The British Parliament in April 1990 passed a bill called British Nationality (Hong Kong) Bill, which granted "...citizenship and right to abode in Britain to only 50,000 carefully selected heads of households and their families." (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 227)

Some of the Pakistanis who have been living in Hong Kong for long time were issued British National Overseas (BNO) passports which the British government had started issuing since 1987, "...allowing holders to travel to, but not to reside in, Britain, Hong Kong, or anywhere else. These will not be issued after 1997, meaning that the children of current holders will be ineligible even for this dubious document. Instead, only the next two generations of South Asian and other ethnic minorities will be issued British Overseas Citizens (BOC) passports...."

(Barbara-Sue White 1994: 228)

After the 1997 handover of Hong Kong to China the joint Declaration on the government of Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) ignored the minorities' status. A British declaration promised the right of travel to the holders of BDTC passports without giving them the right of abode in Britain. While the Peoples' Republic of China announced the granting of Chinese citizenship to all ethnic Chinese living in Hong Kong, they ignored ethnic minorities. However, Article 24, Clause 4 of the Basic Law provided the right of permanent residence to all those non-Chinese people who had been living or would live in future in Hong Kong for seven or more years before or after 1997. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 227-228)

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These people are British citizens and were living in Hong Kong at the time of British handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997. The families of these people have become cosmopolitan as they are spread in different countries of the world. One such Pakistani who runs a business in Chungking Mansions was interviewed by Gordon Mathews and he stated, "I manage a guesthouse in Chungking Mansions, but my son is a doctor in London and my daughter is studying in the United States'- making a better future for themselves not just away from Chungking Mansions but from Hong Kong." (p.69) Quoting Tariq Soomro of the Pakistan Consulate General in Hon Kong Barbara-Sue White writes that there were around 2,000 Pakistanis with dual citizenship in Hong Kong after the handover of the colony to China but the same author at another place on page 228 mentions 2,200 Pakistanis holding BDTC passports. (142 & 228)

However, according to Syed Raza Hassan Abedi, himself holder of British Nationality, around 06 months before the handover of Hong Kong to China, the Indians/Pakistanis especially the Sindhis started a vociferous campaign for their right to be given full citizenship of Britain as they did not hold Hong Kong passports but they were living in Hong Kong for decades. After this the then Labour Government passed a bill from the British Parliament which granted full citizenship to those Pakistanis/Indians including other foreigners, who have been living in Hong Kong permanently for more than 07 years. (Interview 2014)

Another category of Pakistanis is of those who have arrived in Hong Kong to seek asylum. There are many who are genuine asylum seekers but there are also people who can be termed as economic migrants but they want to avail the opportunity through asylum. The Pakistani asylum seekers normally apply for a Chinese visa in Pakistan through some agents, when they are granted visas, then they travel through China to reach Guangzhu and Shenzhen. There they contact the human smugglers and pay them some money to be transported to Hong Kong. These human smugglers use speed boats and bring them to one of the isolated islands of Hong Kong during night time from where they are mostly driven to the Hong Kong by taxi drivers. (Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013 & Norma Connolly & Clifford Lo, Proquest 2013)

It is not easy to get asylum in Hong Kong because Hong Kong is not the signatory of UN's Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, however, it is signatory of Convention Against Torture (CAT). Over the years the Hong Kong Government had left the issue of asylum to the

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offices of UNHCR in Hong Kong, which was understaffed and could not handle the rush of asylum seekers. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 190).

During the period of 2006 to 2007 UNHCR was issuing appointment letters to the asylum seekers which were not formal letters and were not enough for legal protection. The result was that the law enforcement agencies were hounding the asylum seekers and putting them behind the bars for many many months ranging from a month to six months period. This used to greatly terrify them and many would stay within their rooms for days and days fearful of arrest. This situation changed a little bit when Hong Kong English media raised voice against these injustices meted out to asylum seekers. Some asylum seekers also went on hunger strike in jail while others marched on the UNHCR headquarters. This also attracted the attention of Hong Kong Legislators and Director of Immigration who visited them. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 190-191).

These events resulted in some relaxation to the asylum seekers including Pakistanis. The Hong Kong government limited the stay of asylum seekers making it less than a week to one month maximum. After spending the time in detention the asylum seekers are given identity papers in shape of a plastic laminated card which the asylum seekers carry in lieu of passport or Hong Kong Identity Card. This card prevents the Hong Kong law enforcement authorities to arrest the asylum seekers again until their cases are decided. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 191)

Starting from 2007 the Human Rights lawyers advised the asylum seekers to apply through CAT to get the refugee status instead of or as well as the UNHCR. It was also because of the prolonged process and indifferent attitude of NNHCR in Hong Kong towards the plight of asylum seekers in Hong Kong that the asylum seekers turned towards the government of Hong Kong though it was considered almost impossible to get the right of residency in a third country through it. It is obvious from the stringent policy of the Government of Hong Kong regarding asylum seekers as the government has not granted residence status to almost any asylum seekers within their boundaries. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 191).

The Pakistanis who have sought asylum in Hong Kong love their country in spite of the fact that there are many who have come to Hong Kong due to the fear of persecution back in Pakistan. This can be verified by the fact that one person namely Muhammad Hasan who fled Pakistan due to the fact that his marital relations with his wife were not satisfactory but his extended family,



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particularly uncles, wanted him to keep the marital bond intact or he can be killed if he broke the marriage. Since he was not satisfied with his marriage and could not handle the stress he came to Hong Kong and sought asylum but he believes that if he did not have marital and family problems he would have been better off in Pakistan. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 184-187)

Another Pakistani woman who is Ahmadi by belief while talking about her own status and Pakistan observed “Yes, some Pakistanis hate Ahmadiyya Muslims like me, but I still love my country very very much — those who hate us are just some people in my country, not my country as a whole.” (Gordon Mathews 2011: 204). It is a fact that there are many who have been forced to leave their country to save their lives but they love their country may be as a compensation for being not able to return back to their homeland. They love their country as they believe that it’s not their country which has persecuted them but rather that was the government who have tortured them and have targeted them. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 204)

Defining different Pakistani categories the Consul General of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Hong Kong, Mr. Ahmad Balal stated that Pakistanis can be divided in the following categories:

1. British Nationality Origin (BNO)
2. British citizens
3. Temporary Pakistani Residents, who are in Hong Kong either for doing jobs and study. In this category those government of Pakistan employees are also included who are on deputation in different Pakistani offices like Pakistan Consulate, Hong Kong Baptist University, Pakistan International Airline, National Bank of Pakistan etc.
4. Permanent Residents of Hong Kong who came as temporary residents to work or study here but with the passage of time they either became permanent residents after spending 07 years or married the local Chinese or Hong Kong resident Pakistani girls.
5. Another category of Pakistanis in Hong Kong is of those who are working in Hong Kong on different countries’ passports like USA, Canada, Australia, etc.
6. Asylum seekers and illegal residents who have submitted their cases for asylum but their cases are not yet decided. (Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013)

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## **Local Boys/Girls:**

The children who were the offspring of Pak-Indian sub-continent men married to Chinese women were/are generally called “local boy” or “local girl”. These children though genealogically trace their background to the Pak-Indian sub-continent fathers; most of them consider themselves as Hong Kongers. (Muhammad Khan, a ‘local boy’, Interview 2013). In the beginning, the Chinese families were reluctant to marry their girls to the local boys due to the importance given to the kinship by them but since the local boys were economically well-off, they were able to marry Chinese girls who normally would convert to Islam. However, the dilemma was that of the wealthy local girls, who would not marry a poor Chinese man both for religious and social reasons. Discussing this dilemma of the local girls and local boys Anita M. Weiss while giving reference of a discussion with a well-known Indian Muslim family writes:

“Local girls weren’t so easy to marry. They were quite choosy. They looked for higher status and better education than the local boy had. They were looking to marry up. Most, therefore, married foreigners, if they could, or else local boys, or became spinsters. Few married Chinese then.” (422).

There were other reasons for such situations as well which had roots in culture and orientations. Generally the Pakistanis prefer marriages within their own extended families like first cousins either from father or mother side. This is particularly true about the girls as they are to leave their parents’ house to live with their in-laws and the parents are not sure about the unknown bridegroom’s family environment so they are reluctant to marry their daughters outside their family. But in case of boys since the bride will move to the bridegroom family, parents are more accommodating towards girls outside their family. Overall result of this situation is that the families more tended towards traditional values would result in more spinsters. (Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Interview 2013)

## **Arrival of South Asian Muslims:**

Before the arrival of South Asians; the Muslims’ arrival can be traced back to 7<sup>th</sup> century in the nearby Chinese territory of Canton (now known as Guangzhu). According to some sources the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sent one of his companions Hazrat Sa’ad Bin Abi Qaas to China for the propagation of Islam in 629 A.D. He made Canton his headquarter for his

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missionary activities and succeeded in bringing many Chinese to the fold of Islam. Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqas after his death was buried in a Muslim cemetery in Canton, where his tomb is still visited by many Muslims. Later some Muslim Arabs, Persians, and Indian traders also came to china for their business activities and thus the population of Muslims increased with the passage of time. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 1 & Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013)

When the British arrived in South China they found five Muslims' mosque flourished. The Muslims had also established their settlements in Macau, where the Europeans used to visit during and between trading season with Guangzhu. In Hong Kong some Muslims lived in modern Central District known as Lower Lascar Row, the Street of the Moros, or 'Moro Kai, then situated near the harbor before reclamation even before Hong Kong became British colony. Later these Muslims dispersed into other parts of the colony like Tsim Sha Tsui, and the original road became famous as 'Cat Street', home of numerous curio and antique dealers. (Barbara-Sue White, 59)

The Pakistanis/Indians are cosmopolitan by nature in the sense that they have been traveling around the world as traders, professionals, military personnel, watchmen and labourers, and Hong Kong was also explored by them for their variety of ventures. When the British extended her imperial territorial control to Hong Kong in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the South Asian Muslims also accompanied the British Masters. In the early days the South Asian Muslims were not easily distinguishable from Parsees, Hindus, and Sikh countrymen. These early South Asian Muslims were mostly seamen and traders who after arrival into Hong Kong gave a sense of identity to the Indian sub-continent Muslims. These were later joined by people from the Pakistani territories of present days Attock, Hazara, Lahore and Gujrat who were mostly traders and contractors. With the growing British Empire more people arrived from these areas as security staff which included the services of, military, police and prisons. (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet n.d.: 1, Anita M. Weiss 1991: 419 & Barbara-Sue White 1994: 1 & 59)

By mid 1840s the Pak-Indian sub-continent traders had achieved prominent position in Hong Kong and some of the firms were leading firms of the colony. Most of the trade in early days that earned fortunes was in opium. Those were early days of colony when around hundred foreign businessmen were competing with each other. "Approximately a quarter of these adventurous

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firms were Parsi or Muslim, and the largest of the Indian enterprises was D. and M. Rustomjee, a Parsi firm with fifteen partners. The British firm of Jardine, Matheson and Company, with five partners and twenty assistants, was the most grandiose international concern. Along with many European traders, Matheson and Jardine both received their early trade experience in India itself and with Indian-based firms. Rustomjee numbered fourth after Dent and Russel. (Barbara-Sue White, 12)

The early people from Pakistan-India sub-continent who came to Hong Kong had no intentions to settle in the colony and mostly they were men. "The first Registrar-General estimated the total population of Hong Kong at around 24,000 in 1845. This figure included 362 Indians of whom 346 were men, accompanied by only twelve women and four children, but did not include the all-male Indian troops in the garrison. Many of these Indian troops were based at Sai Ying Pun, the Western Military Camp at West Point, but some Indian troops were still housed in temporary matcheds in Central. Other troops were at Chek Pai Wan (Aberdeen), Chek Chu (Stanley), and Sai Wan. It was a lonely existence for all Indians in Hong Kong, whether present as traders, guards and police, or military, for they were merely accepted by others, and their families were far away." (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 18)

The living environment for troops, especially for Pak-Indian sub-continent troops, in Hong Kong was very harsh and hostile. They were usually hit by malarial fever and many lost their lives. At the West Point military camp in 1843 100 men died of fever. Between May and October the same year 25 percent troops stationed in Hong Kong died of fever. Such calamities affected the Indians more than the Europeans and Chinese. The mortality rate was not only high on the Hong Kong territory but also on the British ships which affected both Indians/Pakistanis and British alike. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 18)

British had always used Pakistani/Indian troops for show of their power on the China coast. It is obvious from Lord Napier request of 1835 for both navy and military troops from Pak-India sub-continent to be used in autumn against China. His frigate, *Imogene* and other ships sailing from Pak-India sub-continent were run by Pakistani/Indian crew. Before that in 1832 a small opium smuggling ship, *Jamesina*, owned by Jardine and Matheson also had large number of Pakistanis/Indians, which included "...ten Europeans, a crew of fifty-four Indian lascars, and four Chinese staff members. Sir Henry Pottinger, replacing Elliot, who had originally obtained Hong

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Kong for Britain, was given 10,000 troops, many of whom were Indian, to finish the Opium War of 1842.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 18-19) Actually Hong Kong remained a very important station for the British and whenever they wanted to shift their troops to other parts of the Empire, Hong Kong was always one of the postings.

Anita M. Weiss giving reference of K.N. Vaid writes in her article that there were four reasons which facilitated the arrival of South Asian Muslims in Hong Kong and later joining these services:

“Firstly, the British actively recruited South Asians into the military in India and transported them throughout the Empire to maintain law and order. Secondly, many Indians (mostly from Tamil Nadu) were sent to the Straits Settlements in Southeast Asia to work as either indentured or free laborers. In time, some of these individuals migrated to Hong Kong as sailors or traders, often with Malay Muslims. Thirdly, South Asian traders (generally from mercantile communities) were able to spread throughout the British Empire without restriction until the 1930s. Finally, the British enabled a small number of South Asians to work as petty clerks in various parts of their empire. Descendants of traders acknowledged to us that given their aptitude for English, they were able to be recruited to work in clerical positions for both the colonial government and private British trading firms, thereby enhancing their socioeconomic position in the Colony.” (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 419-420).

