

POLITICS IN PAKISTAN

SURENDER NATH KAUSHIK



REPRODUCED BY
SANI HUSSAIN PANHWAR
MEMBER SINDH COUNCIL, PPP

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With Special Reference to Rise and Fall
of Bhutto

SURENDRA NATH KAUSHIK
1984

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Pakistan occupies a position of crucial importance in the South Asia region, more specifically as India's close neighbour. Naturally therefore, it has attracted the attention of academicians.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto appeared on the Pakistan political scene as a meteor and also disappeared in the like manner. However, the Bhutto phenomenon persists in contemporary Pakistan. As a dynamic leader Bhutto possessed a multi-dimensional personality. He not only succeeded on the domestic front but also tried to project his image as a third world leader. The Bhutto phase in Pakistan represented a shift from military-bureaucratic authoritarianism to parliamentary democracy. His style can also be distinguished from the established pattern of leadership in Pakistan -mainly because he operated within a constitutional set up. His endeavor to institutionalize a new style foundered on the rock of his own personal ambition and also because the army had deeper roots in the Pakistani politics than he could visualize.

It gives me immense pleasure to place Politics In Pakistan: A Study of The Rise and Fall of Z. A. Bhutto in the hands of scholars of Pakistan and South Asia. I would like to avail this opportunity of thanking Dr. Surendra Nath Kaushik, who has produced an immensely useful work on Pakistani Politics, under the auspices of the South Asia Studies Centre.

DIRECTOR
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RAMAKANT

PREFACE

This study grew out of my assignment at the South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. It was indeed a challenging obligation, made more so owing to paucity and non-availability of source-material. I believe that several dilemma; and vague notions which I confronted were at least partially resolved and clarified consequent upon useful discussions with the faculty and area – experts. I am indebted for that opportunity.

I must explain that the chapter – scheme of this study seeks to maintain some sort of explanatory continuity rather than uphold chronological sequence. The purpose was to present as viable a thematic study as possible under the given circumstances, in full cognizance of the expanse of the subject and the several possibilities of critical evaluation, I had to defer any ambitious notions and attempt a modest study, which it ultimately turned out to be. I am aware of the limitations of this study. I must state that the present study is restricted to events and issues upto April 5, 1979 and does not, therefore, claim to sort out the transformation that followed.

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Ramakant, Professor and Director South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, for suggesting the subject of this study as well as for his academic guidance and constructive evaluation. His erudite insight and comprehension were of great inspiration to me.

Professor Iqbal Narain former Director, South Asia Studies Centre now Vice – Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, had always taken keen interest in my academic endeavors and his suggestions in this context have been of great help to me. I am sincerely beholden to him.

Dr. Satish Kumar, Associate Professor of Diplomacy, School of International Studies, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi, very kindly went through the draft of this study and gave me very useful suggestions, for which I express my sincere gratitude.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the valuable suggestions given by Dr. D. B. Mathur, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, at every stage of this work.

I am thankful to authorities of the libraries of the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi and the Central Library, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, for their help and cooperation.

And, finally, I am deeply beholden to Shri S. B. Gupta, Proprietor, Aalekh Publishers, for taking up my assignment as his own and imparting to it the format of his kindness and generosity.

Surendra Nath Kaushik
December 22, 1984.

BHUTTO'S ASSUMPTION OF POLITICAL POWER: AN INTRODUCTION

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto assumed power of the residual (west) Pakistan¹ on December 20, 1971, consequent upon the emergence of its erstwhile eastern wing (East Pakistan) as independent Bangladesh. The landslide victory of his Pakistan People's Party (PPP) during 1970 general elections enhanced his popularity and enabled him to take over from the military Junta. This was a very challenging moment in the history of Pakistan. Bhutto inherited a truncated and disillusioned nation, facing multifarious challenges on socioeconomic and political fronts. These challenges, however, did not deter Bhutto's quest for consolidation of power. Soon; he earned considerable popular support. Bhutto came to acquire the esteemed prefix, "*Quaid-e-Awam*" (leader of the people) and, it is believed that his popularity was perhaps next only to "*Quaid-e-Azam*" (Father of the nation) Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

In his shrewd and concerted style, Bhutto succeeded in maintaining himself in power for over five and a half years, a feat of some consequence considering the fact that Pakistan had till then, given little evidence of resilience of political leadership. Previously, as is known, Pakistan was dominated by bureaucratic-military leadership. In fact, in totality it might be stated that Bhutto deserved credit for his popular pronouncement that Pakistan and democracy could well, and effectively, coexist, which was a departure from the style and approach of his predecessors. Had Bhutto operationalised his popular policies and "radical programmes and steered clear of issues that later eroded his legitimacy, he would have been better placed to his political tenure considerably.

