INTRODUCTION

The name of Sind is most probably derived from the word 'Sindhu', the Sanskrit name of Indus. It has been recorded in the Vedas as a self-moving river of golden hue, coming down the snow-clad mountain and after traversing a vast expanse of plan it finally spreads into the sea. It is a mighty river which is fed by branches on both sides. It has been also explained in term of Sapta-sindhavah, the land, 'par excellence' in the Rigveda. Sind is indeed a creation of mighty Indus, without which it would have been a continuation of Thar desert. Thus it seems that the word Sindhu which in the beginning denoted the areas fed by the Indus or the whole region beyond the Sindhu came to denote a certain region.

Sind, the land of one of the great ancient civilizations of the world consists of several cities and towns which have played a very significant role in the making of our history. While Harrappa and Mohenjodaro are treated as the twin capitals of what the world knows as Indus civilization, its cities have been the centres of cultures and religion since almost the dawn of the history in the region. Sindis had created an influential culture within the orbit of upper Sind region which

extended north east to Kashmir and South to Gujarat. They evolved a very highly developed urban system with a flourishing trade and economic affluence. The prosperity of the region was based on a rich agricultural soil watered by the mighty Sindhu on whose bank the great city of Mohenjodaro stood. This was the base and home of one of the earliest civilizations of the mankind. The strategic importance of this region is quite evident from the writings of the Chinese and Arabian travellers and geographers. The important cities of Sind were Alore, Debal, Brahmanabad, Banbhore, Uchh, Mansurah and Multan. Hiuen Tsang records sin-tu (Sindh) and Mu-lo-san-Pu-Lu (Multan) to be the centre of culture and social life. Multan, the Bait-uz-Zahab of the Arabs, is a place of great antiquity and cultural wealth. The socio-cultural contact between the Arabs and the local people and the assimilation of the two cultures helped not only in the rapid spread of Islam, but also paved the way for academic and cultural relations, intellectual collaboration and understanding between the Muslims and the Hindus. Moreover, Multan has been a religious centre of great importance since the ancient time being the abode of the Hindu god Surya. Hiuen Tsang, who visited these regions, tells us to have seen as many as thirty Hindu temples in existence in Sind. In Multan there were a number of Hindu temples, including the most celebrated

Surya temple. It was an important centre of religious significance for the Hindus. The devotees came from all over North, Central and Western India to visit the sun temple of Multan. Sind appears to have been a rich country in those days, mainly due to its flourishing trade. It was also rich culturally on account of its diversified religious pattern.

The province had also commercial significance from ancient times because there was a sea port of Debal. Through the Arabian sea this region was connected with the sea ports of the Muslim world. Hence Sind was a gate for the commercial activities with the Muslim world and India. It was actually the geographical importance of the region from commercial point of view that impressed on the minds of Arabs in the very beginning of Islamic history the need to establish their control over this region. Apart from the well known harbours that existed in the Arab world, they were in search of new ports to extend their influences to other regions. For this purpose, Sind appeared to be very useful to them. Most probably, this factor had prompted the Arabs to venture for the conquest of Sind much before the final conquest by Muhammad bin Qasim.

BOUNDARIES:

In view of the insufficient material on the history of the period and varying information about the boundaries of Sind

it is very difficult to fix the exact limits of Sind or to arrive at definite conclusion about it. However, an attempt is made here to discuss the problems in the light of available sources. The region covered by the mighty river is bordered by three deserts, Rajasthan in the east, Baluchistan in the West and Cutch in the South. The Greek historians have not defined any clear boundary of Sind. But the Greek accounts show that during Alexander's expedition Sind was divided into several independent states.\(^1\) The northern most was Alor, while Kachch-Gandhava and the Arabii (the Purali) formed the boundary of West. Later, Huen Tsang defined the region 'sintu' (Sind), West of the Indus including Cutch and Multan to the east as a part of a separate kingdom.\(^2\)

In the period of Chach (652-691 A.D.), the boundaries of Sind extended, "on the north to the mountains of Kiknan and Kurdan and on the South to the coast of Arabian sea and Debal. On its east is Kashmir; on the West is Makran.\(^3\)

At the time of the Arab conquest of Sind, Makran and the most of the Western Hills had already come under the orbit of