The early Pakistanis/Indians who were consisted upon seamen, traders and different security personnel started living in Central on the Hong Kong Island. The total numbers of these people were 346 men, 12 women, and 4 children out of the total population of the colony numbering 24,000 in 1845. Later these Indians also started living in Tsim Sha Tsui when the Kowloon area was ceded to the British. (Barbara-Sue White 1994, 18)

The contacts and influence of Pakistanis/Indians was not limited to army or trade relations. Pakistanis/Indians played a significant role in the development of young territory of Hong Kong. Governor, Sir Henry Bowring in 1850 recognized the importance of all races in Hong Kong by declaring that all landholders should be equally given the right to vote. “He listed qualified landholders as sixty-nine British, forty-two Chinese, and thirty other nationalities, which would

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have included Parsi and Bohra Muslim Indians, Portuguese, and a few others.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 19)

The number of South Asian Muslims, principally Punjabi Muslims from the present day Pakistan territories increased, as the British established firmly their colony in Hong Kong. They were working to the British government and firms in different capacities like Army Personnel, Police Constables, Marine Guards, Dockyard Guards, Watchmen, Bank Clerks, Royal Naval Dockyard Police, Ferry Supervisors, Post Office Mail Launch Guards, Sanitary Foremen and Government Drivers. (Trustees of Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 1)

The experience of British in Pak-India sub-continent was a factor in establishing Hong Kong in the British Empire. It is obvious from the fact that the first Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Henry Pottinger spent his early formative years in Pak-India sub-subcontinent before arriving in Macau in 1841 to implement British Plans in China. In Hong Kong he was instructed to use money received from China on the expenses in the territory while the remaining should be sent to the British Government in Pak-India sub-continent. Initially Hong Kong was used as a factory or depot in the same manner as British used East India Company in Pak-India sub-continent. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 20)

The trade between Pak-India sub-continent and Hong Kong were mainly of cotton and opium and ships were regularly running between the two territories to carry on the business. Even a regular passenger ship was also run between Hong Kong and Pak-India sub-continent. The links were so close and important that in 1865 the British were even mulling the proposal of establishing a rail link between Guangzhou and Calcutta. In 1844 the postmaster in Hong Kong was instructed to receive Indian postage and open an account with post master in Pak-India sub-continent. Even the Indian rupee was freely acceptable in the Hong Kong territory for business or day to day shopping. The Pakistan/Indian troops stationed in Hong Kong were paid salaries in Indian rupees. It remained acceptable till 1860s when silver dollar was introduced, which was more favoured by the Chinese, that British and Indian currencies were replaced. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 20)

Due to close relations between Pak-India sub-continent and Hong Kong the prices of Indian commodities were regularly printed in Hong Kong. Before the Chinese laundry became popular

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even the laundry was sent to Pak-India sub-continent regularly to be washed and ironed spotlessly. News from Pak-India sub-continent was always heard with interest both by Pakistanis/Indians as well as British. The latter were interested in the news as many of them had lived in India and some had their business interests there. (Barbara-Sue White 1994, 20-21)

Trade with Pak-India sub-continent remained important for a long time and annual reports highlighted different activities. "In 1912, for instance, the Hong Kong Exchange rose due to 'borrowings in China, good harvests in India and the forced buying of silver by the Indian Government to replenish their reserve.' It added that the Indian cotton yarn trade was only fair, and that the price of opium had fluctuated 'mostly in a downward direction.'" (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 25-26)

After the creation of Pakistan two main periods are important in the context of Pakistanis' arrivals in Hong Kong. One boom period of such arrivals was 1970s and the 2<sup>nd</sup> was 1997. During these two periods hundreds of Pakistanis arrived in Hong Kong. It may also be of interest to note that it was also the 1970s period which saw the boom in cotton yarn import from Pakistan. This may be one of the reasons for the arrivals of many Pakistanis in Hong Kong. The post-1997 boom in the arrival of Pakistanis can be the result of many reasons, which include the migration of many whites, Sikhs, and other Indians as they feared that the handover to China would not be favorable to them. Though some Pakistanis also migrated, those were very few as Pakistan enjoyed very cordial relations with China, so they were not afraid of any negative impact on their lives. When thousands of people migrated from Hong Kong it created a labour vacuum which was filled by the fresh arrival of Pakistanis. There is another reason for the labour vacuum as well in Hong Kong. Around 40 per cent of Hong Kong girls of child bearing age neither have children nor do they want to give birth to, which obviously affects the labour market. To fill the labour market vacuum the Hong Kong government imports labour from other countries including Pakistan. Since Pakistanis presence in Hong Kong is spread over hundreds of years, the already settled Pakistanis bring their relatives or acquaintances whenever such opportunity arises. (Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013)

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## **Early Occupations of Pakistanis/Indians:**

### **Security Services:**

Though the earliest Muslims to arrive from the Paki-India sub-continent in Hong Kong were Bohras, soon they were numerically over numbered by Punjabi Muslims, mostly coming from the present days Pakistani territories. They were recruited and brought by the British government to Hong Kong to serve as army soldiers, police personals, and guards in different departments such as marine, jail, dockyard, and post office mail launch. Following these pioneers many more followed as private watchmen and security guards. Explaining the reasons for these recruitments Anita W. Weis refers to Vaid and writes:

“It was only in defence and security services that the British either did not desire or could not find Chinese recruits, and they sought to meet this need by bringing in Indians. To a much lesser extent, the Colonial Government also recruited Indians to staff postal, health and educational services for which Chinese with the required knowledge of the English languages and skills were not available.”(K. N. Vaid quoted by Anita M. Weiss 1991: 426).

The duties of the Pakistani/Indian soldiers and officers in the British Army from the Hong Kong Regiment included the suppression of any kind of resistance from the local Chinese when the occupation of the New Territories started in 1899. Besides that they were also posted on the border with China where on and off skirmishes were taking place. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 427).

The Pakistani/Indian security forces in Hong Kong were used as buffers between China and British Hong Kong when problems erupted between them in the New Territories located on the borders of Chinese territories. The construction of a police station was ordered at Tai Po by the Superintendent of Police, Captain May at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century to look-after the territory. In 1898 when the British flag was raised in the New Territories, a contingent of 2,000 Chinese attacked the Pakistanis/Indians who were part of the British military force. It became more important to station the Pakistanis/Indians in the territories as Chinese could not be trusted for their loyalty. When the dispute over the territorial limits in New Territories surfaced, the surveyors' team was called from Pak-India sub-continent to settle the claims of both parties. For a while the British posts were reduced but the Pakistani/Indian troops were posted on the Chinese borders when serious clashes took place in 1912. “The year before, when revolution



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fermented in China, armed Indian military patrols paraded daily in Hong Kong streets after some local rioting occurred.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 24-25)

The Pakistani/Indian security personnel also played a very important role in the Battle of Hong Kong against the Japanese. “In *Hostages to Fortune*, an account of the battle for Hong Kong Tim Carew has high praise for the Indians: ‘The Rajputs and Punjabis, martial races both, have produced some of India’s finest fighting men. ...both Indian battalions acquitted themselves valorously in the vicious fighting that followed.’ David Bosanquet, in *Escape Through China*, underscores their importance as ‘two seasoned Indian Army regiments’ who held their New Territories battle stations as the Japanese approached.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 43)

The Pakistanis/Indians’ role in resisting the Japanese invasion was not restricted to the army alone rather they also contributed in volunteers, in the St. John’s Ambulance Corps, and the British Army Aid Group (BAAG). In the Hong Kong Field Ambulance Corps beside others the Indian Medical Service and Pakistan/Indian volunteers also greatly contributed. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 43-44)

When the battle moved to Hong Kong Island the Pakistanis/Indians found themselves in strange situation because the Japanese were able to win over some of the Pakistanis/Indians to their side by paying them. These hired Pakistanis/Indians were used to provide false information through British loyal Pakistanis/Indians to the British. When the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong started they went all out to win over the Pakistanis/Indians to their side. The Japanese used both carrot and stick policy in order to woo Pakistanis/Indians. On the one hand they behaved well and offered incentives to them; on the other hand those who remained loyal to the British were tortured and murdered. “A secret telegram reported that the Japanese treating Indians particularly well. The Japanese ‘try to take every occasion to give concrete evidence of their desire to make friends with Hong Kong Indians. They recently released Indian prisoners-of-war and are training them ostensibly for use as street guards. Treatment going to some of their heads and must expect that some of them will become willing tools of the enemy.’” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 44)

P. McLane, the Canadian Trade Commissioner in Hong Kong before the War was of the opinion that the Japanese were trying their level best to persuade Pakistanis/Indians to join Japan. They were regularly brought to the propaganda meetings of the Japanese by force. On one such

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occasion the Japanese ordered those Indians who were pro-Japan to move to one corner of the room, when few did so, three of the others were bayoneted. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 44)

The Japanese were carrying out propaganda in different Pakistani/Indian languages and they were also trying to raise Indian Independence League, the purpose of which was to send them to Pak-India sub-continent to carry out anti-British struggle for independence. Thus the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong put the Pakistanis/Indians in great dilemma. As a result, like other groups in such circumstances, Pakistanis/Indians tried to play safe for their survival. In this situation at best the Pakistanis/Indians can be categorized into "...good Indians, dubious Indians, and Indians just struggling to survive each day under the Japanese occupation." (Barbara-Sue White, 45) Actually the Pakistanis/Indians had come to Hong Kong to work for the British, who considered them inferior to themselves. When the Japanese occupied Hong Kong the situation did not change for them. Now they were working for Japanese and the Japanese too were considering themselves superior than the Pakistanis/Indians. Consequently some Pakistanis/Indians joined hands with the Japanese and became part of their war machine. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 45)

The Japanese occupation of Hong Kong was a harsh period for Chinese in Hong Kong as the commodities were short of supply and there was shortage of even daily food items. This brought a social change in Hong Kong. Earlier the Chinese parents were unwilling to marry their daughters to Pakistanis/Indians (mixed marriages) but the Japanese occupation changed the situation because Pakistanis/Indians continued to work for the Japanese as well, particularly in the Police and Correctional Services Department (Prisons Department). This had enabled them better access to food and other commodities, as a consequence the Chinese' parents relaxed their opposition to mix marriages. Thus it can be seen that many Pakistanis/Indians married Chinese girls during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. The Japanese too did not object to such marriages rather those who married Chinese girls were exempted from joining the Indian National Army which the Japanese were raising for the fight against British in Pak-India sub-continent. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 47)

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## **Hong Kong Mule Corps:**

The Hong Kong Mule Corps was established two years before the World War II. This corps was consisted upon the mules, attached to the carts and guided by the Indian drivers and was an essential part of the military transportation services in the hilly tracts of Hong Kong. The Mule Corps was established in 1912 when the General Officer Commanding South China requested a Mule Corps from Upper India to be stationed in Hong Kong. It was to "...operate on a peace scale, with troops bringing their own artillery, rifle ammunition, camp equipment, and Indian followers." (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 30)

The purpose of such arrangement was to make the Mule Corps self-reliant which was given forty mule carts which would accompany the troops. This Pakisani/Indian unit with British Officers was not to depend on the Chinese supply, who were unreliable. This self-reliant Unit became an essential part of the defence strategy of Hong Kong. The Pakisanis/Indians were needed in Hong Kong as Chinese coolies were expensive and unreliable and were also prone to strikes while the Pakistanis/Indians were immune to such things. In 1921 the Mule Corps was consisted upon 580 men, including one pack battery. The following year, the Government of Hong Kong requested extra seventy Pakistanis/Indians for the pack battery. The Mule Unit and Pack battery was supposed to be an essential part of the defence of New Territories. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 31)

"At that time, the Hong Kong Mule Corps was still administered by India rather than by the Hong Kong government. It had originally been designated the Detachment 30<sup>th</sup> Mule Corps, but in 1921 the Hong Kong Mule Corps Detachment was listed under the B Mule Corps Depot as part of the Indian military establishment. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 31)

The Mule Corps drivers were sent from Pak-India sub-continent because in Hong Kong amongst the Pakistani/Indian population men were not available for the job. It indicates that at that time the Indians/Pakistanis were well assimilated in the job market of Hong Kong. The local Hong Kong Indians/Pakistanis who were recruited in the Mule Corps were paid very low salary, "HK\$ 19 per month, plus bonus and clothing, and several dollars for living quarters....The year 1924 saw 18 locally engaged Indian civilians joining a combined unit of seven British, 114 enlisted Indians, 200 mules, and four horses...." (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 31-32)

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In order to attract Indians/Pakistanis to the Mule Corps incentives were offered to them in 1925. They were entitled to Good Service and Good Conduct Pay and were also given mosquito nets, blankets, and kits. “Leaders, or *daffadars*, received HK \$24 a month plus 79 cents a day. Drivers received about half that. Mule Corps members were considered so essential that their families were often given permission to join the Indian men in Hong Kong. However, if families showed up without official blessing, they were forced to return at their own expense.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 32)

Initially the Mule Corps was consisted upon Dogras, a northern Indian hill tribe, which was replaced in 1931 by Punjabi Mussulmans. It was also suggested that Dogras should be replaced in entirety by Punjabi Mussulmans instead of gradually as the belief was that the Pakistanis/Indians work better if they belong to the same background. When the modern mechanical transport was introduced in the Hong Kong military then a suggestion was floated in 1929 for the reduction in the strength of Mule Corps but it was still to continue in the hilly terrain of the New Territories where animal transport had much advantage. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 32)

“The Hong Kong Mule Corps Peace Establishment in 1939-40 included 360 mules, 12 riding ponies, and three officers’ chargers. The Mule Corps included two British officers and two British non-commissioned officers. The rest of the corps were Indians and comprised four officers, five *daffadars*, nine *naiks*, 35 lance-*naiks*, and 127 drivers. There was 180 Indians in the corps, but to meet their need they were accompanied by two grooms to take of the 12 riding ponies, one carpenter, eight saddlers, six shoeing smiths, two blacksmiths, one tailor, two hammersmen, two bellowsboys, five cooks, and five sweepers.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 32-33)

The population of Pakistanis/Indians fluctuated with the changes of Government of Hong Kong policies, however, by the turn of the century when in 1901 the first official Hong Kong Census Report was published the Pakistani/Indian population was reported to be 1,453, which included 1,108 men and 345 women. When in 1931 the Census report was released it reported 4,745 Pakistanis/Indians in Hong Kong. It included 3,989 males and 756 females. “Out of over 3,000 Indians (including Pakistanis) then in Hong Kong, about 1,200 were in the army, while almost

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400 were members of the Hong Kong Police. Around 125 Indians were enrolled in the Civil Service, including government physicians, veterinary surgeons, engineers on the Kowloon-Canton Railway, prison officers, school teachers, clerical workers, telegraph operators, and technical workers. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 34-35)

### **Police Service:**

The British started recruiting the Pakistani/Indian Punjabi Muslims as a necessity as their earlier recruitment of Indian and British soldiers proved unsatisfactory. They also tried local Malay and West Indians but they too proved to be unsatisfactory, while the British were cautious to employ the local Chinese as constables. A British officer named C. V. Creagh, a Deputy Superintendent of Police in Hong Kong, who had earlier served in Sind played a major role in bringing the Punjabi Sikhs to Hong Kong in order to solve the ongoing problems. Anita W. Weiss writes that “Vaid suggests that Muslims were recruited from Jhelum, Multan and Cempbellpur (near Attock) districts to counterbalance the domination of Sikhs, so that by 1871 there were 182 Sikhs and 126 Muslims in the Colony’s police force.”(K.N. Vaid quoted by Anita M. Weiss 1991: 430).

During their service in the Hong Kong Police force the Pakistanis/Indians served the government with honesty, dedication and courage. Many of them even lost their lives while performing their duties. The first recorded murder of a Pakistani/Indian policeman was that of Lall Kahn (most probably it was Lal Khan) who was killed by a Chinese in Wan Chai while performing his duties. The Chinese was later executed. The Pakistani/Indian policemen continued their sacrifices in the line of their duty. Since the establishment of the Department to the beginning of 2<sup>nd</sup> World War forty-two policemen laid their lives while on duty. Amongst these forty-two, twenty-three were Pakistanis/Indians, nine were Chinese, seven were British, and one was unspecified. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 109 & 113)

Initially the British officers themselves would go to Punjab and advertise the recruitment for Hong Kong police. There were no hard and fast rules for recruitment on the basis of age as in those days no body kept the records of their dates of birth. So many underage boys would tell their age much older than their usual age and get recruited. After recruitment they would usually travel to Calcutta and then after one month sea journey would reach Hong Kong. After arrival in

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Hong Kong they were used to be put at the Police headquarters in the Central Police Station on Hollywood Road. At the police headquarters the Muslims were provided a space to use as mosque while the Sikhs were provided a place to use as *gurdwara* (temple). (K. M. Malik, Interview 2013).

