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KARACHI AFFAIRS IN YEAR 2015-II

UZAIR BALOCH IN HOT WATERS:

Uzair Baloch had been the most powerful gangster in Karachi but later was seen heading towards active politics in Lyari. During meetings, Uzair Baloch described himself as the '*product of violence*'. At any given time, he could gather thousands in Lyari, and along with his close gang members and political patronage, he ran the most sophisticated Mafioso organization in Karachi earning billions with extortion, smuggling, kidnapping for ransom and trade of narcotics.

Uzair Baloch started as a young companion of Rehman Dakait – an infamous gangster of Lyari closely affiliated with the PPP who was allegedly killed by SP Chaudhry Aslam under mysterious circumstances in August 2009. Uzair Baloch's father Faizo Mama was an Iranian Baloch and a transporter. He was brutally killed by the rival Haji Lalu gang. When Uzair was in power, Uzair Baloch took revenge by chopping off the heads of Haji Lalu's two sons, Arshad Pappu and Yasar Arafat, and playing football with them.

In Lyari – Uzair Baloch handed over all the anti-Pakistan Baloch nationalists to intelligence agencies, in exchange for them ignoring his crimes, it is said. The People's *Amn* Committee [PAC], was designed and made to take on the MQM; PPP hawks wanted to end MQM's 'fear factor'. It was OK but amidst political reconciliation with the MQM, the PPP tried to distance itself from its Lyari group and Uzair's associates, however, it backfired.

On 29th December 2014; Uzair was arrested in Dubai by Interpol when he was crossing into the United Arab Emirates from Muscat by road; *he had left Pakistan in September 2013 and had gone to Oman and perhaps to UK also*. The Interpol move was confirmed by the Pakistani authorities and within a week they sent a Karachi police team to the UAE to get Uzair's custody but to no avail.

Later, the same FIA & Police team visited the Gulf state several times, met security officials there and also held meetings with Interpol but did not succeed. However, rumours were around that the UAE authorities secretly

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handed over Uzair to Pakistani sleuths but the fact remained that Uzair remained in UAE for many months thereafter.

Once known for his loyalty to the PPP and close contacts with its top leaders, including former home minister Dr Zulfikar Mirza, Uzair portrayed his PAC as a community group. It had been accused of widespread killings, extortion and running a drugs business both by police and PPP's rival parties. The Sindh government had banned the PAC and in October 2011.

The Sindh government later announced a Rs:2 million bounty on Uzair Baloch. However, it was withdrawn before the May 2013 general elections in a bid to appease the PAC, which had an iron grip over Lyari, since long considered a PPP stronghold.

Uzair fled the country after a Rangers-led operation was launched in Karachi in September 2013. In June 2014, on a request by the Sindh government, Islamabad approached Interpol for the issuance of a red warrant against him as he was booked in over 40 criminal cases till then.

The military operation of 2014-15 led by Pakistan Rangers – broke the back of militant wings of major stake-holder political parties including MQM, PPP and ANP. Having turned against the PPP, Uzair Baloch fled to Oman with a fake Iranian identity. His gang in Lyari was wiped out both by the Rangers and his former ally Baba Ladla but in separate moves.

In Dubai, a team of FIA and Sindh Police was working with Interpol to fight a half-hearted battle to bring Uzair Baloch back to Pakistan. They knew that during court appearances, they had [*purposefully*] not provided evidence that Uzair Baloch was a criminal in Pakistan. Karachi's police officer in Dubai held that:

"There is pressure on us. No one wants Uzair Baloch back in Pakistan, except the PML[N] government."

Whereas, referring to 'The Friday Times' dated 13th March 2015; Uzair Baloch pleaded:

"I am not criminal and I am living peacefully here in Dubai. All charges against me are baseless and politically motivated. Why didn't they arrest me when I conducted all those political functions for the PPP?"

I am prepared to come to Pakistan but I fear that I will be killed like Rehman Baloch [dakait] because I know too much.

I know things that could send major political leaders to jail, because they used me to do their dirty work."