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2. T. Watters, II, pp. 252-54.

the Arab rule. Later, the Arab writers calling it as-Sind used it in a much wider sense. They included Multan in as-Sind and meant from as-Sind the whole of the lower Indus Valley from Multan down to the sea, including nearly the whole of modern Baluchistan. Balazuri (9th cent.) describes al-Kiknan (modern Qalat in Baluchistan) as a part of Sind. However, the Arab travellers and geographers mentioned the kingdom of Mansurah (i.e. Sind) as extending up to Alor in the north, while Turan and Budha were on its West, and in the east the boundaries extended up to the river Shakira (Sind Sagar) and Fahmal. According to Istakhri (10th Cent. A.D.) and Ibn Hauqal (10th cent. A.D.) from Saimur to Fahmal in Hind and from Fahmal to Makran and Budha and beyond as far as the territories of Multan all belong to Sind. Another geographical account Hudud-al-‘Alam (compiled 982 A.D.) defines the boundaries of Sind as on its east is the river Mihran, south of it is the great sea and the West of it is the province of Kirman and on the north of it the

2. Balazuri, p.421.
desert extended up to the territories of Khurasan.¹

The next important change in the boundaries of Sind occurred after the Ghorid conquest, when for a short while during the rule of Qubacha political control of Sind extended up to Tabarhind, Kuhram and Sarsauti. Later, as a province of Delhi Sultanate the boundaries of Sind recorded no great change.

After the disintegration of the Tughluq empire, Sind became independent under the Local dynasty of Sammah. During the last half of 15th century A.D. the territories of Sind towards cutch, at one time remained up to Sind Sagar, while the areas of Morji, Keri, Sathalpur, Wagnikot (Wanga) and Morowah were under the dominion of Gujarat.² It shows that during the Sammah hegemony the western boundary of Sind extended from the territories of Makran³ up to the desert of Sibi, though the region of Sibi was not actually under Sind.⁴ The eastern frontier appeared to have settled down from the regions of Bhakkar and the borders of Jaisalmer to Umerkot and Wange, while

² These territories were captured by Sultan Mahmud Baigra in 1472 A.D.; Shaikh Sikandar, Mira'at-e-Sikandari, ed. S.C. Misra, Baroda 1961, pp.126-7; Ali Muhammad Khan, Miraat-i-Ahmadi, ed. S.Nawab Ali, Baroda, 1928, p.57.
³ Makran was not a part of Sind, Yusuf Mirak, Mazhar-i-Shahshani, ed. S.Husamuddin Rashidi, Karachi, 1962, p.28.
⁴ Sibi desert was difficult to be crossed without guide. Mir Masum, Tarikh-i-Masumi, ed. U.H.Daud Pota, Poona, 1938, pp. 104,112; Mir Tahir Nisyani, Tarikh-i-Tahiri, Ms. Or. 1685, fol. 9.
Nagarparkar and Suleman Nagar (Cutch) were outside the Jurisdiction of Sind.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY:

Within its present boundaries, as a province of Pakistan, Sind lies between 23°35' and 28°30' north and 66°42' and 71°10' east having an area of 34.86 million acres and a population of (1972) 14 million. In the term of popular geography Sind has been divided into three climatic regions: Siro (Upper Sind), Vichola (middle Sind) and lar (Lower Sind). Physically, Sind is divided into these areas. (a) Western high lands (Kirther, Kohistan) (b) Lower Indus Valley (Western, Eastern Delta) (c) Desert (Pat, Thar).

WESTERN HIGHLANDS:

Kirther:- These comprise the range of the mountains which separate Sind from Baluchistan. The hills attain heights between 4000 and 5000 feet, but some peaks rise to nearly 7000 feet. Apparently barren but it affords grazing to large herds of cattle.

1. Masumi, p. 208.
4. M.U.J., p.103; Kute-ji-Qabar in Larkana district is 6878 feet.
Kohistan:— It runs parallel from north to south with deep broad valleys, with scanty rains and limited cultivation. Out of the entire area under cultivation is seven thousand square miles of Sind, Kohistan may not amount to more than two thousands acres in an average year. The crops grown here are Jwar and wheat in different seasons. The inhabitants are nomadic, living in tents moving with their flocks of goats and sheep in search of water and grass.