Beginning with vociferous advocacy for democracy and socialism Bhutto lapsed into unfortunate tenor of personal and partisan ambition and adventurism which ultimately caused his downfall. For the sake of his own survival, Bhutto adopted a dual style on the one hand, through radical postures, he assured the common man of inevitable dawn of equality and social justice. On the other hand, he seemed to have been over enthusiastic for safeguarding the interests of orthodox-feudal elements and business community.

¹ After the creation of Bangladesh the remaining (West) Pakistan covers an —area of 310,403 sq. miles. In December 1971, then East Pakistan covering an area of 54,501 sq. miles and 70 million people, 56% of the total population of united Pakistan declared itself as an independent state. This was a great challenge to the ideological foundation of Pakistan. It is widely believed in reliable quarters that Bhutto was the "catalyst" of Pakistan's dismemberment. His unwillingness to accept the landslide victory of the Awami League of Sheikh Mujib materialized the movement for separate Bangladesh nation.

And yet, for all sections of society to note, Bhutto's style seemed to have been reflected in his carefully pronounced postures of concern catering to all sections of Pakistani society without bartering away his political alternatives and decision making discretion. It might be recalled that like his predecessors Bhutto exploited the name of Islam and indulged in anti-India tirade in order to ensure his legitimacy. Though, Bhutto enthusiastically claimed to rebuild a "New Pakistan" of what was left, he did not succeed entirely in the ultimate analysis. Not surprisingly his tenure witnessed religious and sectarian clashes, regional disparities political instability and economic stagnation and widespread violence, which together presented a gloomy picture of Pakistan.

What eventually became a source of protracted anxiety was the widening crisis of national identity of Pakistan. The situation became more acute after the liberation of Bangladesh. In the "New Pakistan", dilemmas of national integration surfaced with crudity and spelt concern for the system as such. During Bhutto's rule, regionalism sought to assert itself in a variety of ways especially repeated allegations and voices of concern against Punjab's domination in various walks of national life. The call for autonomy for provinces followed. In the absence of viable alternative Bhutto could neither control these trends nor did he succeed in containing the military and bureaucracy, the former exhausting more than half of the total national budget, with a view to warding off alleged treat from India. Such a policy of defence could not preclude strengthening of political ambitions of armed forces. As later events showed, Bhutto's game failed. As for bureaucracy, it might be added that Bhutto had to rely heavily on its allegiance and fidelity. But, in highly surcharged political climate, Bhutto's calculations misfired once again and one might surmise that either, the bureaucracy was not prepared to go all the way along with Bhutto, to the point of no return, or else that Bhutto relied upon elements of doubtful credibility. However, one might view the past, Bhutto failed to correctly assess the potential sources of mischief.

Both as President and Prime Minister of Pakistan Bhutto exerted effective influence on national and provincial politics and it was often difficult to discern where his influence turned into interference. Democratic accountability soon became a casualty. By the end of 1974, Bhutto's name became synonymous with the political system of Pakistan. "Bhuttoism" became sole ideology of the nation.

Under strict Emergency regulations Bhutto exercised his authoritarianism as if the trends of South Asian neighbours had afflicted Pakistan as well. What followed was perhaps inevitable, considering the fact that Bhutto was never a serious votary of democracy. It seems that having consolidated, or so he believed, his position and authority, Bhutto announced the date of general elections. As

subsequent events showed, there was widespread rigging at the March 1977 polls which ultimately led to the army 'Coup' (July 5, 1977).² The erstwhile mentor of democracy and socialism came to be looked down upon as detractor and persecutor. In the totality of perspective of Bhutto's rule, it might be said that if only he did not over-stretch the patience and trust of his followers among citizens and within the party and if he promptly conceded demands for fresh elections, his stock would have gone up and perhaps, he would have rehabilitated his former popular image.

It appears that Bhutto miscalculated the potential and extent of popular fervour and support and was equally confounded by over reliance on the numerical and brawn power of the PPP. The numerous coercive and repressive measures he adopted to neutralize antagonists and perpetuate personal and partisan hegemony, easily invited criticism and disbelief abroad and mass frenzy at home. Whatever Bhutto could or could have done for Pakistan pales into insignificance if one ponders over the fact that he failed to exterminate the intriguing recurrence of military intervention in Pakistan political system.

It is true that the general elections of 1970 provided Bhutto with a purposive probe in to the mechanics of power-politics and also induction of the PPP into spoils of electoral victory. There were other equally weighty factors that ensured for Bhutto a reasonable level of mass adulation and considerable popular expectations.