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In Karachi, Dr Zulfiqar Mirza – a friend of Uzair Baloch by words – was very angry while urging that:

“My parting ways with the PPP has nothing to do with Uzair Baloch and everything to do with the policies of the current leadership of the party.”

PPP's senior leadership disagreed and contended that:

“Dr Mirza's biggest resentment with the PPP is about Uzair Baloch but we have no tolerance for criminalization of politics.”

Lyari was relatively peaceful since the new developments though the PPP practically lost an important constituency. The residents of the neighbourhood, who had worked for the PPP since Z A Bhutto times, felt gravely deprived, destitute and depressed saying that *“the PPP have not done justice with their decades old loyal voters.”*

After former MQM worker Saulat Mirza's shocking revelations in a video broadcast just hours before his execution in May 2015, reports surfaced that Uzair Baloch had also spilled the beans about his criminal association with the PPP.

On 19th March 2015; *Express TV's* anchorperson Gharida Farooqi, while hosting her '*G for Gharida*' programme, revealed that:

“Uzair Baloch had told UAE authorities that he had committed murders allegedly on the orders of PPP leadership, including its co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari, among others.

Baloch, currently detained in UAE, claimed that he was in direct contact with the PPP leadership and that he had carried out target killings in the city on the orders of PPP leaders.

Some of these orders came from the PPP co-chairman, former Sindh home minister Zulfiqar Mirza, incumbent Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Memon and even PPP leader Owais Muzaffar.”

Anchor Gharida Farooqi further claimed that PPP was trying its utmost to prevent Baloch from being extradited to Pakistan.

Refuting the Baloch's claim, Sharjeel Memon said that the PPP never ordered him to carry out any criminal activity. Instead, it was under the last PPP government that the biggest operation against criminal elements was carried out in gang-infested Lyari. Memon added:

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"We have always said that action should be taken against criminals irrespective of their political affiliation."

The PPP's Chief in the National Assembly Syed Khurshid Shah said that *"...the Lyari gangster was taking his revenge on PPP for the action against him and his fellow Lyariites."*

On 22nd March 2015; speaking to media reporters, Mr Shah avoided talking about death row convict Saulat Mirza's allegation against the MQM leadership while saying that:

"I cannot talk about Saulat Mirza, but the case of Uzair Baloch is different. Uzair is levelling allegations against the PPP leadership in order to take his revenge."

Lyari was a PPP stronghold, where the party had launched an operation to restore peace and order. Uzair Baloch escaped abroad since the noose was tightening around his neck to the targeted operation."

Syed Khurshid then claimed that the law and order situation in Karachi and Sindh was better than in Punjab. In his view, positive results of the Karachi operation were apparent and that the action against criminal elements were approved to be continued; a criminal was just a criminal irrespective of his party affiliation.

The fact remained that all political parties had mutually agreed to an operation against terrorists throughout Sindh, including Karachi. However, it was the MQM and ANP which had demanded an army operation in Karachi.

On 18th June 2015; Uzair Baloch confessed killing of two most important witnesses concerning Benazir Bhutto's assassination.

Uzair Baloch was painted as a target killer by some PPP local leadership because his role was over. Just those days, he was extradited from Dubai and kept in Peshawar allegedly in the custody of Intelligence agencies. From there, he released his video message confessing that he killed Benazir Bhutto's two important witnesses; he also exposed massive money laundering on behalf of PPP's top personalities.

One of the most significant witnesses was Khalid Shahnsha who was in Benazir Bhutto's jeep when she was killed in Rawalpindi. After his statement against army, Asif Ali Zardari landed in more trouble as his right

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hand man and target killer Uzair Baloch confessed many target killings in Karachi on the directions of Zardari. Allegedly, the Government did not disclose Baloch's presence in Pakistan; his probe was still going on.