Lower Indus Valley:— It is again divided into the following regions: (a) Western (b) Eastern (c) Delta.

(a) The Western Valley:— Situated in the north west corner of the plains, it is formed mainly of older alluvium plains (Bhangar) with few outcrops of lime stone. The most productive region of lower Indus valley is about 160 miles north to south enclosed between the Indus and the Western Nara. It has kirthar range on the West and the Thar on the east.

(b) The Eastern Valley:— It is the ancient abandoned bed of Indus, a great Doab in recent alluvial sands and clays falling from 250 feet to 50 feet in 200 miles, spread over eastward from Indus to eastern Nara. The area also comprises

of three hill ranges including the Makli hill near Thatta. Drainage is faulty, however, numerous small alkaline lakes are found along the eastern Nara. The sand hills serve as a dividing barrier between the Indus and the dry Hakra.

(c) Delta:- The delta of the Indus commences below Thatta, which spreads to Cope-Mong in the West and to Rann of Cutch in the South east with a straight coastal line of 125 miles, so the delta covers an area of 2000 to 3000 square miles. Its annual average increase is only 41 yards. It has increased only about 97 square miles at the mouth of the Indus between Gharo and Kori creeks between 1873 and 1904 A.D.

Desert: (a) Pat (b) Thar

(a) Pat:- This is the name of a small area of 30 miles lying between the town of Shikarpur and the Bolan pass. There are no means of irrigation in this sandy tract. These areas are covered with sand hills i.e. 'Pats'. Little vegetation can grow, and that only after receiving some showers of rain. The common plants are kundi and those having thick fleshy stem and leaves with very long roots.

(b) Thar:- The eastern portion of the province is occupied by the desert or the desert of Rajputana, covering

2. Lamabrick, p.23.
large portions of Sukkur, Nawabshah, Khairpur and Thar Parkar districts. On the introduction of canal irrigation, the western segments of this area have been transformed into fertile territory.\(^1\) The desert is full of sand duens and being wind blown. The sand in the Thar, Rann of Cutch and the delta of the Indus is blown over by the south West winds from the sea during the summer. It forms the irregular and parallel ridges of Sand duens which may rise to about 150 feet.\(^2\)

**CLIMATE:**

Due to absence of rainfall, the climate of Sind is variable but generally hot. It has two seasons, cold and hot. There is practically no rainy season.

The region was more fertile and received greater rainfall during the ancient times.\(^3\) But a drift in the monsoon range had resulted in substantial reduction to rainfall, drying up the weather of the region.

**RIVERS:**

The main river of Sind is Indus. It enters Sind at 28°26' North and 69°47' East near Kashmore. It flows with a depth of 4 to 6 at low water at Daryashah. The Indus runs 580 miles within Sind and then it falls into Arabian Sea. Its

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2. Lambrick, pp. 11-12.
average width is 480 to 1600 yards during the winter season. Its depth varies from 4 to 24 feet. The only other Perennial stream is river Hab, which sets the Sind Baluchistan boundary. There are many other dried channels called Fuleli, Ren, Hakara, Sakra and others are found in the Indus delta.

**Lakes:**

The largest lake is Manchhar on which the Historic town of Sehwan is situated. During inundations it measures a direct distance of 80 miles and covers an area of 150 miles. It is drained through Aral river into the Indus. The lake provides much fishing in summer.

**History of Sind in the Early Period:**

The history of Sind is generally traced back to the Indus civilizations which had flowered approximately two thousands years before the Aryans who settled on the Indus between 1000 B.C. and 500 B.C. During the ancient period for long stretches of time Sind experienced foreign domination. In 516 B.C. the region of Sind was annexed to the Persian empire by Darius Hystaspes (522-486 B.C.). It was the twentieth

5. A.K. Majumdar, Concise History of Ancient India, I, Delhi, 1977, p. 129.
satrapy of the vast Achaemenian empire. Sindhu was considered the prosperous and more populous satrapy of the Persian empire, paying immense tribute of three hundred and sixty talents of gold dust. The Achaemenian ruled it for about two centuries till 326 B.C.

Alexander crossed Indus in February 326 B.C. and appointed Peithon, son of Agenor, the governor of the region. His mercenaries mutinied and killed the governor. However, the Greek could not hold the territory and returned to his homeland in 317 B.C.