Later the recruitment policy was little bit changed and the serving Punjabi Pakistani/Indian policemen were required to recruit more men while coming back from their leave in Pak-India sub-continent. The standard rule was that after 05 years a policeman could go on eight month leave, while returning to rejoin the police force he would recruit and bring more people to Hong Kong. According to one source of Anita W. Weis, in 1941 there were around 800 Punjabi policemen in Hong Kong. Anita argues that word Punjabi was used for both Muslim and Sikh Punjabis and normally they were in equal numbers in the force. During the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong the policemen did not receive their regular salaries but were provided food, shelter and occasionally small sums of money by the Japanese. During the occupation the Muslim police stations were as following: Mong Kok, Hung Hom, Kowloon City, Western, and The Peak; Central remained half Sikh and half Muslims. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 431-32).

The Japanese Occupation of Hong Kong during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War had put the Pakistani/Indian policemen in dilemma as their loyalties were doubted by the British after the War. When the War was over the British started investigation of the Pakistani/Indian policemen for their behavior during the war. According to Mike Wallace, of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force, the records of all Pakistani/Indian policemen were reviewed and they were graded as black, white or grey. Those who were declared black that meant they were not loyal and they were immediately sent back home. Those who were declared white were considered loyal and were allowed to continue their service. Those declared grey were investigated for their cooperation with the Japanese during the occupation. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 113-114)

After the creation of Pakistan in 1951 the Government of Hong Kong sent a request to the Government of Pakistan for the recruitment of Policemen from Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan agreed but put two conditions for the recruitment: One, that the salaries of the policemen should be raised; and two, that either the Muslims or Sikhs should remain in the police force but not both groups together. The Government of Hong Kong sent back all Sikhs to India in 1951, which paved the way for the recruitment of first Pakistani policemen batch after

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the creation of Pakistan in 1951. In the first batch 150 men mostly Punjabis and Pakhtuns were brought to the colony in 1952. The recruitment of Pakistanis continued for another ten years but in 1961 the final batch consisting upon 46 men proved to be the last contingent from Pakistan. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 434 & K. M. Malik, Interview 2013).

Initially Pakistani policemen performed the regular duties but after few years they were totally reserved for emergency services of the police department after the establishment of Emergency Unit (EU), which was basically a riot control force. There were two sections of the EU, one in Kowloon and the other in Fanling and both were exclusively manned by Pakistani policemen until 1964. However, the said year all the Pakistani EU personals were shifted to Fanling and Kowloon EU was manned by local Chinese. (M. Munir Khan, Zulfiqar Hussain alias Danny & Abdul Zahir, Interview 2013).

October 1967 was the turning point in the life of Pakistani Emergency Unit. In 1967 riots had broken out in the colony and the British government in Hong Kong called the Pakistani Emergency Unit to restore calm. Three Pakistani policemen were injured at Sham Shui Po before they were called to Tsuen Wan along with Gurkhas to control the law and order situation with clear instructions not to fire on the mobs. However, the Emergency Unit used automatic machine guns on the rioters, which killed many of them. Two Pakistani policemen were also seriously injured. The press severely criticized the Pakistani Emergency Unit for excessive use of force and brutality. Later two Pakistani policemen were killed by the Chinese border police at Sha Tau Kok, which compelled the Pakistani Consul General in Hong Kong to complain to the Chinese government to stop killing Pakistanis. The Chinese government responded by saying that they had killed only the Europeans as the Pakistani policemen were serving the British Government. (K. M. Malik, Interview 2013).

After the October 1967 riots the Fanling Pakistani Emergency Unit was essentially immobilized before it was finally disbanded in 1970. After that the unit was divided into small unit and stationed at different locations. In 1987 there were around 50 Pakistani police men left in the Hong Kong Police services, (Anita M. Weiss: 435). while at the writing of this paper the only known police man from Pakistan is Muhammad Munir Khan, who is Senior Police Inspector, at Tsim Sha Tsui Police station. Besides him recently a Pakistani girl born in Hong Kong has joined the police force. (M. Munir Khan *et al*, Interview 2013).

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For many years the Pakistanis/Indians were served their native food in all Pakistani/Indian mess but in the 1970s the separate mess for Pakistanis/Indians were abolished and they were integrated into the Chinese mess in order to avoid the allegations of preferential treatment to the Pakistanis/Indians. (Liaquat Ali, Interview 2013)

The Pakistanis were so an important part of the Police Department of Hong Kong that at their Fanling camp where around 200 Pakistani policemen were living along with their families, Mr. Brian Welch, a senior welfare officer founded a Pakistani school in 1965 within the camp premises so that Pakistani children can learn in their own languages in a Pakistani cultural environment. Initially the school started with thirty-five students with a single class and a Pakistani female principal Zakia Sultana. With the passage of time the number of students increased many folds. The medium of instructions in the school was Urdu and subjects like science, history, geography, religious study, and general knowledge were taught. English was taught as a second language. Cantonese was taught for speaking purposes so that the children have no problem in communicating with the local communities. The school was later upgraded upto class VI. (Barbara-Sue White, 216 & M. Munir Khan *et al*, Interview 2013)

### **Prison Department:**

The Pakistanis have also played an important role in the Hong Kong Prison Department. The recruitment policy of the prison guards was the same as of police force. They worked as guards and the first batch was brought in 1880 to work in the Victoria Prison. “The Stanley Prison, built in 1935, eventually came to be closely identified with the Muslim prison guard community; out of a total 500 personnel there when it opened; some 200 Muslims (plus 100 Sikhs) were working there.” The Muslim guards were so important to Stanley Prison that they were provided a land where they constructed mosque for their prayers while the same was denied to the Sikhs for the construction of their gurdwara (the Sikhs temple), for their own prayers. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 432-33).

During the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong the guards did not leave Hong Kong and they were not encouraged as well by the Japanese to join INA rather they were allowed to continue their duties as prison guards. In this changed situation these guards were now keeping a watch on their former masters, however, during these difficult days of the British prisoners, the guards



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took good care of them which were later recognized by the British after the end of war. After the war they were paid their salaries and were allowed to continue their services. (M. Munir Khan *et al*, Interview 2013).

The guards in the prison service were given long leave between 1945 and 1950 on rotation basis and used to go back to the Pak=Indian sub-continent. Very few amongst them did not return back and took early retirement. The new prison guards were recruited on local terms instead of expatriate terms as was the practice earlier because many Macanese and Chinese were being hired. Though the salaries were equivalent to those hired overseas, they were not paid return journey ticket while going homes on long leave. The number of Pakistani in 1957 who were hired on local terms were fifty five (55), while those who had been hired earlier on expatriate terms were 100. The last Pakistani expatriate prison official retired in 1974. Almost all the Pakistani prison guards returned home after retirement. Later the number of Pakistanis decreased dramatically and those who were hired were not even fully Pakistanis rather most of them were local boys who though called themselves Pakistanis, they could not speak Urdu or Punjabi. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 433).

The prison guards were allowed to bring their families to live with them in the family quarters. It seems due to this reason few married the local Chinese girls though there were no official restriction on intermarriages. The children of the prison guards used to study at the Sir Ellis Kadoorie School, where they were commuted by a bus provided by the government of Hong Kong. In spite of facilities provided hardly few continued their studies into higher degrees. (K. M. Malik, Interview 2013).

Between 1950s and 1960s the Kowloon mosque became the Centre of religious and social activities for the Pakistani prison staff. There they could see the dockyard police as well as many Pakistani watchmen who increasingly were entering Hong Kong. The Stanley mosque which was earlier the center of religious and social activities for the prison guards was visited lesser and lesser as the number of Pakistani guards dwindled after the 60s.(Anita M. Weiss: 436 & Mufti Arshad, Interview 2013).

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### **Security guards and watchmen:**

After the police and prison services became scarcer and scarcer Pakistanis found new avenues in the security field. More and more Pakistanis became security guards and watchmen at local firms. Actually this field was not new for Pakistanis as earlier they used to do these jobs in China and Vietnam but after 1949 revolution in China Pakistanis moved out of China and found new opportunities in Hong Kong. From Vietnam the Pakistanis moved out after the break out of war between the Vietnamese and French forces. They also moved into Hong Kong as entering into Hong Kong before July 1969 was very easy. Besides the new arrivals some old Pakistanis also joined these jobs, these were those Pakistanis who retired from the prison or police services but were married to local Chinese women. They stayed on and to augment their meagre pensions started working as security guards or watchmen. The local Chinese were very eager to employ the Pakistanis as security guards and watchmen and used to contact local Pakistani leaders for such people. Anita M. Weiss explaining the reasons for such preference to the Pakistanis believe that there were two reasons for it. First, many Pakistanis had served in the Hong Kong Police and had earned respect amongst the local Chinese – that respect also had translated into fear which became a quality for these Pakistani watchmen. Second, since there were still many Pakistanis in the Police service, the Chinese believed that in case of any problem the policemen would readily help their kinsmen and countrymen. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 436 & Qari Muhammad Tayyab Qasmi, interview 2013). Justice Kemal Bukhari believes that since majority of security guards and watchmen were Pakistanis the Chinese always looked for such people for recruitment as they believed that in case of any trouble all these watchmen will help each other. (Justice Kemal Bukhari, Interview 2013).

The security guards salary package and other perks were better than the watchmen as the later earned less but normally these watchmen were farmworkers or recruits back home in Pakistan and earned very little there. They also had not prospects to prosper as mostly they were illiterate and unskilled but they had seen their fellow countrymen who were working in Hong Kong earning much more than them. Thus they were attracted to Hong Kong; usually they would either sell their property or borrow money to arrange for their plane ticket or travel in frigates. These men would generally travel alone without their families. Occasionally they would bring their families once the children were school going. Very few married the Chinese local girls (after

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they converted) most preferring to marry when go back to Pakistan. Explaining the reasons for such matrimonial alliances Anita M. Weiss writes,

“To understand the reasons behind such marriage patterns, the social fabric of working class Pakistani life must be taken into consideration: these men are living workaholic lives in close living quarters in Hong Kong so as to enrich their families back home. Given such filial orientations, they would not be expected then to defy tradition and marry outside of their family’s wishes, nor would many of them want their wives to mix in Hong Kong’s culture. Most watchmen do return to Pakistan when they retire, or earlier if they can. In a group of young watchmen one day, none of them could recall any instance of any friends marrying in Hong Kong (though they do date Chinese and Philippina women), but they had heard that when it happens the woman converts and there is no celebration function. A young man asserted that most Pakistanis also do not want to marry Chinese or Philippina women because ‘they will wear a skirt or dress after marriage, and nobody likes their wife to dress like that’ ....” (1991: 437).

According to an estimate circa 1991 there were around 7,000 to 9,000 Pakistani watchmen in Hong Kong. They were a good source of income for their Pakistani families back home. Almost every factory in Hong Kong had Pakistani watchmen. They were mostly conversant in Cantonese along with their own language which was either Pashto or Punjabi. Mostly also knew Urdu and few knew a little bit English. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 437). Most of these watchmen were single while their wives and children lived in Pakistan. Generally many of them also had two jobs thus remained on duty almost 24 hours. The factories normally provided them dormitory style accommodation as well where they shared room and kitchen. Cooking was done either by themselves or by hiring a cook who was responsible for cooking. (Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Interview 2013). In the 1960s and 1970s in Heng Seng Bank majority of watchmen were Pakistani origin as these watchmen used their network to employ more kinsmen if ever a new vacancy was available. (Justice Kemal Bukhari, Interview 2013). But this clan and family network to find jobs was not restricted to Hang Seng Bank, it was used to find jobs in different areas particularly in seeking low paid jobs. (Pakistan Labor Families Network, Untitled Document N.D.).

Those watchmen whose children were born in Hong Kong used to send their children to Sir Ellis Kadoorie School as it was free and was historically reserved for non-Chinese students. Others,

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whose children were in Pakistan, they would bring their sons when they would reach age 10, put them in a private school for a year and then shift to Sir Ellis Kadoorie School. These children used to study up to form V, when they will go out to look for a work as messenger boys or night watchmen; mostly working to become security guards later. Some of them also became Civil Servant as their knowledge of English was better than the local Chinese. (Ghulam Mustafa, Interview 2013)

In the labour job market Pakistanis usually get jobs through kinship or friends' network and they get jobs quite easily. It is evident from a Pakistani young man story who changed in couple of years many jobs without any difficulty. Amongst the Pakistanis women are mostly housewives and they do not work outside their homes. (Pakistan Labor Families Network, Untitled Document, N.D.).

Over a period of time though some of the Pakistanis have reached the highest positions in the job market, overwhelming majority is still working as elementary workers, the lowest category of work in Hong Kong census. According to 2007 Census and Statistical Department report 31.1 per cent Pakistanis are working as elementary workers, which include street vendors, security guards and watchmen, freight handlers, construction labourers and hand packers while only 16 per cent of Pakistanis work on the higher positions like managers and administrators. According to the same report the median income of Pakistanis across gender is HK \$ 10,000 as compared to Indians which is HK\$17,500. Further analysis shows that the unemployment rate of Pakistanis is highest amongst the South Asians which stands at 20.9 per cent as compared to Nepalese and Indians which is 16.0 per cent and 11.4 per cent. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree and Hung Wong 2012: 4-5)

### **Early mode of Livings: *Deras*/Dormitory:**

The early Indians and other Muslims in Hong Kong lived in the dormitories which were the modern alternative of *deras*. These *deras* were located "...on Lower Lascasr Row, near the water line by Wyndham Street and Hollywood Road (substantial distance from where is now in Central on Hong Kong island)". (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 420). Due to the Indian and Malay Muslims settlement over there the area became to be known as 'Moro Kai', which means 'streets of the

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people of the Moro.’ The evidence can be still found in spite of the fact that many streets and areas names have been Sinicized, for example, San Ka Road. (S.J.Raghbi, Interview 2013).

The Pakistani men who did not have families in Hong Kong lived jointly with each other in *Deras*. *Dera* in Pakistani rural areas is actually a guest house attached to the house or nearby the house used for receiving guests or an unrelated person thus keeping the *pardah* of the household women. In Hong Kong *dera* is that place where a group of people mostly belonging to the same areas in Pakistan would rent a place and live together. Generally the men in a *dera* were more than the place available for sleeping because most of these men worked at least 12 hours shift (some even 24 hours), thus at any given time all the members were not present in the *dera*. Thus the same bed was used for sleeping by many people at different timings. The *dera* vicinity was out of bound for females. The cooking was mostly done jointly sharing the expenses. (Ghulam Mustafa, Interview 2013).

According to some sources the first *dera* in Hong Kong was known as “119” located on Lockhart road in Wanchai. It was so popular and well known that almost all Hong Kong taxi drivers knew its location. A new arrival from Pakistan just needed to tell the taxi driver to take him to “119” and he used to take the man to the *dera* without any difficulty. Sometimes even there was no need to tell the taxi driver, he by himself would assume that the new arrival wanted to go to “119” and was taken there. When this *dera* started is unknown but certainly existed by 1960. Another *dera* of fame was known as “New Lucky House” located at the corner of Jordan Road and Nathan Road in Kowloon. In the 1960s and 1970s there were many *deras* located in Wanchai, Causeway Bay, San Po Kung and Tsuen Wan. The *deras* were selected by the men according to the location of their job as they wanted the *deras* nearer to their job location. Another preference was vicinity to the prayers house, from the aforementioned places Wanchai and Kowloon mosque could be easily accessed through MTR and for Friday prayers they could make special arrangements by taking long lunch breaks. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 438-39).