More often, confessions in Pakistan are recorded under duress. Uzair Baloch had reportedly divulged some shocking things, as per media reports, even if fifty percent true, the PPP could have been in trouble. Baloch's frequent contact with the top PPP leadership was established by the statement of his daughter. Prima facie he had let loose a reign of terror by masterminding the notorious Lyari gang of Karachi.

Sheikh Rashid of Awami Muslim League [AML] rightly predicted hard days for the PPP. The PML[N] government tried to hinder or stop the action of the Rangers against the top PPP leadership in the light of confessions of Uzair Baloch due to pre-determined political expediency but the Army's top brass didn't like it. The government was asked to let the courts decide about the veracity of Uzair's confessions.

The likes of Uzair Baloch were nursed and nourished by the PPP, a majority political party in Sindh; just compare it with vandalism of one Gullu Butt during mid 2014 who belonged to the PML[N] Lahore. Politics in Pakistan, unfortunately, is marred by coercion and political blackmail and many political parties do this dirty work through their Uzair Balochs and Gulu Butts!

On 3rd July 2015; three gangsters affiliated with Uzair Baloch group were killed and another was injured when rivals suspected to be affiliated with the rival Baba Ladla group attacked them with automatic weapons in Gutter Baghicha, within the remit of Pak Colony police station Karachi. The gangsters affiliated with Baloch group and Aga Nasir Pathan group were sitting in Khawaja Mohalla, Maula Dad Village, when four armed assailants riding two motorcycles approached them and showered with bullets.

Three gangsters of Uzair Baloch group and Agha Nasir Pathan gang who were identified as 28-year-old Bilal, 35-year-old Abdul Ghafoor and 30-year-old Abdul Ghani were killed. Another suspected gangster, who was identified as 36-year-old Attaullah was injured and shifted to Civil Hospital; 9mm pistols and SMGs were used and no arrests could be made. The area where the armed clash took place was still a No-Go area for the police even.

MQM's RESIGNATIONS POLITICS:

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On 5th August 2015; Sindh Rangers asked MQM to hand over 187 alleged target killers among its ranks who were wanted for killing of police personnel that participated in 90s Karachi operation against criminals. Sindh Rangers sent a letter to the MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar providing a list of 187 alleged target killers.

The rangers' said letter said that 119 accused on the listed were those who had killed at least one cop while 47 were involved in the killing two policemen. One, namely Faisal, was wanted to the police in the case of five killings. The accused included Qamar aka Tadi, Amir aka Papa, Asif aka Chitta, Majeed aka Manjla and others.

The letter was originally sent to the MQM HQ at Nine-Zero but copies of it were endorsed to Sindh chief minister, home secretary, Inspector General of Police [IGP] and Karachi additional IG - and Sindh Rangers Lt Col Hassan Akhtar signed it.

MQM's Farooq Sattar told the media that he or his party had not received any letter from the Rangers like that. He also claimed that MQM chief Altaf Hussain had neither asked NATO or India for help nor urged them to interfere in country's internal affairs.

Referring to the daily '*Nation*' dated 5th August 2015;

"The said 187 individuals of militant wing of MQM were nominated in various murder FIRs of those police officials who had participated in those operations.

Since the beginning of ongoing Karachi targeted operation, which commenced on 5th September 2013, the MQM has been asking for the list of accused party workers involved in any sort of illegal or criminal activity."

MQM claimed that at least 40 of their workers were killed extra judicially during the said operation; over 200 were killed in various incidents of target killing, 350 were yet to be produced before the courts while the total number of their activists arrested by police and Rangers was 3,500.

Karachi City has been the victim to politico ethnic violence since decades. During the period of early 90s, operation of law enforcement agencies were undertaken to apprehend the criminals involved in violence.

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On 9th August 2015; the Muttahida Qaumi Movement [MQM] called for a "shutter down" strike to be observed across Sindh next day over the alleged extra-judicial killing of its young worker named Hashim.

Hashim — a member of the MQM media cell and Unit 164 Liaquatabad — was going to his residence from Nine Zero on the evening of 6th May, when he was picked up and taken to an unknown location. Hashim's family filed a petition in the Sindh High Court [SHC] for his recovery, upon which an FIR was registered on 28th July 2015.