The region of Sind was then subdued by Chandragupta Maurya after 321 B.C., who after gaining victory over Seleucos in 305 B.C. had occupied the large districts west of the Indus. The Mauryan dynasty began to disintegrate in 185 B.C. and the Bactrian Greeks began to occupy the region across the Hindukush. The province of Sind was again occupied by the Sakas or Scythians (130-48 B.C.). They ruled the northern part of the sub-continent till the arrival of the Kushans. It was also a part of the empire of the greatest Kushan ruler, Kanishka (120-160 A.D.). He was a Mahayana Buddhist and naturally

1. Cambridge History of India, ed. E.J. Rapson I, Cambridge, 1922, p.307; See also Rawlinson, p.54.
4. Rawlinson, p.92; See also A.K. Majumdar, p.182.
strengthened the Buddhist tradition in Sind. However, the Buddhist tradition survived much longer. With the collapse of the Kushan empire in the third century A.D. and the advance of the Sassanians into the Indus delta, the picture gradually changed. In the fifth century A.D. the White Huns gradually intruded in the region of Sind. This period saw the beginning of the resurgence of the Brahminism.

However, the region of Sind became independent once again at the close of fifth century A.D. under the Rai dynasty. Raja Diwaij founded this dynasty with its capital at Alor in about 485 A.D. The origin of this ruling family are not known to history, but after gaining power the founder extended his realm in the east to Kashmir. On the West to Makran, on the south to the part of Debal and on the north to the mountains of Kiknan and Kurdan. The king made his headquarters the centre of the kingdom with its capital Alor, while the rest was divided in four administrative divisions with their head-quarters at Brahmanabad, Siwistan, Askandah and Multan. Each province was ruled by a governor. History reveals that five rulers of the Rai dynasty ruled this vast region. They were, Rai Diwaij, Rai Sahiras I, Rai Sahsi I, Rai Sahiras II, Rai Sahsi II, each

1. Rawlinson, pp.93, 95; See also A.K. Majumdar, pp.188-89.
2. Rawlinson, p.111.
4. Ibid., p. 11.
being the son of his predecessor. According to *Chach-Namah*, Rai Sahiras I was assassinated in an encounter with the Persian king of Nimruz at Kirman and was succeeded by his son, Rai Sahsi I. After his death his son Rai Sahiras II and Rai Sahsi II ruled the region successively.

During the period of Rai Sahsi II, a Brahman named Chach, son of Silaij, was employed by the king's chamberlain, and he was soon promoted to a high rank. Muhammad Ali Kufi gives a detailed account of his service and his entry into the king's service, his love affairs with the Queen Sohandi Devi and the events which followed in usurping power. He then married the Queen.¹

The provincial governors regarded Chach an usurper and revolted against him in order to take revenge of the cold-blooded murder of their king and to challenge the new king's power. They united themselves under the banner of Bajerah, a near relation of the deceased king and the governor of Multan. However, the artful Queen soon realised the danger and persuaded the Brahman Chach to proceed to Multan to supress the rebellious governors. Chach marched towards Multan and defeated the governor at Sakkah and then at Multan. After this, Bajehra submitted an applogy to Chach. The new ruler restored him to the governorship of Multan.

¹ Chach-Namah, p.20.
After a glorious reign of forty years Chach died and his brother Chander ascended the throne. He ruled the region successfully for seven years, and after his death, Chach's sons, Dahar and Daharsiya divided the vast kingdom among themselves with their respective capitals at Alor and Brahmanabad. The kingdom was again united when Daharsiya died and Dahar became the ruler of the vast region. In the last part of his reign the Arabs gained foothold in 712 A.D.