Even his detractors would not deny that Bhutto was a unique personality. His flamboyant oratory, persuasive style, academic attainments and feudal, aristocratic paternalism, created instantaneous impression on the common man. His training in 'laws' and political science stood him in good stead in his career as an activist. Some even thought that he commanded greater veneration and trust than those attributed to M. A. Jinnah at one time. Bhutto's youthful dynamism was an instant draw for the common man, and for the youth and students specifically, he emerged as a natural leader and mentor. Bhutto was not unaware of these expressions of almost total trust in him and he succeeded in harnessing these forces to his -maximum advantage so long as the title favoured him. If he gambled and erred massively his support base also eroded, ensuring his fall from grace.

If one goes over the vocabulary Bhutto persisted with in his numerous public meetings and announcements, the interesting fact emerges that he employed

² By the end of 1974 major South Asian Countries witnessed similar political trends such as growth of personality cult and rule of Emergency. The mounting pace of repressive politics ultimately resulted in the downfall of the ruling elite of several South Asian States.

expressions as were familiar to even the poor. His utterances seemed to be hall marks of sincerity and profuse concern for the poor and the deprived. He would lapse into self-pity and genuine pain and concern after flashes of extravagant and impossible policy declarations, signifying considerable talent for playing to the gallery. To the *Ulema*, he gave the call of commitment to Islam; to the feudal landowners, he would recall his own *wadera* (Sindhi landlord) antecedents, and, to the radical and pseudo-radicals, he gave the mythical prefix and suffix of socialism. All these postures *cumulatively* made Bhutto look 'different' and full of promise. It was not surprising why he came to be looked upon as the "savior" of the people.

Though it is too early to delineate the manifold aspects concerning 'Bhutto's elevation to national leadership, it would be relevant to state that Bhutto's familial political socialization and personality traits notwithstanding, his long association with Ayub's military government proved more helpful in learning the art of real politics. Owing to his father's distinguished stature in provincial politics of Sindh, Bhutto came into contact with several erstwhile political entities, such as G. M. Sayed, Ayub Khusro, Amir Ali Lohari, Haji Abdullab Haroon and others. Pakistan's last Governor General and first President, Iskandar Mirza, also a close friend of Bhutto's father, evinced keen interest in Bhutto and was responsible for his entry into Ayub's military government. In a way, General Ayub was taken up by Bhutto's youth and ebullience.

On October 27, 1958, Bhutto became the Minister of Commerce and Industries. He was then around thirty and the youngest federal Minister to be appointed in the Asian sub-continent.³ In January 1960, Bhutto was appointed Minister of Information and National Reconstruction, Bhutto was awarded Hilal-e Pakistan, the highest civil honour in August 1963.⁴ Bhutto assumed the office of Foreign Affairs Minister in January 1963 after the death of Muhammad Ali Bogra. As Foreign Affairs Minister Bhutto tried to give a new perspective to Pakistan's foreign policy and reformulated its priorities and alternatives. From an overt pro US inclination Bhutto succeeded, to an extent, in normalizing Pakistan's relations with both the communist countries the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

General Ayub needed Bhutto, as much as the latter needed the former, for the simple reason that Bhutto's talent, energy and zeal notwithstanding, perhaps he would have done practically nothing if Ayub's patronage and ready acceptance were not there. Bhutto could be credited to have repaid a major portion of the debt to his benefactor as he succeeded in convincing the people, by and large, of

³ See: Victoria Schofield, *Bhutto: Trial And Execution*, London, Cassell, 1979, pp. 2-3.

⁴ After his exit from Ayub's cabinet Bhutto surrendered 'Hilal-i-Pakistan' award on February 24, 1969.

the legitimacy of Ayub's military regime. Prior to 1965, Bhutto gave full fledged support to Ayub's military dictatorship.

So long as it suited his political ambitions, Bhutto continued to support the Ayub regime and as soon as it became obvious that Ayub's credibility was being seriously jeopardized, he cleverly dissociated himself from and in fact, stood against Ayub's regime. Political instability, socio-economic unrest and war of 1965, were reasons enough for the people to be disillusioned with Ayub. Bhutto's opposition of the Tashkent Declaration raised his stature. The people seemed to have been taken up by the new found charisma of Bhutto in a big way in the post 1965-phase.