After three months of his disappearance, Hashim's body was found from the Jamshoro area on that day of 9th August. His body had already been buried by Edhi, the MQM claimed.

MQM further suggested that since 1st January 2015, its 20 workers disappeared while 35 were killed through extra-judicial activity.

MQM Rabita Committee member Wasay Jalil took to Twitter to announce a peaceful strike and urged businessmen and transporters to show solidarity with the party's call for a strike in Karachi. There after the party withdrew its strike call for 10th August, the MQM decided to use the Sindh Assembly as platform instead.

Next day, the MQM lawmakers entered the House wearing black arm-bands as a sign of protest against the killing of their worker, Hashim. The tension worsened soon after when MQM's Kh Izharul Hassan, the opposition leader, sought time to brief the House about Hashim's death.

Speaker Agha Siraj Durrani pointed out that the MQM lawmakers had already spent a lot of time speaking on the issue. The CM also condemned it and assured a probe into the matter. Durrani requested the MQM members to return to their seats, but they refused; he adjourned the session.

Following the Sindh Assembly session on that day, the MQM demanded the FIR of Hashim's murder to be lodged against the chief minister Sindh. Speaking to the media, MQM's Azeem Farooqui said:

"The chief minister, who is the captain of this ongoing operation, is responsible for it. Not only Hashim but 130 of our workers are missing and 700 have been jailed."

Farooqui was thankful to the Rangers DG for assuring them of their help in arresting the killers. In response, Sindh's Information Minister Nisar

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Khuhro held MQM responsible for creating 'disorder' in the session. *"Today, they have broken all past records of violating the rules,"* he said.

Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah said later that he was ready to brief the House about the murder but the MQM members had already decided to create disorder. He said that:

"The family of Muhammad Hashim have lodged an FIR against unidentified person and the autopsy report also has confirmed that there was no torture marks on the body of the deceased."

On 10th August 2015; MQM Chief Altaf Hussain lashed out at Karachi based MQM's leadership for their cowardice and betrayal. Unclear on how to calm down their party leader, the elected members offered to resign and to the shock and surprise of some of them, Altaf Hussain had agreed before banging the phone on them.

[Sources confirmed that Mr Hussain was fuming because he felt that his parliamentarians had failed to defend him in the National Assembly. In a speech of the same day, the 10th August 2015, Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan had described Altaf Hussain as the root cause of the problem.]

During his address on phone that night Altaf Hussain especially criticised Senator Dr Farooq Nasim, Rauf Siddiqui and Faisal Sabzwari for *'deceiving him'*; he named them individually. He repeatedly told the legislators that they were of no use if they could not raise their voice against the *"oppression and atrocities being carried out against the MQM"*.

At this point a participant of the meeting, who was not an elected representative, said that the MQM lawmakers should resign from NA, the Senate and the Sindh Assembly. *Dr Farooq Sattar seconded the view.*

Altaf Hussain who was in extreme rage by then said that the parliamentarians could do whatever they wanted. The MQM parliamentarians were left with no choice but to draft their resignation letters, while members of the Coordination Committee in Karachi, London and the US called an emergency session to review their options in case the resignations were accepted.

On 12th August 2015; the MQM, for the first time in their political history, opted to seriously resign from the Senate, National Assembly and the Sindh Assembly. The MQM's 23 members of the National Assembly out of 24,

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eight Senators and 51 MPAs submitted resignation simultaneously after killing of its worker [Hashim] in Karachi.

Though the MQM maintained that they had earlier resigned from the National Assembly as well as the Sindh Assembly in 1992 as a mark of protest against the military operation in Karachi – but they had continued to work as such. Even in 1992, two MQM senators — Ishtiaq Azhar and Master Ali Haider — were not asked by the leadership to resign.

But in August 2015, the MQM leadership was of the view that the human rights issue was bigger than any other consideration and that the party should quit the whole system as a mark of protest. Moreover, there was no use of sitting in the assemblies where every political party was silent over human rights violations in Karachi, the MQM held.