In Sind the rule of raja Dahir came to an end in 712 A.D. as a result of the conquest of this region by Muhammad bin Qasim in the reign of Umayyad Caliph Walid b. Abdul Malik (705-715 A.D.). Sind remained under the rule of Muhammad bin Qasim as a province of Umayyad Caliphate. Afterward, other governors used to be appointed here to rule over the province and this position remained till the establishment of the Abbasid Caliphate in 750 A.D. The Abbasid Caliphs also treated it as a part of their caliphate and they retained the same administrative set-up for this province as was established under the Umayyads. In the latter period when the Abbasid caliphate witnessed the signs of weakness, their control over Sind also became weak and they could not rule over this province effectively. Consequently, different parts of the province again passed under the occupation of local Hindu Chiefs and only Multan and Mansurah remained under their control. This

1. Chach - Namah, pp. 185-86.
2. Balazuri, p. 431.
situation developed mainly from the second half of the ninth century A.D. and Multan and Mansura emerged as independent states, the first under the rule of Banu Samah and the second under the rule of Habbari dynasty. Banu Samah continued to rule over Multan till the Ismaili overthrew them in 969-70 A.D. and established their rule. Multan came under the occupation of Mahmud of Ghaznin in 1010 A.D. But even afterward it practically remained under the rule of the Ismailis and their rule was finally overthwon by Shahabuddin Ghori in 1175 A.D. Afterwards Sind became a part of Delhi Sultanate and the governors used to be appointed here by the Delhi Sultans. The Mongols repeatedly made the region of Sind their target but they could not achieve any considerable success there. Moreover, this region had also provided shelter to a number of rebellious governors during the sultanate period.

However, during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq Sammah again tried to establish their independent rule in Sind. In

1. Istakhri, pp. 103-4.
1333-34 A.D., the Sammah Jams of Lower Sind and Cutch established another independent ruling dynasty at Thatta. Muhammad Tughluq tried to bring it under his direct control, but could not succeed. Firoz Shah captured Thatta and took Jam Juna and Jam Banbinah as captives to Delhi. They ruled the region independently as a vassal of Firoz Shah. After the death of Firoz Shah it broke away and again slipped into the hands of local rulers i.e. Sammah Jams.

Amir Taimur invaded and captured Sind in 1398 A.D. and granted it to Khizir Khan, who recognised the sovereignty of Taimur and his successor, Shah Rukh.

Sind was still under the rule of Jam dynasty when again it was invaded and conquered in 1520 A.D. by a foreign invader, Shah Beg Arghun. However, the region of Multan was ruled by the Saiyids and it was again ruled by a pious man Shaikh Yusuf, a great grandson of Shaikh Bahauddin Zakariya Multani. The government of Shaikh Yusuf was overthrown by the chief of the Baluch tribe Langah, called Rai Sahra, and after capturing

1. Masumi, pp. 48, 60.


power, he assumed the title of Mahmud Shah in 1437 A.D. This region was finally brought by Shah Husain Arghun under his rule in 1527 A.D.

SOME IMPORTANT SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF SIND

The history of Sind in Pre-Mughal times has great importance from political and cultural point of view, but very few contemporary sources are available. No separate work on Sind was compiled during this period. Chach-Namah, the famous history of Sind, deals with very early period and it mainly gives account of the conquest of Sind by Muhammad Qasim and the establishment of Arab rule in that region. As matter of fact, the tradition of compiling regional history developed in the Mughal period. The well-known persian sources of the Sultanate period, (Tajul-Masir of Hasan Nizami; Tabagat-i-Nasiri of Minhaj-us-Siraj; Tarikh-i-Piroz Shahi of Zaiduddin Barani and Shams Siraj Afif, Insha-i-Mahru of Ainul Mulk Mahru and Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi of Yahya Sirhindi etc.) do not provide sufficient materials for the history of Sind. Certain works of the Mughal period (Tarikh-i-Masumi of Mir Masum; Tarikh-i-Tahiri of Mir Tahir, Tabagat-i-Akbari, of Nizamuddin Ahmad, Tarikh-i-Ferishta of Abul Qasim Ferishta; Akbar-Namah of Abul Fazl; Ma'asir-i-Rahimi of Abdul Baqi Nihawandi;

1. Ferishta, II, p.325.
2. Masumi, p.159.
Tarikh-i-Mazhar-i-Shahjahani of yusuf Mirak etc.) also give information about the pre-Mughal history of Sind but they are short of being considered sufficient and much useful for the study of this period. Therefore, our main sources for the present study have been the works of Arab historians and travellers who showed keen interest in the history of this region and gave detailed account of different aspect of its history. Here, an attempt is made to briefly evaluate some of these important sources and to highlight their importance for the history of Sind.