On his part, Bhutto openly accused the Ayub regime of failing to invest itself with a legitimate national purpose. He charged that it was a government of the privileged few, which perpetuated administrative corruption, nepotism and chaos. During his visit to erstwhile 'East Pakistan' in November 1967, Bhutto openly attacked Ayub's dictatorial postures and expressed his open support to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's "Six-point Programme".⁵

Bhutto's trump card was his formation of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in 1967.⁶ The political credo of the PPP, significantly, revolved round: "Islam is our Faith, Democracy is our Polity, Socialism is our Economy and All power to the People".⁷ On March 25, 1969, Ayub was forced to quit and the then commander in chief, General Yahya Khan, assumed leadership of Pakistan. During Yahya regime, pressures for restoration of democracy became more severe, which ultimately led to the first general elections (1970) and also, overwhelming electoral victory of the PPP in West Pakistan.⁸

The radical and socialistic pronouncements of the PPP proved to be populist expectation and the electorate gave its candidates overwhelming support. In the two prosperous provinces i.e., Punjab and Sindh, Bhutto's PPP emerged as a majority party. In addition the prevailing disunity among other parties mostly rightist and religious helped in PPP victory. It was not strange for disillusioned electorate to turn their fury against the previous regimes by voting

⁵ The Pakistan Times, November 3, 1967.

⁶ Pakistan's daily Dawn (25 November, 1967) commented that Party (PPP) "will be one man show"----- "Bhutto can shift his ground faster than a fox and, unlike a leopard, can change his spots from year to year."

⁷ For details refer to Hasan Askari Rizvi, Pakistan People's Party: The First Phase, (Lahore, Progressive Publishers, 1973).

⁸ See: Dilip Mukerjee, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: Quest For Power (New Delhi, Vikask 1972), pp.67-103. Shahid Javed Burki, Pakistan Under Bhutto, 1971-77 (London, Macmillan, 1980) pp. 11-58

overwhelmingly, for the PPP in search of a systemic alternative. However, it should be recalled that Bhutto failed to muster adequate following in Pakistan's two provinces Baluchistan and the NWFP.

That, however, did not adversely affect his assumption of almost complete control over Pakistan's political system. Infact Bhutto's rise to power witnessed the beginning of a new phase in Pakistan's politics and systemic process, His tenure in power was of considerable significance and his fall from grace seemed inevitable, considering the policies he came to adopt and pursue almost ruthlessly.

QUEST FOR CONSOLIDATION OF POWER: THE PHASE OF INTERIM CONSTITUTION OFCEMBER 1971-JULY 1973.

After the disintegration of Pakistan the then President, General Yahya Khan was forced to hand over power to the democratically elected leader Z. A. Bhutto. Prior to the adoption of the new constitution, Bhutto exercised powers through an *interim constitution*. He assumed both the offices of the President and of Chief Martial Law Administrator. It was widely believed in several quarters that given a popular mandate Bhutto was likely to transform the political system into an egalitarian, democratic one. It is a matter of debate whether Bhutto; himself a product of electoral process, did in reality, have enduring faith in the democratic system. However, it is true that he never tired of giving considerable priority to slogans of democracy and socialism, his interpretation notwithstanding.

“The New Pakistan” as Bhutto termed, it was obviously facing manifold problems and challenges. Pakistan’s defeat in the war (December 1971) with India caused unprecedented economic crisis, political instability along with erosion of morale of the entire nation. In fact, Pakistan appeared to be on the verge of further disintegration.

Bhutto was shrewd enough to exploit such a critical national situation, in his first broadcast to the nation, he said:

“I have come in at a decisive moment in Pakistan. We are facing the worst crisis in our country life, a deadly crisis. We have to pick up pieces, very small pieces but we will make a new Pakistan”.¹

It was not only Bhutto’s duty to rehabilitate the shattered morale of the people of Pakistan, he did indeed make considerable efforts to raise the nation, from the ashes as it were. But, it is one thing to aspire and hope for a strong, viable nation and quite another to be able to undo the inherent constraints and consolidate instruments of nation-building. He made categorical declarations that the old military regime was finished and under his leadership Pakistan will be more democratic and strong nation witnessing the beginning of new saga in the annals of Pakistan”.² Bhutto hopefully asserted: “We are going to build a new country

¹ Quoted in Satish Kumar, *The New Pakistan* (Vikas, New Delhi, 1978) p. 1.

² Z. A. Bhutto in his article "Pakistan Builds A new" (*Foreign Affairs*), Vol. 51, No. 3 April 1973, 541-554) has stated : "Since the early years of Pakistan's inception democracy in Pakistan had been supplanted by dictatorship,--The introduction of democratic process is being accompanied by measures aimed at the establishment of egalitarian society".

again. It is almost like the first chapter of the genesis of Pakistan".³ His announcements seemed to have been directed for consumption of the common man as well as his opponents and with the obvious intention to assert that civilian rule had come to stay. Above all, Bhutto had to ensure his own legitimacy. How he went about seeking it is an interesting prelude to fruition of his political ambitions, as subsequent events amply showed.