The MQM, founded in 1984 by Altaf Hussain, was the second largest party in the Sindh Assembly and the fourth largest in the National Assembly after the PML[N], PPP and Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf [PTI].

The MQM had been a part of the ruling coalition at the centre and in Sindh for a larger period of time from 1988 to 2014 and it had the credit of sitting in governments with all major political parties — PPP, PML[N] and PML[Q].

During the previous PPP-led government, the MQM on a number of occasions threatened to quit the ruling coalition and on one occasion it even came out of the government, but rejoined it after getting assurances from the then president Asif Zardari. Besides resignations, the party also kept matchless track record of boycotting elections.

The MQM had proved its existence for the first time by winning a significant number of seats in the local government elections in Sindh three years after its creation in 1987. The party had contested the 1990 elections under the banner of Haq Parast. After the 1990 elections, the MQM became part of the ruling coalition in Sindh again — this time with the PML.

However, the MQM members came out of the National Assembly and the provincial legislature in 1992 because of the military operation against it allegedly discriminately. Altaf Hussain had already left the country for London months before the operation.

The party later boycotted the 1993 general elections for the National Assembly, but participated in the provincial assembly elections in Sindh and won 27 seats.

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The MQM also boycotted the local government elections held under Gen Musharraf in 2001, but took part in the general elections in October 2002. This time the MQM has resigned on a day when the Election Commission of Pakistan informed the Supreme Court that it wanted to conduct the local government elections in Sindh and Punjab in November and December.

The resignations by the MQM parliamentarians did not just take Islamabad by surprise because it was not planned by those who turned up in the speaker's office a day earlier i.e on 11th August 2015. In fact, none of the National or Sindh assembly members had even discussed the option in private. Till that late night the MsNA & MsPA of MQM gathered for a meeting along with members of the *Rabita* [coordination] Committee and some participants from the US. In their various locations, they were addressed by the MQM Chief from London.

However, a *severe dressing down* followed.

Several MQM leaders believed that quitting the parliament was not a right decision at that moment, especially because Altaf Hussain had himself conceded that he should have not boycotted the 1993 general elections.

Even Farooq Sattar's statement on that day was seen as reflecting this reluctance – after GEO News channel reported that the MQM resignations had been accepted, he was quoted saying that the government had different policy to deal with PTI resignations compared to how it handled the MQM's.

[The news broke out in the Capital because when Ch Nisar Ali Khan, the Interior Minister, heard that the MQM had submitted their resignations to the Speaker in his chamber, and the Speaker Ayaz Sadiq had taken the resignations and had ordered 'pl process' on the file being sent to the Secretary NA – he [Mr Nisar] rushed to the Speaker's chamber and advised him to immediately accept the resignations.

In fact, the Speaker had not written any order on the file but had verbally instructed his Secretary to start typing notifications of acceptance of resignations and for onward forwarding to the Election Commission of Pakistan.

PM Nawaz Sharif was on the foreign tour then.]

However, it is important to note that this was a one-sided interpretation because publicly, Farooq Sattar as well as others stood by the resigna-

tions. He told that as Altaf Hussain, their leader took the decision thus everyone would own it; a senior MQM lawmaker who had attended the meeting on that night divulged later.

It was also decided that as there was frequent talks of '*minus - Altaf formula*' so the MQM would not be contesting the coming local government elections in Karachi and Hyderabad.

Even otherwise, there was likelihood of delay in the local bodies' elections if the MQM resignations were accepted and by-elections held. "*For Altaf Bhai this is a win-win situation...he told them [the establishment] that he is still in control,*" commented another MQM leader.

Meanwhile, Altaf Hussain paid rich tributes to the MQM parliamentarians for submitting their resignations and making the whole nation proud. Following the resignation of MQM lawmakers from both houses of parliament, the MQM Rabita (Coordination) Committee had to decide the further course of action – the politics in Karachi was taking turn.