In the fifties and sixties a *dera* was rented by a group of 10 to 12 men to start with. New members were admitted to the *dera* only if all existing members agreed. The members who would bring their family to Hong Kong would physically leave the *dera* but would keep his membership and share the rent, though not sharing expenses of food. Any man kicked out of a *dera* for some reason; either for not sharing work or his immoral activities, was not accepted by

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other *deras* as well. The organization of a *dera* was such that they would pool the money to share the expenses of rent, cooking and cleaning. Flour for bread (*chapatti* or *paratha*), milk, sugar and tea were shared by all members, while other food expenses were shared by smaller groups. The *dera* in Wanchai and surrounding areas used to have a monthly account for *Halal* meat with Muslim butchers at Bowrington Market. Cooking responsibilities were shared by the *dera* mates. These *deras* people used to eat their Friday lunch at Ammar mosque at Wanchai. These *deras* were used not only for living but also as a communal organization, where they entertained their guests, used it for social gatherings and communal help in case of emergency particularly in case of death. Though generally these people did not have any social life as they worked almost round the clock, sometimes they would arrange a joint meal and watch movies on the *dera* VCR. The young people would also go out to eat meal together and play cricket and hockey. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 439, Raja Chacha, Interview 2013 & Liaquat Khan, Interview 2013).

### **Pakistani/Indian Residential Areas:**

Since 1911 Census Reports the residential pattern of different communities/nationalities is recorded. "At that time, most of the 1,511 Indians (Pakistanis included as well) in Hong Kong lived on Hong Kong Island, with only 401 in Kowloon, 95 in the New Territories, and a few on Stonecutters Island." (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 37)

By 1931 the Pakistani/Indian population in Hong Kong doubled. The pattern of their residential settlements was as following: 46 per cent in Kowloon, 44 per cent on Hong Kong Island, 7 per cent in the New Territories and 3 per cent were categorized as afloat. This last category probably included the moving peddler who would go to the ships anchored in the harbor to sell their merchandise or those Pakistanis/Indians who had married Chinese women and were living with them in the boathouses. In the Hong Kong Island almost all lived either in Victoria or Central except 23 Pakistanis/Indians consisted upon 6 families who lived on the Peak and 106 people lived in other parts of the Island. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 37-38)

By 1941 further changes were recorded in the Pakistani/Indian populations' settlements. By then the afloat category evaporated and now the majority of Pakistanis/Indians were living in Kowloon. The breakup of these settlements was as following: 55 per cent Kowloon, 45 per cent

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Hong Kong Island, which shows none listed elsewhere. Further breakup of the settlements in those two areas was as following: More than a thousand in Happy Valley, 500 at Stanley, 435 in Central District, 385 in Quarry Bay, 326 in Bay View, 253 in Mid-levels and the Peak, and 220 in Western District. “At the same time, on the eve of World War II, Indians (Pakistanis included as well) in Kowloon included 2,350 in Tsim Sha Tsui and 1,171 in Sham Shui Po. Small groups elsewhere numbered 281 Indians in Yau Ma Tei, 87 in Mong Kok, 84 in Kowloon City, and 64 in Hung Hom. There were almost 4,000 Indian (Pakistanis included) military personnel stationed in the New Territories who were to become of immense importance to Hong Kong as the threat of a Japanese invasion increased. The names of hundreds of the South Asian men who died in the battle for Hong Kong are inscribed at Sai Wan War Cemetery on Hong Kong Island’. (Barbara-Sue White 1994, 38)

According to Ahmad Balal, Consul General of Pakistan in Hong Kong in 2013 there were around 35, 000 Pakistanis living in Hong Kong. Though almost all areas of Pakistan have their representation in Hong Kong, majority of them belong to the areas falling between Rivers Indus and Chenab mainly from the areas located on both sides of the Grand Trunk (GT) road. Amongst them around 70 per cent are from Attock and adjoining areas. (Interview 2013)

### **Social Life of Pakistanis/Indians:**

In the early days of their arrival most of the Pakistanis/Indians were mainly male who came to the colony to work and earn money and support their families back home. The overwhelming numbers of men were not accompanied with their wives who remained within their country to look after the extended family as well as the children. The children were also not brought because the parents wanted to give proper religious and cultural education to children in India/Pakistan. When the new workers would arrive from India/Pakistan, they would either live with the family of elder relative or with him in the all-male dormitory. This was also a good social check on the young people as they were guarded in this manner from the raucous society of Hong Kong. (Nazeer Hussain, Interview 2013)

The Pakistani/Indian soldiers in the British army posted in Hong Kong worked totally as expatriates having no social life like others who came as seamen and traders. While the children

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of seamen and traders attended local schools and learnt Cantonese, the Pakistani/Indian soldiers in the army never learnt Cantonese. Further there is no record available showing that these soldiers have ever married the local Chinese girls rather after the completion of their stay in Hong Kong they normally repatriated to the Pak-India sub-continent. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 427).

Like the soldiers in the military, the policemen were also not allowed to marry the local Chinese women. One such case was discovered in which the policeman has secretly married a local Chinese woman, when the case was discovered he was promptly dismissed. These restrictions were relaxed during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong and many Muslim policemen married the local Chinese girls. During the occupation the Chinese parents, who were earlier reluctant to agree to such marriages, also readily agreed to such marriages. Both sides had incentives in such kind of marriages, while for Chinese the incentive was better access to food and other necessities as the policemen had better access to such items. For policemen the incentive was that by marrying a local Chinese girl they were exempted from joining the Indian National Army, which the Japanese were forcing all the Indians to join and fight the British in India. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 431-432).

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War most of the families of traders and seamen migrated to Macau where they usually received small subsidy from the British Consul there. Those police officers who left Hong Kong, few went to Macau rather many migrated to China for refuge. Some of the police men, around 100, also joined Indian National Army, or migrated out of Hong Kong. These later two categories did not receive any salary or pension after the end of the War from the Government of Hong Kong. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 432).

In the early phase of Punjabi Muslims recruitment to Hong Kong Police, some police stations were known as “Muslim Police Stations” and had the family accommodations. The policemen posted there were allowed to bring their families after some years of service. The different police stations with varied facilities were as following:

*“No Family quarters:* Hung Hom; Ping Shan; Shau Tau Kok; Pok-fulam; The Peak.

*Facilities for 5-6 families:* Tsim Shah Tsui; Castle Peak; Au Tau; Western; Central (housed both Muslims and Sikhs; family quarters in Wanchai).



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*Facilities for 10 families; Kowloon City.*” (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 431).

*Fanling*: more than 200 families all Pakistanis. (Munir Khan *et al*, Interview 2013. Though Fanling was having accommodation for more families that colony for Pakistani policemen was established much later).

The earlier Muslim policemen mostly lived in the neighborhood of Shelly Street mosque till the Great War. They ate lot of fish and chicken, the later were slaughtered as per Islamic practice called *Zebah* in their homes but meat was not available. On some occasions a Muslim Chinese butcher would come from Kennedy Town to Central Police Station to slaughter goats for the Muslims. These public slaughters according to the Islamic principles were disregarded by the British officers. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 431 & K.M. Malik, Interview 2013).

The Pakistani/Indian Muslims who came to Hong Kong as contractors, tailors, and provision store owners have left a deeper impact on the identity of the Muslims of Hong Kong hailing from the Pak-India sub-continent. One trade mark of the community was tailoring business, in which they flourished tremendously while serving the British troops and gentry. Amongst scores of such businessmen the one who received accolades and appreciations of the British was Haji Ahmad Din & Sons (C.A. Ghafoor & Brothers since 1958). Haji Ahamd Din started business with the Wiltshire Regiment in 1882 in Rawalpindi as master cutter and even accompanied them to Singapore and Shanghai in 1910 & 1929 respectively. He moved to Hong Kong in 1950 along with the Wiltshire Regiment but when the regiment was moved out of Hong Kong in 1953, they received an appreciation letter from the commander of the regiment. The Certificate of Service given by the commander recognized the “long and loyal service as contractors and tailors” from 1882 to 1953 in British India, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Alexandria.(M. Munir Khan *et al*, Interview 2013 & Anita M. Weiss: 427-28).

Chung King Mansions and Mirador Mansions on the Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, are the two important locations having the imprint of Pakistani/Indian Muslims heritage. The traders who served the Indian in the British regiment were mostly located in these two buildings. Even today both buildings are known for South Asian businesses more particularly the Chung King Mansions, where many Pakistani businesses can be found. Even the names of many such businesses are after the well-known place of Pakistan, e.g. one restaurant is known as Khyber

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Mess after the world wide known Khyber Pass which is located on the north-western frontiers of Pakistan connecting it with Afghanistan and Central Asia.( Asad Khan, Interview 2013 & Anita M. Weiss 1991: 428).

With the passage of time the social life of some Pakistanis have also changed in Hong Kong; as now, there are many professionals working in the city. These highly qualified and professional people are liberal middle class who socialize with not only Pakistani families but also Indian families who are their colleagues in different organizations. Another aspect of the Pakistanis in Hong Kong is their liberal and tolerant attitude towards different sects of Islam and other religious groups. They, in no sense, are religiously fanatics. (Capt. Shahzada Saleem Ahmed, Interview 2013)

### ***Bazm-e- Sukhn Hong Kong:***

The Pakistani literary enthusiasts in Hong Kong have organized themselves in a literary organization called *Bazm-e-Sukhn*, Hong Kong. Though earlier there was no formal literary organization, the local poets, off and on, would find an opportunity where they would recite their poetry. In the 1970s the local poets used to recite their poetry in the functions mainly organized by Pakistan Association, Hong Kong. The then Consul General of Pakistan, Mr. Amanullah Zafar (1973-1975) fully supported and patronized these activities. However, for long these activities continued in an unorganized manner. The first organized *musha'era* (literary sitting) was held at Green Palace Hotel, Mirador Mansion, Hong Kong under the presidentship of Consul General of Pakistan, Sikandar Ali Keeriyo (1992-1996), in which besides the local poets a young poet from London, Mr. Anjum Shahzad Anjum also participated. Later with the arrival of Abid Ali Baig these literary activities got a boost. With the arrival of Ghulam Mustafa Anjum in the Consulate General of Pakistan these activities further organized and strengthened, which finally resulted in a formal meeting on 29 August 2004 and the *Bazm-e-Sukhn* organization was founded. Since then the organization is regularly holding local poets' *musha'era* once in a month and also invites and sponsors a reputable poet from Pakistan once in a year for their annual special *musha'era*. (Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Written Speech 2013)

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## **Pakistanis in Sports:**

The Pakistani Community in Hong Kong have been actively participating in the sports activities, however, the Pakistanis dominance is particularly visible in Hockey and Cricket. Pakistanis have been participating in four hockey teams, which are:

1. Indian Recreation Club;
2. Pakistan Association;
3. Correctional Services Sports Association; and
4. Shaheen Hockey Club.

These teams are consisted upon locally (Hong Kong) born Pakistanis and foreign (Pakistan) born Pakistanis. The former though are born in Hong Kong, they recognize themselves more as Pakistanis. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 447)

Before the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War Queens College has played a unifying role for the Pakistani/Indian community. “The first Muslim student (No. 334) was Abdullah Curreem in the late 1860s. By 1870, the school consisted of five English, two Portuguese, two Japanese and ‘fourteen Indian boys....in 1898, The Queen’s Eleven Cricket team, captained by Dawood Rumjahn, consisted of eight Indians, two Portuguese, and one Jewish boy. The school’s history states that ‘the large Moslem contingent had its own athletic club’ by 1900. The boys organized themselves into the Islamic Athletic Club, which enabled other Muslim boys outside of Queen’s College (especially from St. Joseph’s College) to compete in athletic events with them.” (Anita M. Wiess 1991: 446)

In 1919 some Indian Muslim enthusiasts of Cricket, football and lawn tennis who were involved in Muslim Recreation Club opened the Indian Recreation Club in Sookunpo, just opposite to Sir Ellis Kadoorie School. The Clubhouse which is built on the Indian style architecture was constructed in 1931. During the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong they had converted it into a firewood place, later it was reconstructed in late 1940s. (Anita M. Wiess 1991: 447)

Another sport in which Pakistanis dominate and excel is cricket. They have been dominating even the official Hong Kong Cricket club and there are many Pakistanis who have captained the cricket club. The team in itself is also consisted upon majority of Pakistanis. (Imran Idrees, Interview 2013)

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There is one Pakistani cricketer, Imran Idrees, who came to Hong Kong as a coach to a local cricket club and later opened his own cricket coaching academy known as Imran Cricket Academy. He has also established his own cricket club by the name of United Cricket Club, Hong Kong. He coaches young boys in Hong Kong irrespective of their national or racial background and charges no fee rather he provides them uniform and other cricket equipment free of charge. He has also established his own cricket club by the name of United Cricket Club. Due to his enormous interest in cricket and sports he has established his own sports business at Hennessy road, Hong Kong. (Imran Idrees, Interview 2013),

### **Muslims' Religious Life in Hong Kong:**

The Hong Kong Muslim community is quite diverse in nature, however, in spite of its diversity the good aspect of their religious life is that they are overwhelmingly non-sectarian and followers of different sects can be seen intermingling with each other quite easily in religious functions. This is clear from the non-sectarian nature of main Islamic organization known as “The Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong”, which is the guardian of 5 mosques out of six and all the Muslim graveyards in Hong Kong. (Amirali Bakerali Nasir, Interview 2013). Though majority of the Muslims in Hong Kong are Indonesians per se, however, since almost over 95 per cent of them are working as female maids (domestic helpers) their role in the Muslim community is negligible. The other dominant group(s) are Pakistanis and Chinese Muslims who are almost equally numbered (around 25 to 35 thousand) but the Chinese Muslims have, over a period of time, become more Sinicized. Thus the Pakistani Muslims have become dominant in the overall religious life of Muslims in Hong Kong. This is also obvious from the fact that many Muslim organizations, *madrasahs* and mosques are under the control of Pakistanis. (Mufti Arshad, Interview 2013)

Amongst host of organizations which are either founded by Pakistanis or they are playing the dominant role in those are Madani Mashawrat Dawat-e- Islami, Hong Kong, Minhaj-ul-Quran Organization, Hong Kong, Khatme Nubuwwat Islamic Council Limited, Hong Kong, Hong Kong Shia Asna-i-Ashari Association Limited, Hong Kong. These organizations are involved in host of religious activities like organizing regular five times daily prayers, *Eidain* prayers,

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special functions on religious days like *Eid Milad un Nabi*, organizing *Taraveeh* in *Ramadhan* (the fasting month), the Shia organization also regularly organizes Muharram and other days *majalis (matam)*. Besides these functions these organizations also make special arrangements for *Holy Quran* learning both reading and learning by heart (rote learning). There are about 25 such *Madrassahs* (religious schools) for children where they are not only taught Quran reading but also given basic knowledge about Islam. (Qari M. Tayaib Qasmi, Interview 2013 & Maulana Syed Hassan Imam, Interview 2013)

### **Mosques:**

#### **Shelley Mosque:**

The Muslims including Pakistanis/Indians and Malay held their first congregational prayer (*Namaz Ba'a jamma'at*) at an open area at Lower Lascar Row for some time. In those days the non-Muslims were very respectful of the Muslims' religious sensitivities and they never passed through the Muslims' area when the prayers were being held and they were holding pork. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 420).

