**Second constituent assembly 1955**

The Federal Court’s decision in the Reference by the Governor General cleared the way for summoning the 2nd Constituent Assembly. The verdict of the Federal Court in Usif Patel’s case had put to an end the effort of Ghulam Mohammad and his nominated Cabinet to make a Constituent to make a Constitution by executive decrees.

The Federal Court unanimously declared that the task of framing a Constitution had to be performed by a Constituent Assembly. That decision was made on 13th April and two days later, the Governor General, Ghulam Mohammad, by proclamation, summoned a sixty-member ‘Constituent Convention’ to meet on 10th May 1955. The Convention was to be elected from the existing provincial assemblies and its function would be to replace the first Constituent Assembly.

The Convention, unless dissolved earlier, would stand dissolved at the expiry of six months and would be presided over by a person appointed by the Governor General. Of its sixty members, seven were to e reserved for non-Muslims in East Pakistan. The number of the seats was allocated as follows:

East Pakistan 30

Punjab 16

North-West 3

Sindh 4

The remaining seven would be nominated by the Governor General on the basis of one from Baluchistan, Frontier State, Khairpur State, Bahawalpur State, and Karachi. The Tribal Areas had two representatives. The proclamation of the Governor General was amended by subsequent orders. Within fifteen days, two new orders were issued. The first was related to the method of election to the Constituent Convention. It provided that the procedure for the election would be the same as had been adopted for the Constituent Assembly elected in 1947 that is, by the method of proportional representation with the a single transferable vote. The Governor General issued a second amendment Order on 27 April under which the Convention would have eighty members and would also function as the federal legislature. The new Constituent Convention would now have all powers which were exercised by the first Constituent Assembly under the provisions of Section 8 of the Indian Independence Act. The composition now stood as follow:

East Pakistan 40(9 for non-Muslims)

Punjab 21(1 for non-Muslims)

NWFP 4

Sindh 5(1 for non-Muslims)

The Governor General would nominate ten members as follows:

Baluchistan 1

Baluchistan States Union 1

Frontier States 1

Tribal Areas 3

Khairpur State 1

Bahawalpur State 2

Karachi 1

The composition of the Convention was based on the principle of parity of representation between East and West Pakistan. In East Pakistan, the leader of the united front, A.K. Fazlul Haq, was threatening to boycott the Constituent Convention on the ground that did not give East Pakistan a majority of seats on the basis of population. Subsequently, as a result of deal with the Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali, under which parliamentary institutions suspended since 1954 were restored in the East Pakistan, United Front accepted its representation. Law Minister Suhrawardi already accepted it. Party position in the second Assembly was very different. In the first Constituent Assembly the Muslim League had an absolute majority since it had captured almost all the Muslim seats. It was clear that from the beginning that the Muslim League would not enjoy that position in the new Assembly. It was in East Pakistan that out of 309 members in the East Pakistan provincial legislature the League only had 10 members and it could get one seat from province. In West Pakistan the League captured all the Muslim seats from Sindh and NWFP. In the Punjab internal divisions prevented it from having monopoly. It lost three seats to the dissident group led by Malik Feroz Khan Noon. With twenty-five members in the house eighty the Muslim League was still largest single party in the new Assembly.

Since no single party was in the position to command a majority the various groups lost no time in seeking alliances. A coalition of the Muslim League and the United Front was ultimately formed with Chaudhry Mohammad Ali the Former Finance Minister, as prime minister. Mohammad Ali Bogra quietly resumed his old assignment as Ambassador to the United States.

Chaudhry Mohammad Ali contributed a lot to the success of the new Assembly in framing a Constitution. Other prominent members of the New Assembly were H.S.Suhrawardy leader of Opposition, A.K Fazl ul Haq, Leader of the United Front. There was a complete absence of women from the Second Assembly. The immediate task before the Second Constituent Assembly was to revalidate those statues which had become null and void as a result of the legal disputes. The task was not too easy as it involved the delicate discussion of the merits of those statutes. The Assembly first met on 7 July 1955 and immediately passed the Validation of Laws Act of 1955.The first important and highly controversial task performed by the second Constituent Assembly was the unification of the West Pakistan. West Pakistan was established as One Unit. The Second Constituent Assembly also had the advantage of profiting from work of its predecessor. The draft provided for a strong center. Draft containing 245 Articles was finally approved by the Second Constituent Assembly