PTI's Chairman Imran Khan tweeted on country's current political situation saying: '*A tale of 2 resignations: One to investigate an election where all parties claimed election was rigged; & the other to save target killers.*' Whereas MQM's Farooq Sattar repeatedly alleged that his party was being targeted in the Karachi operation to create political space for PTI and the MQM-Haqiqi.

Sindh Assembly Speaker Agha Siraj of the PPP told the media that he would not accept the MQM resignations in haste. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that '*if MQM takes back their resignations, the government would work towards resolving their grievances.*' JUI[F] Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that he did not consider the move as a good omen - it would create a crisis situation in the country.

Jamaat e Islami [JI] Chief Senator Sirajul Haq said that the MQM's sudden and unexpected decision to quit from the assemblies was both surprising and sentimental. He added that in Pakistan, political parties were weak but the leaders were stronger, and politics revolved around the interests of personalities instead of principles.

Next day, PM Nawaz Sharif in a meeting with parliamentary leaders of various political parties decided not to accept MQM lawmakers' resignations from the assemblies. He treated MQM resignations issue the same way it treated PTI's resignations. The PM also decided to form a committee comprising multi-party representation to negotiate the issue with the

MQM. On PM's instructions, National Assembly [NA] Speaker Ayaz Sadiq kept the issue in adjournment until resolved through negotiations.

The most important factor remained that during the meeting, it was also decided that the Karachi operation would continue targeting terrorists in the city; however, the government would hold talks with the MQM to bring the party back to parliamentary politics.

Till then, the government had already tasked its key aides to negotiate with the MQM leadership. Interior Minister Ch Nisar Ali Khan, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and JUI's Maulana Fazlur Rehman were assigned to resolve the controversy and convince the MQM legislators to take back their resignations. The PM, who returned from his 3-day official visit to Belarus the same day, had discussed the issue with Ch Nisar at Islamabad Airport.

MQM's Farooq Sattar wanted the Rangers operation in the city but that it shouldn't be specific to the MQM saying that *"if their reservations are addressed, the MQM may return to Parliament."* Meanwhile, Maulana Fazl called Farooq Sattar urging the party to return to Parliament and play their constitutional role. The MQM leader demanded to constitute a judicial commission and a committee to probe the impartiality of the surgical operation in Karachi.

On 19th August 2015; with the meeting between PM Nawaz Sharif and JUI[F] Chief Maulana Fazl, the stage was set for the return of the MQM members to their respective elected parliamentary houses; the reappearance was indicated for only a formal meeting of the MQM delegation with the PM which was conveniently arranged after two days.

The JUI[F] Chief, who had once been playing the role of a trouble shooter, submitted a report about his meeting with the MQM leaders at Nine Zero. Federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Pervaiz Rashid and Ahsan Iqbal were also present on the occasion. The parliamentary group leaders had assigned the Maulana to negotiate with the MQM for withdrawal of its resignations.

MQM served 19-point memorandum called as 'charge-sheet' to the government expressing reservations about the mode of ongoing operation against terrorists and criminals in Karachi. Maulana Fazl held that it would not be fair if a group [PTI] was allowed to make comeback while the other sent out. His mission remained inconclusive in the wake of an attempt on the life of the MQM MNA Abdul Rashid Godil.

As per MQM's 19-point memo, the party's reservations were related to Karachi operation; 14 out of 19 points were concerned with Ranger's opera-

tion. The MQM was not against operation, but the issue was about targeting just one political party; the prime minister agreed to resolve the issue.

Reasonable demands of the MQM were to be met and apparently there was no legal hindrance in the MQM's demand of forming a monitoring committee to oversee the Karachi operation for alleged excesses from the Rangers and other LEAs. However, formation of monitoring committee for overseeing the operation was not an easy proposition since it could have an adverse impact on the spirit of Karachi operation.

On 3rd September 2015; due to 'non-serious attitude' of the government, MQM withdrew itself from the ongoing process of negotiation, demanding acceptance of resignations of the party's lawmakers without loss of further time. MQM's six-member team had held a third round of talks with the government's negotiation team a night earlier.