Around 1844 for the first time the Muslims in Hong Kong applied for a piece of land for the construction of a mosque to the Government of Hong Kong. The Government allotted them on 3 December 1850 on a 999 years lease a plot called Inland Lot No. 268. This was the highest land point within the developing land of the Island. With the passage of time as the numbers of Muslims increased they started constructing a structure for their gatherings and their regular five times worshipping every day. According to the map drawn by Gordon, one British official who was posted in Hong Kong in 1843, one square structure existed within the mosque area which looked like a primitive structure of the mosque. Later they were able to build the first proper mosque at the present site of Jamia Mosque aka Shelly mosque in 1849, which can be seen in the map of the city of Victoria in 1850 at the same site where it stands today. However, there are other accounts which mention the date of construction of the mosque differently, for example while the Antiquities and Monuments office of Hong Kong mentions the date of construction of the mosque as 1849, the Government Information Service published a report about Jamia mosque in 1968 and recorded that the mosque was constructed in 1880. (Ng Yat Fai 2007: 4, 9, 11 & Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 1)

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Besides prayers the mosque was used for another important function as well which was the provision of accommodation to Muslim travelers. The founders of the mosque constructed two travelers' lodges (*Musffir Khana*) with the mosque with the intention to accommodate Muslim travelers passing through Hong Kong. In those days the Muslims in the region were using Hong Kong as a transit while going to pilgrimage (*Haj*) to Mecca, so these lodges were constructed to provide them accommodation. For long these were used by the pilgrims on their way to Mecca until the modern airplanes came into use. (Ng Yat Fai 2007: 4)

This accommodation was also given to those poor Muslims who came to Hong Kong in search of jobs. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War even the Muslim women and children were allowed to stay in the lodges. Currently there are many such families who have been living there for more than 30 years and they have established their own social network. (Ng Yat Fai 2007: 4-5)

The present structure of the mosque was the result of a generous donation by a rich businessman from Bombay, H.M.H. Essack Elias. The reconstruction of the mosque was inaugurated by Nakoda Suliman Curimmohamed on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1915. The reconstructed mosque is around 70 feet long, 40 feet wide and 20 feet high with a portico and minaret above that. The rebuilt mosque was now bigger than the previous one and could accommodate about 400 people. (Ng Yat Fai 2007: 18-19 & Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 1)

Syed Muhammad Noor Shah from Rawalpindi, Pakistan, was the first Imam of the mosque who served the mosque for a long time and finally returned to Pakistan after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. He died in Rawalpindi at the age of 86 in 1980. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 425).

### **Kowloon Mosque:**

Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani, Chairman, Kowloon Mosque Reconstruction Committee in his booklet on the mosque titled *Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre, Kowloon, Hong Kong*, 2012 writes that "On May 7, 1892 'Mohammadans of Upper India (Khattaks & Yusufzais tribes and men from Jhelum, Shahpur, Rawalpindi, Hazara and Gujrat arrived in Kowloon to serve in the Hong Kong Regiment of the British Army.'" (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 3)

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Since they were accommodated in Whitfield Barracks within the Kowloon Park, they had started praying at a makeshift place within the park. Later Colonel E.G. Barrow granted them a piece of land for proper mosque which they constructed with their own donations in 1896. Along with the mosque they also constructed an ablution pond, the Imam quarter and a *Musfir Khana* (guest house) for the Muslim travelers. The original marble foundation stone is still preserved in the Kowloon mosque and it mentions Maulvi Gulab Shah as its first Imam. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 3 & 6)

The writings on the foundation stone are in Persian which are translated in English as following:

“THE HONG KONG REGT. BUILT THIS MOSQUE IN  
1896 UNDER THE KIND SUPERVISION OF COL. E.G. BARROW  
AND  
REPAIRED AND REPAINTED BY THE HELP AND PERMISSION OF MAJOR BERGER  
IN 1902

---

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

Praise be to Him who is the Creator and Allah

Every person is a witness to it

It was E.G. Barrow who authorized

The construction of this place of worship

It became a reality in 1896

Of the Christian calendar

The beautiful Masjid was constructed

Exclusively with the money from Muslim soldiers

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Double M showed the way

Maulvi Gulab Shah was the Imam

It was the year 1902

Twenty second of January was the date (when)

The Hong Kong Regiment Masjid was

Renovated by Mir Asadullah

We thank Allah for the repairs and

Pray that He protects it from destruction. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 3)

The Kowloon mosque was initially managed and run by the Muslim soldiers of the Hong Kong Regiment but when Pakistan came into being on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1947, the Muslim soldiers left for Pakistan and the management of the mosque was assumed by Pakistan Society/Association.

After some time this responsibility was given by the Hong Kong government to the “Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong”, which is still running its affairs. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 6)

Though the mosque was run by the Muslims the land was not deeded to them upto 1972. It was only in this year that government of Hong Kong leased 16,000 sq feet of plot for 77 years to the Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong. In the early 1970s it was felt that the dilapidated conditions of the mosque, Imam quarters and guest house needed repair. Further with the passage of time the prayer area became insufficient to accommodate the growing number of Muslims. However, the government was not granting permission for its repairs. It became possible only when Tsim Sha Tsu station of the Mass Transit Railway (MTR) station was initiated that damaged the building beyond repair which made the reconstruction inevitable. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 6)



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For the damage which was caused by the MTR construction work the Mosque committee submitted a claim for HK\$1.5 million, however, the MTR corporation finally paid HK\$66,000 in June 1980. The Board of Trustees did not go for litigation as that would have cost them lot of money. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 7)

In May 1977 the Board of Trustees appointed an Ad Hoc committee with Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani as Chairman for the reconstruction of the mosque. After protracted correspondence with the government of Hong Kong finally the government granted permission for the construction of the Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre on 13 October 1978 and the construction work on the mosque started on 6 March 1981. In order to complete the mosque and Islamic Center in a befitting manner donations were requested from the Muslim community within and outside of Hong Kong. The bank account for donations was opened with the National Bank of Pakistan, Hong Kong. The Muslim community donated generously and collected upto August 1987 (this shows that donations continued even after the completion of the project) a total of HK \$ 24,724,652.40. Out of which a total expenditure of HK\$24.396.734.04 was incurred on the project leaving a surplus of HK\$327,918.36 in the hands of the Committee. The project was completed in 1984 and was opened for regular prayers on Friday, 11 May 1984. (Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani 2012: 16-68)

### **Happy Valley Mosque:**

Happy Valley Mosque was constructed in late 19<sup>th</sup> century after the government of Hong Kong provided the land for the Muslims' cemetery there. Initially it was a small mosque especially for *janaza* (funeral) prayers. As the population of Muslims increased on the Hong Kong Island, the mosque was used more frequently by those Muslims who were living nearby. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War the mosque was reconstructed and expanded, which continued to be used until December 1978 when the government of Hong Kong resumed it for the construction of Aberdeen tunnel approach road. The government as a compensation provided another plot to the Muslims on Oi Kwan road, Wanchai along with an amount of HK\$2.5 million. (H.K. Rahmani, *Hong Kong Standard*, December 4, 1984: 10-11)

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### **Masjid Ammar and Osman Ramju Sadick Islamic Centre:**

The Muslim community decided to make maximum use of the plot and the money, which had been given to them as compensation to the Happy Valley Mosque acquisition by the Government of Hong Kong. Thus an eight story building was constructed on the site. The Ammar Mosque is part of the larger complex of the Osman Ramju Sadick Islamic Centre. The Centre was rightly given the name of Osman Ramju Sadick, a local Muslim business man, who endowed large sum of money for the purpose. Masjid Ammar is run by the Islamic Union of Hong Kong and is a reflection of the melding of Pakistani and Chinese culture. It seems that as the intermarriages increased between the Chinese and Pakistanis, the local boys importance and influence also increased. It is also to be pointed out that with the passage of time and particularly after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War the local boys' community became the back bone of both the Islamic Union and Muslim Ummah in Hong Kong. The Islamic Union has around 700 members which mostly sounds like Pakistanis, however, 'a group photo would invariably look mostly Chinese'. Amongst the local boys most would recognize themselves as Pakistanis but some would not consider themselves as part of any single ethnic background. They consider themselves as part of a religious community rather than ethnic. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 443).

The Islamic Union of Hong Kong organizes lunch every Friday at Masjid Ammar after Jumma Prayers. The menu of the lunch is also evident of the Pakistani culture, which includes potato and chicken curry. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 443).

### **Cape Collinson Mosque:**

The Muslim Cemetery of Ho Man Tin in Kowloon Peninsula was taken over by the government of Hong Kong in 1963 and as compensation the Muslims were provided land for cemetery at Cape Collinson. The government also constructed a small mosque for the Muslims which was opened on 4 August 1963. The mosque was constructed particularly for *janaza* (funeral) prayers and regular prayers are not offered in the mosque as the mosque is in an isolated area where no Muslims live nearby. The mosque also does not have a permanent Imam (prayer leader). (H.K. Rahmani, *Hong Kong Standard*, December 4, 1984: 11)

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## **Stanley Mosque:**

In the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century around 400 prison guards were working in the Hong Kong Prison Department. Initially they were posted in Aberdeen/Victoria Prison where Shelly Mosque was nearby and the Muslims could go there to perform their prayers. However, later in the 1930s some of them had to be moved to Stanley where the government was constructing a new prison complex. (H.K. Rahmani, *Hong Kong Standard*, December 4, 1984: 11)

Most of the Muslims devoutly and regularly pray. In order to provide the praying facility to around 200 Muslim guards of the Stanley Prison the British allotted a piece of land for the prayers, where they constructed in 1936 a beautiful mosque in typical Punjabi rural style in earth-brown color. The mosque was constructed near the guards' quarters and still serves the Muslim community in Hong Kong. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 432 & Barbara-Sue White 1994: 116).

With the decrease in the number of Muslim Prison guards the prayers are not regularly offered in the mosque. Further it is in a faraway place from the town where very few Muslims live and is in a restricted area, however, on special occasions like *Eidain* or *Eid Milad un Nabi* the authorities allow the Muslims to come to the mosque and offer prayers. On such occasions special buses are arranged to take the Muslims and their families to the mosque to offer prayers. (H.K. Rahmani, *Hong Kong Standard*, December 4, 1984: 11)

## **Muslims' Cemeteries/Graveyards:**

The burial of dead bodies of Muslims is a religious obligation for all Muslims. The first Muslim cemetery in Hong Kong was located on 7, Seymore Street, however, it did not remain operational for long as after the burial of 5 or 6 bodies the cemetery was resumed by the government of Hong Kong and the Muslims were allotted a place for cemetery at Happy Valley where the earliest graves can be found dating back to 1864. (H.K. Rahmani, *Hong Kong Standard*, December 4, 1984: 10)

Cognizant of the religious sensitivities and requirements of the Muslims on 15 July 1870 Major General Henry Wase Whitfield on behalf of the colony of Hong Kong deeded a plot for

## **A Socio-Cultural Profile of Pakistani Diaspora In Hong Kong**

Muslims' cemetery. This piece of land was located on the west side of Wong Nei Chong road which the Land Office registered as Inland Lot No. 288 in the name of "the Mussalman Cemetery". (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 425 & Barbara-Sue White 1994: 60).

After the acquisition of the land for Cemetery the Muslims of Hong Kong soon built a mosque alongside the Cemetery in Happy Valley in order to perform the burial rituals. For the look-after and management of the Cemetery and the mosque, guardians were appointed by the Muslim community who happened to be invariably from the areas which are now parts of Pakistan. The boundaries of the land were specified and adjusted in 1938 along with the pronouncement "...that the Guardians should 'at their own expense maintain and repair to the satisfaction of the Director of Public Works any buildings, paths, drains and channels [of the cemetery] and pay the wages of all servants employed by them.'" (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 425-426 & foot-note: on page 425, "This was specified in the 'Substitutional Deed of Appropriation of Inland Lot NO. 288 for the Purpose of a Mussulman Cemetery' dated 12 May 1938 (C.S.O. No. 6634/1909, Part II).

Though the land was deeded to the Muslims, the ownership remained with the Crown, which ultimately resulted in the shifting of the mosque and many graves to the Cape Collinson Cemetery in the late 1970s when the Hong Kong government decided to build the Aberdeen Tunnel on the route which passed directly through the Muslim Cemetery of the Happy Valley. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 426).

Another cemetery which the Muslims had established in Hong Kong was at Ho Man Tin. This was the result of the Muslim soldiers of the Hong Kong Regiment of the British Army request to their Commanding Officer to allocate them a separate place for the burial of their dead bodies in Kowloon Peninsula. The Commanding Officer accepted their request and temporarily allotted them a piece of land in the Ho Man Tin Hill, just behind the present Pui Ching School on Waterloo Road. The Muslim forces with volunteers on every Sunday used to go to the site to develop it as cemetery. They also constructed a small mosque in the cemetery for funeral prayers. Besides that they dug out a well which could be used for ablution and drinking. The fresh water of the well became an attraction for all inhabitants of Ho Man Tin and they used to come to fetch the water from the well. The cemetery and mosque were named as "Moro Garden" for its enthralling view and fresh drinking water. (Trustees of Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 3 & Mufti Arshad, interview 2013).

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The Ho Man Tin Muslim cemetery having 50 graves was handed over to the Indian Muslim Society in 1930. The Society for the repair of the cemetery small gate, construction of the boundary wall and a small monument at its entrance started a subscription of 10 cents per member. Initially it was allotted for the burial of Muslim soldiers in the British army but after "... the Second World War, it was opened for the use of all Muslims in Hong Kong, and operated until it was closed in 1961 and the bodies subsequently exhumed and transferred to the new Muslim cemetery in Cape Collinson on Hong Kong island in 1972". (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 427& Mufti Arshad, Interview 2013).

Though cemeteries are available for the burial of dead bodies of Muslims in Hong Kong, right from the beginning the Pakistanis take their dead ones back to Pakistan. It became particularly easy for them when Chaudhri Shujaat Hussain, became Prime Minister of Pakistan for a short period (June 2004 to August 2004) and announced free transportation of expatriates dead bodies to Pakistan by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) free of cost. (Haq Nawaz alias Abid, Interview, 2013). The Hong Kong cemeteries are also evident of this trend as only 5% graves belong to Pakistanis and 15 % belong to local boys while the rest are those of Chinese Muslims. These figures clearly show that Pakistanis consider themselves as visitors to Hong Kong and always yearn to be buried back at home. Even those who are buried in Hong Kong identify themselves as Pakistanis. A grave stone in the Happy Valley cemetery is evident of this thinking:

"Born in Pakistan, June 11, 1934  
Died February 26, 1979" (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 444).

Though in 1934 there was no Pakistan, still many of those who came to Hong Kong at that time or earlier consider themselves as Pakistanis. Even those who have no ties with Pakistan regard themselves as Pakistanis. "A spinster of the Arculli family identified with Pakistan (which she had never visited) to the extent that she left a large part of her estate to build a mosque in Rawalpindi." (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 444).

Another such case is that of Syed Dawood Shah Bokhari hailing from Peshawar city, Pakistan and came to Hong Kong before the creation of Pakistan. His younger son Syed Kemal Bokhari, who retired as senior judge of the Hong Kong Appellate court, was born in Hong Kong after the

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creation of Pakistan; still keep mostly their Pakistani habits of diets and other aspects of Pakistani culture. Dawood Bokhari, who is around 94 years old is sponsoring many philanthropist projects in Pakistan and has constructed a large mosque in the outskirts of Peshawar, his native town. He has also sponsored another mosque construction in the city of Karachi. (Syed Dawood Shah Bokhari, Interview 2013 & Justice Kemal Shah Bokhari, Interviews 2013).

### **The Changing Social and Economic Landscape of Hong Kong after 2<sup>nd</sup> World War:**

After the end of the War the British allowed the Pak-Indian sub-continent service men to go to their homes for mandatory vacations. Amongst these twenty Chinese wives who had converted also accompanied their husbands but those who were not converted were just left behind by their husbands, who went back home and remarried. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 433).