It might be recalled that, Bhutto, in his initial speeches took recourse to anti-India tirade. Justifying the relevance of two-nation theory, Bhutto refused to recognize the existence of Bangladesh as a, separate, independent nation. He gave out the expectation that the eastern wing of Pakistan would come round and revoke its separate entity. He insisted "There is no Bangladesh, there is East Pakistan What we must do is to get People's consent for grand reconciliation".⁴

As a dramatic political gesture, Bhutto released Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, permitting him to return to Dacca via London. This move was coupled with an attempt at publicly maintaining the fiction of Pakistan as a federal union of four provinces of West Pakistan with Bangladesh. Bhutto was prepared even to step down, as President, making Mujib the President of Pakistan.⁵

As far as his pronouncements went, Bhutto seethed determined to refurbish the structure of the army and bureaucracy. He was well aware of the Nested interest that these two had acquired in Pakistan and that they might even in future threaten his own power. It was for that reason that General Yahya Khan was removed from office (President) and Chief of Army Staff General Abdul Hamid Khan was also deposed. A three-man judicial Commission headed by former Chief Justice Hamoodur Rahman was appointed to investigate into the "military crackdown in East Pakistan". As a shrewd political leader Bhutto wanted to prevent professional soldiers from becoming "professional politicians". Similarly Lt. General Gul Hasan and Air Marshal Rahim Khan were replaced by trusted and loyal officers like General Tikka Khan and Air Marshal Z. A. Chaudhry.

It was widely talked about that Bhutto purged the army set-up with the exclusive purpose of preventing the army to stage another comeback as well as to ensure its continuing support for his political survival.

³ Dilip Mukerjee, Z. A. Bhutto: Quest For Power, (Vikas, New Delhi, 1972).

⁴ Ibid : p. 8.

⁵ Robert La Porte: Power And Privilege: Influence and Decision-Making in Pakistan (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1976) p. 101.

In addition to the purge of the army, Bhutto overhauled the entire-bureaucratic structure. About, 1,300 civil servants were dismissed under Martial Law Order No. 114. Several civil servants were demoted from their higher ranks, and many were suspended. Obviously, an ambitious political leader like Bhutto could not afford to take the “steel frame” of the system for granted.⁶ He curbed privileges and powers of the CSP and other branches of the civil services. Moreover, Bhutto assailed remnants of “Viceregal” system in free Pakistan and warned that the military and the bureaucracy would not be permitted to go beyond their specified duties and obligations.

It was not unnatural that soon after there was a demand for lifting martial law. But, Bhutto was hesitant to set an early date for the return of civilian government.⁷

Throughout the interim constitution phase, Bhutto endeavored to consolidate his power and authority. He directly interfered in the “making” and “unmaking” of provincial governments violating democratic and constitutional norms. Gradually, it became obvious that Bhutto was not prepared to either trust his antagonists or to be tolerant to their political existence. “For instance, the activities of democratically elected NAP-JUI coalition governments in Baluchistan and the NWFP were severely curbed under the dictates any directives of the federal government.

On the front of socio-economic reforms Bhutto was quite vocal in his pronouncements but took little interest when it came to actual policy-making and execution of programmes. It is true that with a view to gaining the sympathies of the working class, passports of 22 top business families were impounded on. December 22, 1971. Several statutory curbs were also imposed. Some arrests were made both of key businessmen and of top industrialists. In addition, on January 2, 1972, management of 20 private firms with assets of 200 million were taken over by the government. This move, however, excluded foreign-owned firms or investment and the cotton textile industries. Through a presidential order, promulgated on March, 19, 1972, Life Insurance was nationalized.⁸ Such policies, notwithstanding, no one took Bhutto seriously as a socialist. His measures did not seek to eradicate the ills and evils of the existing socio-economic reality. If at all, he wanted to present himself as a reformer in

⁶ Neither Bhutto's interim constitution (adopted in April 1972) nor the permanent (1973) constitution included the "guarantees" which were provided to civil servants previously in the 1956 and 1962 Constitutions.

⁷ Dilip Mukerjee, op. cit : p. 174.

⁸ Ibid : pp 177-206

which venture, also he was partly successful. However, he was at no time either genuinely anti-capitalist nor anti-foreign investment.

It might be recalled that on March 1, 1972, Bhutto announced lowering of ceiling on individual ownership of land from 500 to 150 irrigated acres, and from 1000 to 300 non-irrigated acres. The upper ceiling of permissible land holdings was reduced to 240 acres. In addition the government decreed several changes in the landlord tenant relationship to eliminate domination of the landlords. Liability for payment of water rates and other agricultural taxes was shifted from tenants to landowners. These reforms were, in fact, introduced to appease the poor peasants and workers.