At an emergency press conference at Islamabad Federal Lodges that day, the MQM's negotiations team headed by Dr. Farooq Sattar put forth three basic demands:

- Undeclared ban on MQM's welfare activities be lifted;
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- MQM's political offices be allowed to function and;
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- Altaf Hussain's recorded statements be allowed to go on air on electronic media.

Dr Farooq Sattar said MQM lawmakers had already tendered their resignations from assemblies and the Senate on 12th August and even after a lapse of almost 20 days no grievance-redress committee was formed by the government. Dr Sattar reiterated that MQM was being pushed against the wall in the guise of Karachi operation.

"MQM faces an undeclared and unconstitutional ban on its political and welfare activities," Dr Sattar declared. All the political offices of MQM were shut and its welfare wing *Khidmat e Khalq Foundation* [KKF] was not being allowed to carry out its activities. Party's chief Altaf Hussain's statements – both live and recorded – were banned from going on air, terming it an unconstitutional act.

During ending September 2015; the MQM claimed that the authorities seized 10,000 sacrificial hides collected by its volunteers in Karachi during Eidul Azha festival days. Senior MQM leader Farooq Sattar said in a press conference that 35 vehicles including 10 trucks loaded with 10,000 sacrifi-

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cial hides were diverted to another location instead of allowing them to reach the central camp set up by *Khidmat e Khalq Foundation* [KKF].

KKF had set up 26 collection points across the city; but despite following legal ways for transportation of sacrificial hides MQM's trucks were stopped and volunteers arrested. All that happened despite the fact that KKF had administration's permission to collect hides. Dr Sattar held:

"We have got details of all the vehicles and are ready to share with administration. Anybody including KKF workers should be arrested if found involved in forcefully collecting hides,"

The Sindh Rangers and other law enforcement agencies had arrested about 11 people involved in snatching of hides of sacrificial animals on the occasion of Eidul Azha in Karachi. Acting upon complaints registered by residents of New Karachi, Landhi, Liaquatabad, Federal B Area, PIB Colony, Jamshed Quarters and Jacob Lane, the troops arrested those people and recovered 150 animal hides from their possession.

In fact, the Sindh government had announced a strict code of conduct for collection of animal hides according to which only registered organisations were allowed to collect the hides on *Eidul Azha*.

MQM's RASHID GODIL ATTACKED:

On 18th August 2015; MQM leader and Member National Assembly [MNA] Rashid Godil was critically injured as his car came under attack in Bahadurabad area of Karachi. At 10.30AM, four unknown assailants on motorcycles opened fire on Godil's car when he was on his way to MQM HQ, Nine-Zero, for a meeting with JUI[F] chief Fazlur Rahman. He suffered six bullets to his head, jaw and chest.

Fazlur Rehman was tasked by the PM Nawaz Sharif to convince the return of MQM lawmakers to Parliament.

Godil's driver, Abdul Mateen, succumbed to his injuries while the MQM leader was critically injured and immediately operated; he was targeted after being identified. 9mm pistols were used in the attack and eight bullet shells were recovered from the crime scene. The attackers came from behind the car and opened fire at MNA Mr Godil.

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Rashid Godil was in critical condition; doctors termed the first 48 hours important for Godil as his lungs were severely affected by the bullet he received. A team of expert doctors was looking after the MQM leader who had been put on a ventilator in the ICU.

The incident was not only condemnable but also raised serious concerns about the efficacy of the on-going Karachi operation; a thought provoking moment for those who claimed that peace was restored in Karachi. However, SSP East told MNA Godil was provided security but he preferred private security guards.

Meanwhile, MQM chief Altaf Hussain condemned the attack and expressed grief over the demise of Godil's driver. In a statement issued from his London's office, Altaf appealed to the nation to pray for MNA's recovery.

