The First Constituent Assembly of Pakistan

The First Constituent Assembly of Pakistan came into existence under the Indian Independence Act 1947, at the time of independence. Its roots went back to 1946 when elections for the constituent assembly of United India were held to decide the destiny of the All India Muslim League. The first meeting of the constituent assembly of united India was held on 19th December 1946, but Muslim League boycotted it since they demanded a separate constituent assembly for Pakistan. With the acceptance of the 3rd June plan, a separate constituent assembly was formulated for Pakistan.

The inaugural session of the first constituent assembly of Pakistan was held in Karachi in August 1947. Mr. J.N. Mandal was elected as temporary chairman of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Subsequently, Jinnah was elected as the president of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, on 11th August 1947 and Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan as its Deputy President. The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan functioned from 1947 to 1954 and involved two major parties—the Muslim League representing all Muslims except for a few and The Congress Party representing the twelve million Hindus in Pakistan.

The first constituent assembly set up several committees to carry out its tasks. Most important of these was the Basic Principles Committee; it was assigned the task to report per the Objectives Resolution on the main principles by which the constitution of Pakistan was to be framed. Basic Principles Committee set up three sub-committees and a special committee named Talimaat-i-Islamia which consisted of scholars to advise on the religious matters arising out of Objectives Resolution. Basic Principles Committee submitted its interim report in September 1950 and the final report in December 1952.

The final sketch of the constitution was prepared and the Constituent Assembly was near to the completion of its purpose. But at this point, the Constituent Assembly was suspended by Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad, on 24th October 1954. He stated that the Constituent Assembly had lost the confidence of the people; this ruined the efforts of the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan which had been working towards formulating a viable constitution for seven years.