On February 10, 1972, Bhutto's government proclaimed a "new labour policy", raising the workers' share in the annual profits of the undertaking from two percent (as fixed by Ayub regime in 1968) to four percent." Employees were specifically directed to improve the living standards of the workers, providing them with Educational and housing facilities.⁹

In his enthusiasm for idealistic pronouncements, Bhutto introduced some educational reforms, which were publicized as socialistic. Private schools and colleges were nationalized. On March 15, 1972 the federal government introduced a "16-point Education Plan" providing free education upto class X and raised salaries of teachers to bring them at par with those drawn by government officials.¹⁰

However, the socio-economic reform measures proved -to be neither effective nor far reaching. Moreover, the measures frustrated the radical elements and antagonized vested elite interests. Also, industrial workers and agrarian labourers came to realize the futility of alleged reforms. It was widely felt at that time that Bhutto's policies and measures were meant to ensure the welfare of the middle class.

Maintaining a facade of democracy and socio-economic justice", President Bhutto was all the while concentrating on acquiring absolute power. Popular resentment against Bhutto's atrocities was mounting in all the four provinces of Pakistan. Signs were visible that the country was drifting towards a grave domestic crisis. The opposition parties were insistent upon introduction of "Parliamentary-federal form of government", in accordance with PPP's 1970 general election Manifesto. On this issue one could see intraparty cleavages also surfacing and adversely affecting party discipline and harmony.

⁹ See Meenakshi Gopinath: Pakistan In Transition (New Delhi; Manohar Books, 1975) pp. 118-119.

¹⁰ Asian Recorder, April 1-7, 1972.

In the constituent provinces of Pakistan sub-cultural groups openly waged struggle for provision of safeguards for development of their respective socio cultural heritage and identities. Above all, the three provinces of Pakistan, *i.e.* Sindh, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province, openly expressed apprehensions of growing dominance of Punjab. At the same time Punjab and Sindh were pressurizing the federal government for added privileges claiming to be the exclusive support base of Bhutto's PPP. On the pleas of territorial dimensions and prosperity, Punjab was indeed in a better position to take the bargaining stance. The leaders of Punjab, besides having monopoly in politics, economy, administration, and army were demanding greater regional-autonomy and reinforcement of "Islamic values". They were exerting immense pressures for promotion of "Punjabi culture", since they were apprehensive of Bhutto's preferential attitude towards "Sindhi culture". It was alleged by some Sindhi leaders that Bhutto was leaning more towards Punjabis to the detriment of the Sindhis, and yet none else than Bhutto himself could be more suspicious of the preponderance of Punjabi elements in the army and administration, which provided the support base for him. That was Bhutto's dilemma. He required a reliable support base; he had one though its reliability was suspected. Also, the support – base was not necessarily Bhutto's best choice.

Situation in Sindh was becoming very critical. Bhutto succeeded only in satisfying the vested interests, the *waderas* and big industrialists of Sindh. The leaders of opposition parties were not impressed with Bhutto's flamboyant gestures and politics of appeasement. The veteran opposition leader, G. M. Syed organized "Sind United Front" and revived his militant regional "Jiye-Sindh Movement" for greater regional autonomy and saving original "Sindhi" culture from the influence of "Urdu-speaking" settlers known as *Muhajirs* (immigrants).¹¹ Militant Sindhi regionalists propagated the theory of "Sons of the soil" demanding more safeguards to the original residents of Sindh. They pleaded for more security in governmental jobs and administration, which was heavily occupied by the outsiders. Echoing the "Six-point programme" of late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, G. M. Syed demanded that the federal government should deal with only defence, foreign affairs and currency matters. Pressures of Sindhi regionalism were so intense that Bhutto was compelled to grant the demand of adopting "Sindhi" as the official language of Sindh province. Violence gripped the entire province on July 7, 1972, when Sindh Assembly passed a bill making Sindhi the only official language. The leaders of Jamaat-i-

¹¹ The Muhajirs are generally known as "new Sindhis" who constitute about 50% of the entire Sindh population. They constitute nearly 70% of the population in the metropolitan city of Karachi and about half the population in the second biggest city of the province, Hyderabad. In other cities of Sindh, like Sukkur, Jacobabad and Rohri they constitute a sizeable part of the population.

Islami¹² advocating the cause of Urdu-speaking *Muhajirs* pressurized Bhutto to retain “Urdu” as the official language. Bhutto ultimately resolved the language controversy through a “peace formula” -announcing both ‘Sindhi and Urdu’ as the official languages of the province.

In Baluchistan and NWFP, Bhutto was really on the horns of greater dilemma. These two provinces posed real challenge to Bhutto’s authority. The non-PPP (NAP-JUI-coalition) governments in Baluchistan and the NWFP were critical of Bhutto’s iron hand methods and excessive centralization. The local Baluchis and Pakhtoons demanded “regional autonomy” and the restoration of “Undiluted democracy” and socialism as promised in 1970 Manifesto of the PPP¹³.