An investigation team headed by AIG Mushtaq Meher along with SSP SIU Farooq Awan, SSP East Javed Jaskani was immediately raised; the CIA and Counter Terrorism Department were to assist the JIT whereas Rangers were investigating the incident separately.

A week earlier, members of the MQM had offered their resignations from their seats in the Parliament over what they described as a campaign of victimisation against them. The resignations were not yet formally accepted when the episode occurred.

MNA Rashid Godil served as MQM's parliamentary leader in the National Assembly but was recently replaced by Farooq Sattar. He had joined the party in 2000 and became the town *Nazim* of Bahadurabad after contesting local bodies' elections. A businessman from the Memon community, he was elected as an MNA during 2008 general elections for the first time.

Meanwhile, MQM committee showed their concern over the arrests of its workers; five of its office bearers and activists were detained in Orangi Town, Qasba Colony, Jackson and Korangi.

Another MQM activist was also shot dead in the Orangi Town that day. Rahim, son of Moin, was fired upon by unidentified armed men and died on the spot. The MQM's Coordination Committee lamented that:

"On one hand MQM leaders are being attacked, while on the other hand law enforcement agencies are apprehending our workers instead of arresting terrorists of banned organizations."

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MQM's Farooq Sattar, while speaking to media said:

".....the incident is being considered as an attempt to sabotage the peace of Karachi and hoped that those behind the attack would be arrested soon and made to face justice."

On 12th October 2015; the Counter-Terrorism Department [CTD] of Sindh Police claimed to have arrested two accused for their alleged involvement in an armed attack on MQM legislator, Rashid Godil. The CTD carried out raids in several areas of Karachi and Hyderabad, to arrest the two suspects but could not be successful.

On 8th December 2015; however, the CTD police arrested the brother of main culprit in case of firing on Rashid Godil; he was Sohail Bakik, the brother of Shahid Bakik; Dunya TV News dated 8th December is referred.

SSP CTD Naveed Khawaja told that Shahid Bakik was behind the attack on MQM leader Rashid Godil in which his driver died, leaving Rashid Godil severely injured with many bullets in his face, neck and chest. A case FIR No 254/2015 was registered on complaint of Godial's brother-in-law under Section 7-ATA (Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997), Section 302 of Pakistan Penal Code and other sections against unknown suspects.

On 1st December 2015; an Anti-Terrorism Court issued non-bailable warrants (NBW) of arrest against an alleged Lyari gangwar criminal Shahid Bikik involved in the Rashid Godial attack case and three other cases registered at the Gulberg police station. This was for the second time that the court issued NBW against Shahid Bikik in this case and ordered to arrest Bikik and ensure his production in the court on 21st December.

The police, 10 days after the said attack on MNA Godil, had claimed to arrest a man namely Waseem as a 'main character' in the crime; he was arrested with the help of CCTV footage and he confessed before police that he attacked on Rashid Godial. It also surfaced that Waseem had made the plan with his friends in his house and then they attacked on him.

Shahid's brother Sohail told the police that Razi opened fire on Rashid Godil while another terrorist named Shariq was driving the motorbike. He also told that Shahid Bakik provided shelter to banned outfits' terrorists. Two motorbikes were used in the attack. The other motorbike was used by Asad and Haider.

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On 23rd January 2016; Anti-Terrorism Court [ATC] ordered arrest of investigation officer as he failed to arrest the key accused in the said case. The court also ordered to block disbursement of the investigation officer Hussain Mehdi's salary as *Shahid Bikik - a Lyari gangster and a key accused in attack at Rashid Godil* - could not be arrested. The order directed the police to arrest both - the accused and the investigation officer – and produce them before the court.

Shahid Bikik, having shelter of Peoples Amn Committee Lyari, was previously arrested in September 2013 by Karachi Police on his involvement in numerous cases of extortion and loot and kill cases but freed by the ATC on bail. Later he failed to appear before the court after taking bail in those three cases. Police report said that the accused was on the run after he was nominated in the Rashid Godil attack case.

Then there was news; the culprits are at large and the case is dumped in the ATC's court room.