The post war period proved to be a watershed event in the lives of the Pakistanis/Indians living in Hong Kong. The partition of India and the departure of the British from the Indian sub-continent resulted in the emergence of two independent states namely Pakistan and India. The Punjabis living in Hong Kong always considered themselves visitors while the new generation of 'local boys' came forward to take the responsibilities of different Muslim organizations as well as community as they approached the middle age. As the British left Indian sub-continent, they were no more in a position to bring the Punjabi Muslims to the colony as earlier. Further some of the Punjabi families living in Hong Kong returned to their homes in Pakistan as the partition brought in their aftermath great divisions in the province of United Punjab. In this changed situation the new groups who came from Pakistan were untied with the British Empire rather they came to Hong Kong just as economic migrants to take benefits from the economic prosperity of the Colony. "The most important of these groups are the Punjabi and Pashto watchmen, the Pakistani bankers, and the South Indian merchants."(Anita M. Weiss 1991: 433).

Most of the South Asians and particularly Pakistanis are related to each other in Hong Kong but lately there is another community developing out of wed-locks amongst them. The children of watchmen who have been raised, brought up and educated in Hong Kong tend to get married to the children of other watchmen in Hong Kong. "In addition, for a variety of reasons related to the

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Territory as well as to attempts at Islamic reassertion throughout the world, many young Muslims apparently are preferring to marry someone who is already a Muslim.” The only distinction of Pakistani community in Hong Kong from their own homeland in connection of marriages is that in Hong Kong first cousin marriages are not the preferred choice of many young people. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 447 & Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Interview 2013)

But there are also some Pakistanis who have been influenced by the liberal social environment of Hong Kong and they are ready to marry even non-Muslims without emphasizing on their conversion to Islam. In most of the cases the girls convert to Islam but there are cases where the husbands did not insist on conversion. Gordon Mathews interviewing a Pakistani young man Fahad Ali records his statement in these words, “I got married just two months ago, to a Hong Kong girl. My wife converted to Islam — she converted before we married. But she didn’t convert because of me but because of her. I can’t push her to be a Muslim! If she’s ready, she do it. I’ve known four or five Chinese girls who have converted to Islam — I’m happy for them. To my wife, I never told her to go and convert, never. It’s not a matter of converting because someone wants you to, it’s a matter of how you develop your own understanding.” (72-73)

There is another case of a Pakistani man who wants to marry his Hong Kong Chinese girlfriend but the girl’s parents are adamantly opposed to the marriage as he is a Muslim. He is now struggling to decide whether he should abandon the most cherished belief and cultural identity for the sake of his girlfriend. It seems that ultimately he may. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 206)

### **Pakistani Businessmen:**

Though initially Pakistanis came to Hong Kong in search of jobs, lately many Pakistanis have also established good businesses in Hong Kong. While some have small establishments others have developed multi-million dollars business companies. There are many small businesses which are run by Pakistanis from Chungking Mansions. Majority of them deal in mobile phones and electronics. There are also many Pakistani food outlets/restaurants and hair salons in Chungking Mansions. (Asad Khan, interview 2013)

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The Pakistanis have also some well-established tailoring shops in Hong Kong. Some Pakistanis have established large businesses, and have their offices in some upscale areas of Hong Kong. They deal in cotton yarn, electronics, telecommunications and shipping, for example, Keywin Group of Companies (owned by Saeed-uddin), Hua Dao Shipping (Far East) Limited (owned by Capt. Shahzada Saleem Ahmed), Cyber Communication Ltd. (owned by Abdul Zahir). The businesses which are dominated by Pakistanis are two, viz. Used auto Vehicles and its parts and 2<sup>nd</sup> hand cloths. The businessmen who deal in used vehicles and its parts have rented large areas in Kam Tin District and Yuen Long where they have established big yards and exports and imports used vehicles and its parts to and from different parts of the world in Africa and Asia including Pakistan. Another area in which Pakistanis have dominated the business is used clothes. Some of these businessmen have made big fortunes out of used clothes businesses. Some of the Pakistanis also deal in watches. One Mr. Javed has even established his own watches' factory in China. Another man, Mr. Arshad Khan, who deals in stuffed tiles, has also established his own factory in China for his business. (Nasir Ming, Interview 2013, Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013 & Wing Yung-Doris Ho 2010: 66-70)

Another profession where Pakistanis have acquired some foothold is transport business, as some of them after earning money have bought truck, bus or taxi and are doing good business in this field. Though the Pakistani labour class is making good money as compared to Pakistan, still they have a yearning for going back to Pakistan. It is evident from the following comment:

“If they can do a business there, nobody wants to come here. They need something for starting up.... It's your home, over there. Pakistan is something very different from Hong Kong. You can eat everything there! Here, you can't.” (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 438 & Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013).

Some of the Pakistanis who are not more than 100 have also prospered well in Hong Kong. These rug dealers either have shops in Central, or directly deal with their customers at their homes or arrange exhibitions/auctions at first class hotels. They import hand-made rugs from Pakistan, India, or Iran and sells in Hong Kong. (Ahmad Balal, Interview 2013)



# **A Socio-Cultural Profile of Pakistani Diaspora In Hong Kong**

## **Pakistani Organizations:**

### **Pakistan Muslim Society/The Pakistan Association of Hong Kong:**

The early Muslims from South Asia were overwhelmingly Punjabi Muslims who along with Punjabi Sikhs were recruited in the Hong Kong Singapore Battalion (Hong Kong Regiment) of the British Army. Besides some of them were also working in the Police and other government departments. Thus besides being fellow colleagues they were culturally too very akin to each other. The result was the establishment of the Kowloon India Tennis Club in 1907. The Government of Hong Kong gave a piece of land on Gasceigne Road in Kowloon to the club in 1910 on which the first club was established made of wood. (Trustees of Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 12)

The Muslims from Pakistan/India organized themselves in The Indian Muslim Society in 1924 and continued using the Kowloon Indian Tennis Club for their past time for almost 25 years. Pakistan Muslim Society came into being on the ashes of Indian Muslim Society in 1950 at a meeting held at old Ho Man Tin mosque. When in 1957 the Trade Commission of Pakistan was established in Hong Kong, the first Pakistan Trade Commissioner played an important role in organizing the Pakistani community. The Pakistani Association of Hong Kong was officially recognized by the government of Hong Kong in 1960. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 65 & Trustees of Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 12)

### **Pakistan Club:**

Since 1930s the Indian Recreation Club is used for social gatherings but Pakistanis rarely visit it, however, the Muslims' religious and cultural influence is visible in its food menu which is all *Halal*, no pork served and the meat, mutton and chicken is slaughtered as per Muslims' religious practices. The only exception is alcohol which is served there since the beginning. It seems since local boys frequent the club and they are less orthodox in religious practices therefore there is no restriction on alcohol serving. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 447)

After the division of India and the creation of Pakistan, the Pakistani community lost access to the Indian Recreation Club and for some time the Pakistani community was without formal club. In 1950 some of the Pakistanis met at Ho Man Tin mosque and '...formed the Pakistan Muslim

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Society, which was incorporated in 1963.’ With the support and encouragement of Pakistan Trade Commission, Hong Kong, they were able to acquire a piece of land measuring 22,000 square feet at Kowloon’s Gascoigen and Wylie Road to the Pakistani community for the construction of their own club. A double-story building was completed on the site in 1969, which includes the Jinnah Hall (multipurpose), a Canteen, squash court, net cricket practice pitch along with some offices. In the Pakistan Club not only official Pakistan functions like 23<sup>rd</sup> March (Pakistan Resolution Day) and 14<sup>th</sup> August (Pakistan Independence Day) are observed but other functions are also organized by the Pakistani community. The Pakistan Association of Hong Kong, which is supervising the Pakistan club also arranges *meena bazars* and *Eid* festivals on the premises of the Club. The Pakistani community is also using the Pakistan Club for wedding ceremonies. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 65, Anita M. Weiss 1991: 448 & Qamar Minhas, Interview 2013)

### **Pakistan Islamic Union:**

In 1972 some Pakistani workers in Hong Kong tried to establish Pakistan Islamic Union after their disappointment with the Pakistan Trade Commission, Hong Kong. The main purpose of the Union was to help those Pakistani workers who face difficulties in different walks of life. Since most of these workers were illiterate they even did not know about their legal rights in Hong Kong. In these circumstances some Pakistanis thought about founding a Union to take care of those Pakistanis who were in need of help. When this Union was under consideration East Pakistan was hit by severe floods in early 1970s, which resulted in the mobilization of Pakistani community of Hong Kong to collect donations for the affected Bengali brothers. They generously donated and even some people donated their full month salary. This greatly impressed the Pakistan Trade Commission staff, particularly Mohiyuddin, who himself was a Baengli. He for the first the time came out of the Commission office and visited people in their homes, dormitories and mills to know their problems. (Gulzar Hussain Sagar January 1976: 6)

With Mohiyuddin encouragement and active support a meeting was called in Nan Yung Cotton Mill dormitory to discuss the possibility of founding a Union. In the meeting Mr. Sher Bahadur Khan suggested the name of the Union as “Pakistan Islamic Union”, which was accepted.

Another meeting for the organization of the Union was called in Far-East Cotton Mill. In this meeting Mr. Gulzar Hussain Sagar suggested the formation of a Consultative Council for the

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Union for two years comprising of a Secretary General, Joint Secretary, Secretary Finance and Secretary Publication which was accepted. It was also suggested that from every dormitory and *dera* one councilor should also be selected. In this meeting the following people were selected for Consultative Council:

Gulzar Hussain Sagar                      Secretary General

### **Councilor of Consultative Council:**

Raja Nazeer Ahmad                      Tai Hing Cotton Mill

Syed Muhammad Shah                      Textile Corporation of Hong Kong

Khan M. Tufail                              Nan Fung Mill

M. Akram                                      Aigrendra Cotton Mill

Umar Bakhsh                                Nan Yang Cotton Mill

M. Idrees                                      Far East Glass Factory

Mr. Rahman                                 Representative of the Business Community

Sher Bahadur Khan                        Representative of the Government Employees

(Gulzar Hussain Sagar January 1976: 7)

This union initially did some worth praising works and helped the Pakistani community a lot. The Union beside other welfare works also started organizing sending the dead bodies of Pakistanis back to the country and they also established a primary school in Tsuen Wan in 1974. This Union, however, could not survive for long due to internal clashes and also due to the members' over engagement in their duties and was finally closed down in 1974. (Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Interview 2013)

### **Communal Fund & Philanthropy:**

The watchmen, security guards, industrial units' labour and the likes used to live in the *deras*. In order to face the emergency situation especially the shifting of the dead bodies back to Pakistan they had established a communal fund. The communal funds were mostly established on the

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basis of the members' regional belongings. For example the people belonging to Khushab or Chach would create fund in which all the members would belong to the same area. Sometimes they could establish such fund depending upon their personal relations with each other. Until recently when the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) started the free shifting of Pakistani expatriates' Dead bodies to Pakistan, such funds were used for such purposes. From these funds the members would also donate some money, one time grant for the welfare of the deceased's family. (Sagar Gulzar Hussain, Interview 2013).

This class of Pakistanis has also contributed a lot in the Pakistan Club but over a period of time they are no more active participants of programs in the Pakistan Club. As they say the expenses of the Club are beyond their means. Further in the Pakistan Club wealthier Pakistani expatriates have taken over, with whom these people do not feel comfortable. (Iqbal Khan, Interview 2013)

The Indians/Pakistanis besides looking after their own problems through collective measures have also contributed in many philanthropist projects and initiatives. They are always forthcoming in such activities, because Pakistanis/Indians consider themselves part of four communities:

“The first is that of his extended family and includes a responsibility to clothe, house, and find employment for every second cousin's son or whoever may arrive on his doorstep in Hong Kong. Next, he is loyal to the Indian (Pakistani) group of which he is a member, be it Sindhi, Sikh, or Muslim. This implies special generosity to those needing help within the group or to the religious centre and its buildings. After that, he feels a part of the entire Indian (Pakistani) community in Hong Kong and participates according to his ability in its charities, organizations, and social bashes. Finally, he never forgets that he is an Indian (Pakistani), still connected to his homeland, and is willing to contribute to those people and organizations which can use his aid and will appreciate his generosity.” (Barbra-Sue White 1994: 2).

Some of the people from the Pak-India sub-continent in the early days of Hong Kong have contributed generously for some welfare projects in Hong Kong and their contributions have a lasting impact on the society of Hong Kong. In this connection few names stand prominent like Mody, a Parsi, whose contributions made possible the foundation of the University of Hong Kong. Another name is that of Jehangir Hormusjee Ruttonjee, another Parsi, who contributed

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generously in the construction of Ruttonjee Sanatorium for the benefit of tuberculosis patients. (Barbra-Sue White 1994: 2).

When in 2008 Pakistan was hit by a devastating earth quake, the Pakistanis in Hong Kong rose to the occasion and collected large amount of money and other necessary emergency items to be sent to Pakistan. In this time of great tragedy all communities helped Pakistanis in their efforts including many Indians who contributed generously for their neighbouring brothers. (Ali Awan, Interview 2013).

### **Pakistani Professional Organizations:**

Though generally the stereotype about Pakistanis/Indians in the pre-World War II was that of uneducated police, guards, and warders, this is not true as they represented a minority. “In 1931, trade and commerce was the largest single occupation of Indians (including Pakistanis as well), numbering 1.294. There were also many independent, highly educated Indian (including Pakistanis as well) professionals, 108 in all, including 24 listed as medical practitioners, 18 chartered accountants, and six consultants in structural engineering and shipbuilding. The remaining professionals worked with private firms or hospitals and schools. Thirty-four Indians (including Pakistanis as well) were listed as domestic servants, almost exclusively with Indian families. The remaining 194 people were primarily watchmen and guards.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 35)

Since there were many Pakistani expatriates who were working in Hong Kong, a need was felt for the establishment of a Pakistani bank, thus came into existence the National Bank of Pakistan in 1960. The first branch of the office was opened at Central Building, Central, Hong Kong. Later three more branches were opened at Kowloon, Kwai Tong and Kwai Chung. During the reconstruction of the Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre, Kowloon, National Bank of Pakistan was not only the prime bank for the Mosque Fund but also donated HK \$ 1,100,000/= becoming the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest donor after the Royal Saudi Government which had donated HK \$ 1,577,877.28. (Haji Kafayatullah N.D.: 67). The National Bank main branch was shifted to Sheung Wan, Cental in 2001 and the two branches were closed down. Currently the main branch in Sheung

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Wan and Kowloon are working while the other two were closed down. (Wong Ting Kai, Interview 2013)

Other Pakistani professional organizations which opened their offices in Hong Kong were as following:

1. Pakistan International Airlines, 1965.
2. Pakistan National Shipping Corporation, 1972.
3. Bank of Credit and Commerce International, 1974.
4. Habib Finance, 1976.

With the opening of these professional institutions the number of professional and educated Pakistanis also increased. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 440)

### **Multi-National and racial organizations:**

There are many Muslim organizations which are not based on national or racial basis. Though these organizations are not exclusively Pakistanis, Pakistanis dominate many of these organizations.