The local Baluchis and Pathans launched regional militant movement like “Greater Baluchistan Movement” and “Azad. Pakhtoonistan Movement”. It might be recalled that these two provinces; since the very creation of Pakistan remained subjugated to the will of the central government in general, and other relatively prosperous provinces Punjab and Sindh in particular. Specific socio-cultural identity of Baluchis and Pathans was alleged to be threatened. In September 1972 important leaders of the NWFP and Baluchistan were accused of fomenting anti-state Conspiracy, hatching plots, in London and Geneva, under an alleged “London-Plan”.¹⁴ The official media also gave out stories of large-scale procurement of arms and ammunition in the NWFP and Baluchistan through foreign sources which were the alleged enemies of Pakistan since its creation. In the name of national unity, it was widely reported in international press that, Bhutto ruthlessly crushed the genuine aspirations of the Baluchis and Pathans for ensuring his unchallenged authority and survival. Moreover, Bhutto also tried to put Baluchis and Pathans against each other.

With the mounting pressures of regionalism and opposition and with the increasing pace of infighting in the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) Bhutto

¹² The ruling PPP was strong in rural Sindhi-Speaking areas of the province. The urban centers were split mainly between the Jatmat-i-Isiami (backed by Urdu-Speaking new Sindhis. The sons of the soil).

¹³ Khan Abdul Wali Khan the leader of the NAP and the leader of opposition in the National Assembly criticized President Bhutto's repressive measures and demanded restoration of “Undiluted democracy” under a new democratic and Socialistic constitutions, See Asian Recorder 29 July and 4 August, 1972.

¹⁴ The issue of the alleged 'London-Plan' was also raised in the national Assembly on September 12, 1972. The then Interior Minister Abdul Qaiyum Khan moved a resolution. He alleged that according to report in *Nawa-i-Waqt* (10-9-72) which were based on report of London-Trines Akbar Bugti, Ataulala Mengal, Ahmed Nawaz Bugti, Malik Ghulam Jilani, Yusuf Haroon, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Zafar All Shah gathered in Loudon. These leaders reportedly held discussions with Sheikh Mujib and his associates in London and Geneva. They jointly envisaged a confederal structure for Pakistan with full regional autonomy to the four provinces of Pakistan in turn, to be federated with India and Bangladesh. See: The National Assembly of Pakistan (Legislature Debates) September 12, 1972, vol. 1, No. 22, pp. 124-125.

ultimately decided to replace the interim phase with Parliamentary-federal constitutional framework by 1973. By mid-1972, he appointed a Committee, of which he became chairman, to draft the new constitution.

True to Pakistan's previous experience in constitution-making, things became complicated at the very outset. On the issues bearing upon form and content of the constitution, acute differences came up between the government and the opposition parties and also within the ruling PPP. Specifically, the issues were:

- (i) The nature of the executive;
- (ii) The relationship between the state and religion (Islam), and
- (iii) The quantum of regional autonomy of federating units.

The differences within the ruling PPP surfaced in October 1972, when Bhutto, due to ideological differences asked, the then Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Mahmud Ali Kasuri, to quit the constitution-drafting Committee and the National Assembly. Subsequently, Kasuri was expelled from the PPP in February 1973.¹⁵ Another prominent PPP leader Mairaj Mohammed Khan (Minister of state for political affairs in the Cabinet) also resigned on account of differences with Bhutto's policies on "labour and political matters".¹⁶

Rightist *Islam Pasand* parties and conservative pressure groups were anxious to protect the alleged values of "the land of the pure" - Pakistan, in the name of incorporating adequate "Islamic provisions" in the proposed constitution. The leftist forces were insisting for a constitution based on the ideals of democracy and socialism as promised in PPP's (1970 general election) manifesto.

Initially, Bhutto was not very enthusiastic about inclusion of rigid Islamic provisions in the constitution. However, for his legitimacy and political survival, he succumbed to pressures of orthodox *Ulema* lobby. Events showed that when these provisions came to be incorporated in the body-politic of Pakistan, an entirely different value-system was initiated which, by no stretch of imagination, could be equated with the aspirations of a modern state.

Amidst mounting regional tensions in constituent provinces, Bhutto agreed to include federal provisions in the constitution. It was widely felt that Bhutto

¹⁵ Differences between Z. A. Bhutto and Mahmud Ali Kasuri were on the basic aspects of the proposed constitution. The former wanted to have a modified version of Parliamentary system providing unchallenged status to the Chief executive. While the latter was in favour of an "unqualified Parliamentary system" based on Westminster model.

¹⁶ Asian Recorder, 11 November, 1972.

might have conceded the federal principles though he could not be trusted to abide by them.