1. **Akhbar us-Sind Wal Hind** of Sulaiman Tajir (Circa 851 A.D.) deals with the political, social, economic and religious life of India. It gives the history of the rajas of India, Sind and other regions, their culture and the social life of the region.

2. **Fufuh ul-Buldan** of Ahmad bin Daud Balazuri compiled in 869 A.D. It deals with the history of Sind from the second Caliph upto the Abbasid Caliph Mutasim Billah (833-842 A.D.). It has a detailed chapter on the conquest of Sind by Muhammad bin Qasim. The information given by Balazuri about Sind is very valuable.

3. **Tarikh-i-Yaqubi** of Ahmad bin Yaqub bin Jafar Yaqubi (d. 900 A.D.). It is an universal history. It deals with the history of the conquest of India and gives
ample information about the governors of Sind of the Umayyad as well as the Abbasid period. It also gives records about the cities of Sind.

iv. *Kitabul-Buldan* of Ibn al-Faqih (c. 903 A.D.). It contains the geographical account of different countries. It also sheds light on the socio-economic life of Sind, export, import and mainly about the agricultural products.

v. *Kitabul Masalik wal Mamalik* of Ibn Khurdazbih (d.911 A.D.) is a book of geography. It provides significant information about Sind specially its economic conditions including the agricultural products and sources of revenue.

vi. *Silsilat-ul-Tawarikh* of Abu Zaid Hasan Sirafi. It is a travel diary. It deals with the history of China and India, specially about the rajas of India and the political and social condition of the period, alongwith the habits and customs of the people.

vii. *Ajaib-ul-Hind* of Buzurg bin Shahriyar (10th Century A.D.). Being a capitain of ship, the author had personal experiences about the coastal cities of India which he gives in his work. It forms an important source on socio-political, religious and economic life of the province.

The author had travelled widely in a number of countries. He visited India in 951 A.D. and prepared a map of Sind. Apart from providing material about political and social aspects of Sind's history, it also contains useful information about agricultural and other products of the region.

ix. *Kitab Surat al-Arz* of Ibn Hauqal (10th century A.D.) is also a useful source for the history of Sind specially its geography. In this work he gives a map of Sind and also mentions the names of the cities of Sind and defines its distances from one place to another.

x. *Muruj-uz-Zahab-wa Maadin al-Jawahir* of Abul Hasan Ali bin al Husain al-Masudi (d. 956 A.D.). In this book the author records his personal observations and experiences after travelling in Sind, Gujarat and Chimure. The book deals with the history of the rajas of the region and that of Muslim rulers of Sind. It contains detailed description of their genealogy, military power and also the local traits.

xi. *Ahsan-ut-Tagasim fi Marifat il Agalim* of Bashri al-Maqadasi (d. 1000 A.D.). He travelled widely including India. He describes in his book the history and culture of the people of Sind. The book is a mine of informations
about the products of Sind and its trade, industries, coins, currency, custom duties, revenue and weights and measures. It also provides details of the total revenue of Sind.


xiii. *Chach-Namah*: It was originally an Arabic work known as *Minhaj al-Masalik* written by the Qazi Ismail of Alor. It was translated into Persian by Ali bin Hamid Kufi in 1216 A.D. in the court of Nasiruddin Qubacha in Sind. It deals with the history of Sind from the Rai dynasty till the conquest of Sind by Muhammad bin Qasim. It is first regional book about the Arab conquest of the region. Generally the informations were collected from the narrator Abul Hasan Al Madaini. However the book is very useful and informative except the chapter on the arrest and dismissal of Muhammad bin Qasim. The romance of Muhammad bin Qasim with the two daughters of raja Dahir as recorded by the author is totally baseless. The author does not maintain the sequence of the events carefully.

xiv. *Taqvim ul-Buldan* of Abul Fida (1273-1331 A.D.). It is a descriptive geography and deals with geography of the
important places of India. It also sheds light on the import of goods from Basra to Sind and some important trade routes.

Rehla of Ibn Batuta (d. 1377 A.D.). He came to Sind in 1333 A.D. and records an eye witness account of the important historical events of the region. He also mentions about the ports, custom duties and the distances of different cities. He also sheds light on the educational institutions and some important Qazi families. Ibn Batuta gives information about the customs, traits, habits of the Ismailis and the Sumirah and Sammah of Sind.