### **The Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong:**

The Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong was founded in 1850. (Ng Yat Fai, 12) This is the most important organization of the Muslim community of Hong Kong. This organization is commonly known as “The Board of Trustees”. It came into existence due to government of Hong Kong stipulation to create an organization which could supervise and manage the Muslims’ mosques, buildings and cemeteries. It was to be formed by the Muslims of Hong Kong through a set procedure. Accordingly four organizations have their representatives on the Trustees Board. These organizations are:

1. The Islamic Union of Hong Kong.
2. The Pakistan Association of Hong Kong Ltd.
3. The Hong Kong Dawoodi Bohra Association

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4. Indian Muslim Association (JAMAATH) Ltd. (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 6)

There are some Muslim groups which exist in Hong Kong but don't have representation on the Trustees' board. These are the Twelver Shias or Athna Ashari, the Agha Khanis and Chinese Muslim Cultural and Fraternal Association. (Asad Khan, Interview 2013 )

The Twelver Shias had a dispute with the Dawoodi Bohras on the representation of Shias on the Trustees. Actually "...an Iranian Shia was instrumental in the formation of the Trustees, and had also formed the Husseini Society which the Bohras regard as the overseer of their separate area of worship called an *Imam bara* (housed in Husseini House on Hollywood Road in Central)." The Twelver Shias claim that in the Trustees representation has been 'set aside for Shias should rightfully go to them as the first Shia who secured that slot on Trustees' Board and founded Husseini Society belonged to their group. After initial dispute the solution is founded in the allotment of a place for worship to the Twelevers at the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Husseini House. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 450)

According to Amir Ali Nasir, a Dawoodi Bohra Muslim, who has worked on the Trustee Board, the Trustee has a very strict policy towards board membership and the board is not ready to give membership to any other group, either on the basis of *fiqah*, racial or cultural consideration, as the board members supposed to represent all the Muslims of Hong Kong not any particular group of religious or ethnic background. If they ll allow any new member, it ll be like opening a flood gate and then board will not be able to run so smoothly and efficiently. (Interview 2013)

The Board of Trustees perform variety of functions, which are listed as below:

- a) To manage the Mosques and Muslim cemeteries in Hong Kong.
- b) To control the subscribed donated and bequeathed funds.
- c) To make all arrangements for funerals and burials of deceased Muslims.
- d) To organize prayers for special occasions like the Eid festivals.
- e) To undertake any other actions in the general interests of the Hong Kong Muslims and propagation of Islam." (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 6)

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Besides the above functions The Board of Trustees also have the power to hire and fire all its employees including the Imams of mosques run and managed by the Trustees. From the very beginning the Imams of mosques in Hong Kong under the Board of Trustees have been appointed from the Sunni Muslims either of Hanafi, Hanbali, Shafi or Maliki *fiqah* as majority of Muslims in Hong Kong subscribes to Sunni Islam. (Zohair Tayyeb, Interview 2013). The Board also has the exclusive authority to issue *Halal* certification to food products in Hong Kong SAR. (Trustees Notification letter, N.D.).

The Trustees has given the responsibilities to run and manage the affairs of the Happy Valley cemetery and mosque (constructed in 1963) to the Islamic Union. (Muhammad Khan, Interview 2013)

### **The Islamic Union of Hong Kong:**

The Islamic Union of Hong Kong was founded at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> Century in order to coordinate the activities of all Muslims irrespective of their ethnic, racial, national, or other considerations. It is a basic clause of the Union that all Muslims without distinction on the basis of sect, nationality, language or race would be expected in the fold of the Union. There are around 1,000 members of the Union. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 63)

Since its inception the Union has witnessed many changes the last being the revision of their Constitution in 1980 in order to fulfill the requirements of the Companies Ordinance of the Hong Kong Government to recognize it as a legal entity. (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 8) Under the revised constitution the Union declared the following objectives as their goals: to strive "...to improve the general welfare of all Muslims in Hong Kong, and to spread Islamic practices, beliefs, and religious knowledge." The Union also supervises the establishment and maintenance of homes and hostels for Muslim travelers besides looking after educational institutions, clinics, health facilities, and homes for the aged and destitute. Arrangements are also made to impart Islamic education through books, leaflets, tapes, newsletters, and classes in Arabic, learning of Quran reading, and Islamic Knowledge. The Union also looks after the donations of money, land, or material goods and any extra money not immediately required is invested for the benefit of the Union. The activities of the Union are run by a General Council, which meets every month. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 63)



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The Union also runs The Islamic Union Medical Clinic which is recognized by the Government of Hong Kong. The Clinic charges a nominal fee of HK \$10 per consultation including medicine, however, it provides free of charge services to those who cannot afford. The Muslim doctors and nurses offer their services as volunteers. The Union also maintains a library which is having 3,000 volumes on Islamic knowledge available in Arabic, Urdu, Tamil, English, Malay, Japanese and Chinese. The library also has a special section for children. The Union also organizes annual Haj pilgrimage tours to Mecca with the help of Tabung Haj Pilgrimage of Malaysia. Last but not the least the Union also extends help throughout the world to all those Muslim organizations who are in need of financial assistance. The union particularly assists those Muslims who are struck by natural calamities. (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 63 & Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 10)

The Islamic Union has also established one elderly hostel for those needy Muslim ladies in Hong Kong who for some reasons do not have anyone to look after them. The hostel is situated near the Islamic Center to make it convenient to the residents to pray at the Centre's Mosque. The Union also organizes variety of functions for the benefit of the residents of hostel. (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 9)

### **Osman Ramju Sadick Islamic Centre, Hong Kong:**

The single most worth mentioning achievement of the Islamic Union is probably the construction of the Osman Ramju Sadick Islamic Centre, at No. 40, Oi Kwan Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong in 1981. Before the construction of the Islamic Centre the Islamic Union was functioning from old fashioned confined accommodation. That was late Osman Ramju Sadick generous endowment fund along with the Government of Hong Kong compensation money and land in lieu of Happy Valley mosque acquisition, which enabled the Union to construct a modern multi story building at the said site. (Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 9)

“The Osman Ramju Sadick Islamic Center consists of a Mayat Room (for washing the dead) and praying area on the ground floor, separate wuthu or washing areas for men and women on the second floor, an air-conditioned masjid with two levels (one for men and one for women) which can accommodate over 600 persons on the third floor, a classroom for conducting Qur'anic and Arabic lessons on the fourth floor, a Community Hall of about 150 square meters which can

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accommodate over 250 persons and which can be used for prayers and lectures on the fifth floor, a library of over 180 square meters on the sixth floor, a Conference Room, Medical Clinic, General Offices and other Consultation Rooms on the seventh floor, and an office for the Islamic Youth Association with an open podium of over 150 square meters on the eighth floor.”

(Trustees of the Islamic Community Pamphlet N.D.: 9)

### **Pakistanis influence in Hong Kong:**

Hong Kong maintains a very homogenous Chinese culture ignoring the ethnic minority groups but in spite of that the Pakistanis have left a mark on the local culture. Pakistanis have influenced the local culture in different ways. For example some of the Educational Institutions in Hong Kong have visible marks of Pakistani culture. In this category the foremost which can be mentioned is Sir Ellis Kadoori School, which was built more than 100 years ago and was built as Sir Ellis Kadoori Indian School. With the passage of time the numbers of Pakistani students increased many fold. For example in the 1970s while the Pakistani students' ratio in the school was  $\frac{1}{6}$ <sup>th</sup>, it increased to  $\frac{1}{2}$  by mid 1980s. Keeping in mind the Pakistani students' language requirement, an Urdu teacher was also employed who had Urdu teaching experience back in Pakistan. The school also kept strict Pakistani cultural values in the school; this fact is testified by many former students of the school. The Pakistani students even keep their Ramadan fasts while attending the school. In recent years the school has somehow relaxed but still the boys and girls cannot meet openly for romance. One such incident resulted in fatal consequences. An Indian boy and a Pakistani girl eloped and ran away to Macau, the girl's parents followed them and took the girl back to Pakistan but the boy ran away to Singapore. The girl was finally poisoned in a field in Pakistan. (Anita M. Weiss 1991: 444-45).

Another such school which shows clear indications of Pakistani culture even today is Kasim Tuet Memorial College, Chai Wan. The school is attended by large number of Pakistani children and there are also many Pakistani teachers who are working in the school. The large numbers of Pakistani girls in the school are wearing their Pakistani dress as uniform of the school. There are also many Pakistani functions, which are occasionally organized in the school. Some of the school's staff is regularly organizing Allama Iqbal (Pakistan's National Poet) day in the school

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as well. One such event was attended by the author himself in the school. (Tahir Nadeem, Interview 2013)

The Pakistanis influence in the police force has remained very strong and for a long time they had very dominating situation particularly in the lower ranks. (Munir Khan et al, Interview). It is also evident from the fact that when in 1967 leftist inspired riots broke out in Hong Kong, amongst the foreigners those were two Pakistani police men viz. Mohammad Nawaz Malik and Khurshid Ahmed, who got killed at Sha Tau Kok, beside others who were injured. (K. M. Malik, Interview 2013).

### **Hong Kong influence on Pakistanis:**

Though the Pakistanis have influenced some aspects of the Hong Kong life, the Hong Kong environment has also left a big influence on the cultural and social values of Pakistanis living in Hong Kong. The most visible influence one can notice is on the language. Majority of Pakistanis who have settled in Hong Kong can fluently speak Cantonese, it is particularly true about the younger generations, who either came to Hong Kong very young or were born here. Though with their grandparents they would talk in their mother tongue, Punjabi, Urdu or Pashto, outside home they will speak fluent Cantonese. Some of the young people (brothers, sisters and friends) even sometimes talk with each other in Cantonese. (Chacha Raja, Interview 2013).

Another important change in Pakistanis behavior is about nationalism. In Hong Kong most of the Pakistanis though love their own country; they have become more cosmopolitan, accommodative and practical. They even have good business relations with their arch rivals, Indians. In Hong Kong money is the primary concern of Pakistanis like other people of Hong Kong. (Chacha Raja, Interview 2013 & Gordon Mathews 2011: 47)

### **Difficulties/Problems faced by the Pakistanis:**

The presence of Pakistanis/Indians is spread over centuries but the racial discrimination has been a continuous problem for them. In spite of the fact that even in the early days some of them earned lot of money but still they were considered 2<sup>nd</sup> rate citizens. It is obvious from the following recommendations made in 1916 regarding the Matilda Hospital “that it was to be reserved for British, American, and Europeans patients.” (Barbara-Sue White 1994: 30).

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One of the major problems the Pakistanis face in Hong Kong is visa related. There are many Pakistanis who are nationals of Hong Kong but they face lot of difficulties in bringing their spouses. Earlier Pakistanis were getting visas on arrival but later the government of Hong Kong changed the policy regarding visas to Pakistanis, now they are required to get visas before arrival in Hong Kong. The Pakistanis now face lot of problems in getting visas for their spouses. (Hong Kong's Information Service Department March 28, 2003 & Gordon Mathews 2011: 18).

Though the Hong Kong government has passed many laws for the prevention of racial discrimination, still the South Asians in general and Pakistanis in particular are facing much discrimination in Hong Kong society. The biggest problem which they face is employment opportunities as many complain that they were refused jobs simply because of their racial or ethnic background. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 1 & Kelly Loper 2004: 1)

Many such incidents have been reported by different writers where the Hong Kong people have discriminated Pakistanis/South Asians on the basis of race, language and ethnicity. One Pakistani young man has recorded experience in these words, "I worked faster and better than the Chinese girl, but they still preferred her to me after the three-month probation." Gordon Mathews has also written that in Hong Kong the racial hierarchy hinders the growth of South Asians/Pakistanis as Chinese believe that whites are superior and brown are inferior. (Gordon Mathews 2011: 69-70)

Another man describes his experience in connection of job search as following:

"The employer when we go to interview they will say 'sorry, you don't know Chinese'. Sometimes they say 'we don't hire Pakistani people'. We are often rejected." (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 12)

Another reason due to which they face problems in getting employment is language skills in Cantonese and English in the educational institutions. Sara & Hung has referred to UNISON study which has pointed out that 70.1 per cent of Pakistani youth who are born in Hong Kong have not acquired the facility to learn Cantonese or English which later impacts their prospects to get employment in the Hong Kong job market. The problem is that the Hong Kong government disregards the special language needs of the non-Chinese speaking students and they have persistently resisted making Chinese as second language for learning. The Hong Kong government insists on adapting the Chinese curriculum offered by individual schools but

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experience has shown that the non-Chinese students are unable to successfully compete in the public examination, which adversely affects their prospects in getting placements in the secondary school. It is particularly harmful for the residents which ultimately increase the generational marginalization of ethnic minorities. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 7 & 9)

Sara and Hung referring to ‘*A Research Report on the Life Experiences of Pakistanis in Hong Kong*’ written by Ku *et al* in 2003 points out that out of 200 respondents which they had interviewed 70.1 per cent believed that they faced difficulties in finding a decent job due to language problems even if they were fluent in English but not in Cantonese. On the other hand 29.1 per cent believed that they were rejected simply being Pakistanis. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 11-12)

Language related denial of employment has particularly increased after the hand-over of Hong Kong from British government to China in 1997. It is obvious from the following two observations:

“(It’s) really hard to find a job because there are a lot of language barriers. Before the handover it was easier to get a job and good income. After the handover we are not able to find long stay jobs, mostly we find temporary jobs with low pays. Even worse is (that) now mainland China people (have) come to Hong Kong. They can speak Chinese [Cantonese] as well as *Putonghua* [Mandarin]. This results in even more problem for us, since most of us are working in low skill field now and they are taking all these places. As a result we are unemployed and forced to go and get Social Welfare money.” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 12)

“After 1997 Chinese became more important than English and its [Hong Kong’s employment market] totally changed. We have more difficulty in employment and education. In medical area [seeking medical help] too.” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 12)

Actually the Hong Kong government took a major policy shift in regarding the medium of instructions in the secondary schools after the handover in 1997. Before the handover the medium of instructions at secondary schools was English but from year 1998 the Hong Kong government adopted Chinese as medium of instructions at the secondary schools, which inadvertently affected the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong. “This policy emphasizes the

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educational benefits of teaching in the mother-tongue and required 307 government and aided secondary schools in Hong Kong to switch from the English medium of instruction (EMI) to the Chinese medium of instruction (CMI), while a remaining 114 secondary schools were allowed to continue teaching in English after establishing their ability to do so effectively.” (Kelly Loper 2004: 4)

According to some sources the government is aware of the ethnic minority problems especially related to language in schools. In order to provide help to ethnic minorities in the acquisition of language skills “In 2002, the government established a Committee on the Promotion of Racial Harmony, made up of members of NGOs and ethnic minority communities, which is supported by a Race Relations Unit and advises the government on race issues. The government has initiated a 60-hour Induction Programme for newly arrived children to help them adjust to the local social environment and education system and a six-month Initiation Programme intended to foster new arrivals’ English and Chinese skills and facilitate their adaptation to a local classroom context. These programmes were established in 1995 for mainland immigrants and were extended to other new arrivals in October 2000. The School-Based Support Scheme provides a block grant to schools for each non-Chinese speaking student in attendance. The school may use the grant to provide extra language classes and other adaptation programmes.” (Kelly Loper 2004: 9-10)

Finding job is one side of the problem. The other side of the problem is to understand the Pakistani cultural sensitivities. Most of the Chinese employers are very strict bosses and they do not take into account the familial and cultural aspects of Pakistani workers. One of the interviewers of Sara and Hung has commented in the following manner:

“Work in Hong Kong can be very strict and the Chinese cannot understand our problems. Someone I know tried to return to Pakistan to see their dying father but his boss would not give permission to go. The Chinese don’t have time for their own parents.” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 12)

The difficulties in medical field have been pointed out by Tang et al 2004 report which states that the hospitals do not offer any translation facilities to the ethnic minorities. Other social services departments of Hong Kong government have the same policy, which affects the ethnic

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minorities' possibilities to get benefits from those social services which are offered by the Hong Kong government. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 12)

The Pakistani women face problem particularly due to their cultural and religious outlook. In this respect Sara and Hung has mentioned Ku's research who has pointed out that the Pakistani women who observe *purdah* and wear *hijab* feel discriminated by the Hong Kong westernized society. This is particularly true after 9/11. In this regard they write:

“...in a rare study of the embodiment of cultural values in Pakistani women, demeaning Islamophobic stereotypes are attributed towards traditional *hijab* dress worn by Pakistani women, which differs markedly from the contemporary, Westernized social uniforms of fashion-conscious Hong Kong Chinese residents. This may carry further resonances in the post-9/11 era in which the symbolization of the *hijab*-clad Muslim woman now carries connotations of both cultural benightedness and the threat of fundamental Islamist-inspired terrorism....Ku suggests that these views become internalized by Pakistani women who begin to view themselves as embodying the racist assumptions that are provoked by their appearance.” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 6)

In order to end the discrimination against ethnic minorities the Hong Kong government passed Racial Discrimination Ordinance (RDO) on 9 July 2008, which became fully enforced w.e.f. 10 July 2009. This was the result of many years of advocacy and campaign by Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Human Rights Organizations and Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). In spite of the passage of this ordinance the NGOs and Political parties still continue to campaign against some serious flaws in the Ordinance. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 8)

The flaws against which NGOs and political parties are campaigning are as following:

“First, unlike Hong Kong's other anti-discrimination laws, the RDO does not cover ‘the performance of Government's functions’ or ‘the exercise of Government's power’ (HKHRM *et al.*, 2009, p.1). Second, discrimination based on immigration status, right of abode, Hong Kong permanent resident status, length of residence and nationality are all excluded from the scope of racial discrimination. Third, there is an exclusion of all laws concerning nationality, citizenship, resident status or naturalization and immigration legislation. Furthermore, the RDO allows

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exemptions for the language of instruction in education and vocational training institutes. Finally, the RDO does not include any statutory equality plan in which the government and public authorities are required to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote racial equality and harmony (HKHRM *et al.*, 2009)

The result of this is that the police officers, immigrations officials and other law enforcement authorities do not feel bound by the RDO and the ethnic minorities complain about the discrimination meted out to them by the law enforcement agencies. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 9) Fahad Ali recalling his racial discrimination experience stated, “The Police are here for our protection, but some of them are very bad. You’re a white guy here; I’m a brown guy. The police, when they’re talking to you, they’ll have a smile on their face, but when they’re talking to me, they will have anger on their face. At that time, I really want to kick their asses. At Immigration, at the airport, I told the guy, ‘just now, you had your teeth out, smiling to that white guy. But now, with me, you’re angry. Why? Can you explain this to me?’ he said nothing.” (Gordon Mathews 2011: 73)

The same situation the ethnic minorities face in the Education Bureau placement policy because it is also not bound by RDO. This is pointed out by social workers in these words:

“One ME (Minority Ethnic) parent asked me when the Chinese children cannot find a school place what do the families do? ‘Why do we spend half-a-year [looking] and still not find a school place? Are the Chinese children the same?’ I answered that [for] the Chinese it is not like that. A Hong Kong resident can get nine years compulsory education. If the parents don’t put their children into school they may be gaoled...it is interesting that [some ME] parents and I have discovered that they are Hong Kong citizens, some of them even born in Hong Kong and they are permanent residents. Why is it like this? It pushes us to think!” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 9)

The ethnic minority children face another problem at the school, which is Chinese children unfriendly behavior. Many children have pointed out that the Chinese classmates do not play with them and sometimes they can be rude as well. (Kelly Loper 2004: 53-54)



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## **Racism at the Interpersonal level:**

Some of the respondents to Ku *et al* (2003) have pointed out verbal derogatory remarks to Pakistanis and the people of Indian sub-continent. They say that sometimes they are referred to as *Ah Cha*, which is hard for them to know why they are referred to.

“They [Hong Kong Chinese] call us ‘*Ah Cha!*’. What does that mean? We don’t know, but something like ‘Boy!’ Or even worse maybe (Male respondent, ethnographic study). (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 201: 12)

Some of the correspondents even have pointed out more serious racial discrimination and vilification, as is pointed out by one in the following manner:

“When we take the lift people will cover their mouth, thinking we’re smelly. Also, they call us ‘*Ah Cha*’, Sometimes they discriminate because of our facial look, because we have a beard and they will say it’s ugly.” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 13)

The Hong Kong Chinese also discriminate on the assumption being biologically superior to Pakistanis or other South Asians. It is obvious from the following statement:

“...the staff still did not allow [ME] youth to come into the Centre. The cleaner of the Centre always complained to me that ‘*Ah Cha*’ smell badly and create a negative image for the Centre. In a meeting a member of the staff said, ‘As a Chinese, in my veins is Chinese blood, and to serve these black skinned people, that I can’t do!’” (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 14-15)

The people of Hong Kong also look down upon Pakistanis and South Asians because they think that they are back ward while Hong Kong has joined the developed world. This fact is obvious from the following statement “We Hong Kongers have recently left the developing world and become wealthy. Why should these African and South Asians be staying in the midst of our newly wealthy home?” (Gordon Mathews 2011: 2).

There is another stereotyping of the Pakistanis as well, which is due to some fraudulent claims by few individuals in order to get social welfare benefits or industrial claims on phony industrial injuries. These few cases have been made by Hong Kong Chinese as a general image of the

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whole community, which is unfair as it is negatively affecting the Pakistani community in Hong Kong. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 14 & Gulzar Hussain Sagar, Interview 2013)

After the 9/11 incidents and subsequent War on Terrorism a new kind of racism has also emerged in Hong Kong. This is related to mainstream institutions like banks. The Hong Kong media has reported the case of two Pakistani females Hong Kong residents who were refused to open account in Hang Seng Bank on the grounds that they belonged to the terrorist country. Later when they approached Bank of East Asia for the same purpose they were advised not to mention their ethnic origin on the form. The minority advocacy NGO UNISON later reported that they have received similar complaints from 15 Pakistanis who have been refused opening of an account on the grounds that they belong to the terrorist country. (Sara Ashencaen Crabtree & Hung Wong 2012: 15)

### **Conclusion:**

Migration and resettlement of the human beings in new territories is as old phenomenon as human beings themselves. In the religion of Islam it has a special importance and significance as the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself embarked upon migration and resettlement in new territory when his and his followers' lives were threatened. Islam also advises his followers that if their financial position is not good in their place of abode; they should migrate and venture into new territories for the improvement of their financial position.

When we look at the Pakistani diaspora in Hong Kong, it seems that both the above stated principles of Islam have been followed. The earliest Pakistani migrants were economic migrants who came to Hong Kong in different capacities. Mostly they were servicemen with the British Government like army personnel, policemen, prison guards, contractors, tailors, seamen, petty clerks, dockyard and marine servicemen, watchmen, construction labours and some joined the industries running in Hong Kong in those days. Later some of the Pakistanis also occupied some professional positions like doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers, managers, etc etc. Some of the Pakistanis also ventured in businesses, while some of them continued to be petty shopkeepers,

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some reached the high echelons of business community and are running now multi-million dollars businesses. All these people are those people who can be termed as economic migrants.

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century a new kind of emigrants started pouring into Hong Kong, who is generally known as asylum seekers. They are those who have reached the shores of Hong Kong in search of protection for their lives. They face different kinds of persecutions at home, some are threatened for their religious beliefs, some are threatened for their political ideologies and even some are threatened by their family or clan disputes. All of them have reached Hong Kong through illegal means and now are waiting to be granted asylum either in Hong Kong or a third country. But there are also some Pakistanis who have applied for asylum but they are not the genuine asylum seekers rather they can be termed Economic Migrants because they have come in search of jobs and better economic life. In reality they have no threat to their lives be that on the basis of religious beliefs, political ideology or clan or family disputes. The lives of these asylum seekers are very tough as they are not legally allowed to work and they get very meagre financial support from the government of Hong Kong. Further, their asylum cases are not speedily disposed of and they wait for prolonged duration of time to know about the fate of their asylum cases.

Amongst roughly 35,000 Pakistanis in Hong Kong overwhelming majority are those who are permanently settled and thus have chosen Hong Kong as their new home. Since majority of Pakistanis are religiously and culturally orthodox, they have brought with themselves their own religious and cultural customs and values. Right from the beginning they have established their own prayer houses (mosques) and have also organized themselves in different kind of associations/organizations/unions, which not only take care of their problems but also arrange variety of cultural and religious functions for the Pakistani community in Hong Kong.

Majority of Pakistani diaspora in Hong Kong have kept their religious and cultural ethos intact. Overwhelming number of families still have joint family system in spite of the fact that the Hong Kong houses are very small but they feel more comfortable living together. They also still give great respect to the elders and generally listen and follow their advice. The greatest manifestation of this is arranged marriages. Even now more than 90 % marriages of the Pakistanis in Hong Kong are arranged marriages and majority of them tie their matrimonial knot back in their homeland, Pakistan. Another cultural tradition which they have kept to their heart is their burial

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in Pakistan, in spite of the fact that for Muslims of Hong Kong cemeteries are available, very few Pakistanis get buried there and mostly are flown to Pakistan to be buried in their motherland.

When one talks to the Pakistani diaspora in Hong Kong and observe their day to day activities, it seems that they are very much satisfied with the living conditions of Hong Kong. Almost all appreciate the safety, facilities and liberal environment of Hong Kong, where nobody is bothered about the safety of their lives or properties. The civic facilities are either at par or in some cases even better than many advanced countries of the West. Generally people are liberal and their attitude is friendly, though some people have complained about discrimination on different grounds, these complaints are not very common. Many Pakistanis in Hong Kong also have the British Nationality but they prefer to live in Hong Kong, obviously for aforementioned reasons. This author has come across couple of Pakistanis who have once in life thought about settling in Britain and went there but after spending couple of months started missing Hong Kong and came back for good.

A very important and significant aspect of the Pakistani diaspora in Hong Kong is their attitude towards religion and sects. In Hong Kong all the Muslim sects live very harmoniously and there is no tension on the basis of their sectarian differences. They even participate in each other programs and functions. The mosques are open to the followers of all sects and nobody interferes with other sectarian or religious beliefs and practices. The most important organization of the Muslims in Hong Kong “The Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong” is a non-sectarian organization. Its board members are not chosen on the basis of sect, race or nationality rather at the time of its foundation at that time four existing organizations were given representation and they continue to function with the same set up. In the history of the Board of Trustees nobody has pointed out any occasion where the Board members have strongly disagreed with each other. They have been taking decisions normally in unison.

To sum up the discussion one can easily say that the Pakistani diaspora in Hong Kong are living a very happy life and they are contributing in many way to the future of the present and future Pakistani generation both in Hong Kong and at home, Pakistan.

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## **Annexure I**

### **PAKISTAN TRADE COMMISSION HONG KONG Trade Commissioners**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Years</b>
Mr. A. Rab	1957-1964
Mr. Riaz Piracha	1964-1966
Mr. Ahmad Ali Khan	1966-1973

### **CONSULATE GENERAL OF PAKISTAN HONG KONG Consuls General**

Mr. Amanullah Zafar	1973-1975
Mr. Minhaj Hussain	1975-1981
Mr. Kamal Afsar	1981-1986
Mr. Umair Khan	1986-1991
Mr. Sikandar Ali Keeriyo	1991-1995
Mr. Tariq Iqbal Puri	1995-1999
Mr. Azmat Ali Ranjha	1999-2004
Mr. Tariq Shafi Chak	2004-2008
Dr. Ahmad Balal	2008-2013
Ghufran Memon	2013-

**Source: A Board in the office of the Consul General of Pakistan, Hong Kong Listing the Head of Mission in Hong Kong names with their tenure, 2014.**

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## **Annexure II**

### **List of the Presidents Of Pakistan Association of Hong Kong Limited**

G.M. Butt	1963-1964
Iftikhar-ud-Din	1964-1965
Farid Khan	1965-1966
C.A. Ghafoor	1966-1969
G.M. Butt	1969-1970
Haji Firdos Khan	1970-1971
Kafayatullah Rahmani	1971-1974
Mohammad Iqbal Khatana	1974-1976
Kafayatullah Rahmani	1976-1979
Capt. Syed Jalal Akbar	1979-1981
Zia Hussain	1981-1982
Kafayatullah Rahmani	1982-1983
Shaukat Raza Mirza	1983-1985
Zia Hussain	1985-1988
Mushtaque Ahmed	1988-1993
Zia Hussain	1993-1994
Mohammad Amin Sabar	1994-1995
Mohammad Taufique Amdani	1995-1998

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Saeed-ud-Din	1998-2002
Mohammad Shezad Sheikh	2002-2005
Capt. Shahzada Saleem Ahmed	2005-2011
Qamar Z. Minhas	2011-Present

### **Source:**

The Pakistan Association of Hong Kong. *Special Supplement on the 66<sup>th</sup> Independence Day, 14<sup>th</sup> August 2013*. Hong Kong: 2013.

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## **Annexure III**

### **Kowloon Mosque Reconstruction Committee**

**May 1977**

Chairman	Haji K. Rahmani
Honorary Secretary	Haji S. M. Yoonus
Members	Mr. S. Y. Chow
	Haji S. M. Dastagir
	Mr. Ibrahim Hassnain
	Mr. H. F. Hei (Khairuddin)
	Mr. Hei Hung-lu
	Haji M. S. M Magdom Ismail
	Hai S. M. S. A. Kabeer
	Hai A. Karim
	Haji W. S. Maghdoom Mohammed
	Mr. Sultan Nacky
	Mr. Sadakatullah
	Haji A. R. Miskin Samy
	Haji Ali Ting

In 1981, the Board of Trustees appointed the following members of the Islamic Union to the Kowloon Mosque Reconstruction Committee, designating Mr. M. E. Peake to be the Honorary Secretary of the Committee:

Mr. M. E. Peake



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Mr. O. K. Dallah

Mr. A . M. Wahab

Haji S. M. Yoonus became Assistant Secretary.

## **Source:**

Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani. *Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre Kowloon*, Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Kowloon Mosque Committee, 2012, 16.

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## Annexure IV

### Kowloon Mosque Reconstruction Fund Raising Committee

#### **Fridays and *Eidain* Collection of Funds:**

Haji A. R. Miskin Samy and Haji Abdul Karim used to collect funds regularly from the congregation on *Juma* and *Eidain*.

For the collection of fund for the multi-million dollars project of the new Mosque, the Board of Trustees appointed the following Fund Raising Committee in January 1978.

Chairman	Haji O. R. Sadick
Vice-Chairman	Haji B. S.A. Rahman
Honorary Secretary	Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani
Assistant Secretary	Haji S. M. Yoonus
Members	Mr. Mushtaque Ahmed
	Imam Haji Ahmed Ceung Kwong-yee
	Mr. Jaffer Ibrahim
	Hajia Khaija Kitcheli
	Mr. A. K. I. Shaikh
	Haji Ali Ting
	Mr. Kasim W. S. Tuet
	Mr. Leung Lai-woo

#### **Source:**

Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani. *Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre Kowloon*, Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Kowloon Mosque Committee, 2012, 58.

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## **Annexure V**

### **The Incorporated Trustees of the Islamic Community Fund of Hong Kong**

#### **(The Board of Trustees)**

#### **Board Members 2012**

Chairman	Saeed ud Din
Honorary Secretary	Qamar Zaman Minhas
Honorary Treasurer	Zoheir Tyebkhan
Trustee	Arab Osman Mohamed
Trustee	Najmee Abdul Mannan
Trustee	Mohamed Ishaque
Trustee	L. M. Nizaduddin
Observer	M. W. Mohamed Mohideen

#### **Source:**

Haji Kafayatullah Rahmani. *Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre Kowloon*, Hong Kong. Hong Kong: Kowloon Mosque Committee, 2012.

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