In spite of the intra party dissensions, Bhutto ultimately succeeded in gaining consensus of different political parties at the 'All-Party Constitutional Conference' held at Rawalpindi on October 20, 1972.¹⁷ The Constitution Committee of the National Assembly completed the draft and formally submitted it to the Constituent Assembly on December 31, 1972. The draft of the permanent constitution was, however, a modified version of the agreement arrived at by the All-Party Conference (October 20, 1972). The leaders of the opposition accused Bhutto of centralizing all power in the bands of the chief-executive that is the Prime-Minister. The modifications introduced by Bhutto were against parliamentary norms. For instance

- (i) In order to be valid, a motion expressing want of confidence in the Prime Minister must also name his successor;
- (ii) Such a motion can not be moved during the budget session:
- (iii) Once a motion of want of confidence is defeated, a subsequent one can not be tabled within a period of six Months; and
- (iv) For a period of 15 years or three general elections thereafter, whichever is longer, such a motion has to be passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of the National Assembly.

The Provincial governments especially, in Baluchistan and the NWFP, were not satisfied with certain provisions regarding centre province relations. The National Awami Party (NAP) called a meeting of its General Council on 17 November, 1972, to voice its opposition to the so called "Constitutional Accord." General Council of the NAP in its resolution criticized provisions regarding the role of Prime Minister at central level and the role of Chief Ministers at provincial level. It expressed dissatisfaction over the quantum of regional autonomy.

¹⁷ The main points of agreement at All-Party constitutional conference were :

- (i) A federal Parliamentary system with a Prime minister as the chief executive responsible to the National Assembly;
- (ii) President to be a titular head;
- (iii) Bi-Cameral legislature;
- (iv) Designation of Pakistan as the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan" and declaration of "Islam as the State religion";
- (v) Incorporation of two lists: "federal" and "concurrent" and all residuary power resting with the provinces.

Dawn, October 21, 1972.

Moreover, it was critical of the policy of direct recruitment to national services and the manipulation of media by the establishment.¹⁸

Bhutto seemed to be losing patience. He resorted to iron-hand methods to contain the challenge of the opposition. Severe restrictions were imposed on opposition leaders and on provincial governments. The federal government mobilized the police, the Federal Security Force and the army to crush dissent. It became apparent that Bhutto had given the provincial governments a clear hint to toe the line of the federal government to ensure their own interests. It was strange that Bhutto had to rely upon the military and the bureaucracy and the history seemed to be repeating itself as it were.¹⁹

Despite the repression and coercion, fissiparous tendencies were mounting with greater intensity. The entire situation appeared to be similar to that of "Balakanization" of Pakistan. Violent clashes between the government and opposition were common features in the National Assembly. Protesting against authoritarian tendencies of the government, Pakistan's opposition parties gave a call for "Pakistan Black Friday" on March 23, 1973.²⁰

Even within the ruling PPP, fissures became obvious. Erstwhile radical elements and former supporters accused Bhutto of imposing personalism, violating the norms of 1970 election Manifesto of the PPP. Consequently, several disenchanted PPP members on March 27, 1973 joined the opposition boycott of the National Assembly, demanding introduction of a "democratic constitution leading to a socialist economy"²¹

In Punjab violent clashes occurred between the government and opposition. Also the rebel group of the PPP, led by Mukhtar Rana and Ahmed Raza Kasuri, was posing tremendous challenge to Bhutto's leadership.²² From opposition it was Telrrik-e-Istiglal of Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan which accused Bhutto of

¹⁸ Asian Recorder 16-22 December, 1972.

¹⁹ Opposition leader in the National Assembly, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, accused President Bhutto of being "counter revolutionary" and "Fascist." He described the situation under Bhutto worse than the previous martial laws. Referring to the "relentless campaign of character assassination against the NAP and its leaders, Khan Abdul Wali Khan said : "I call him Adolf Bhutto, because of his fascist policies. His only aim in life in to secure absolute and undiluted power at the cost of the welfare of the people of Pakistan." Asian Recorder, 25 November, 1 December, 1972.

²⁰ Far Eastern Economic Review, 2 April, 1973.

²¹ Pakistan Times, March 28, 1973.

²² Link, 2 December, 1972.

exploiting the people of Pakistan in the name of democracy and socialism. He called Bhutto a “sick man”, “thoroughly evil”, “insane” and a dictator”. However, the pro-establishment media publicized Asghar Khan’s political postures as detrimental to the integrity and viability of Pakistani nation. On the other hand praising Bhutto’s rule, the media highlighted the achievements of the PPP expressing commitment and faith of Punjabis in the leadership of *Quaid-e-Awam*.

In Sindh, the situation was very tense. Protesting against Bhutto’s ruthless postures, the militant Sindhis were insisting upon the release of their leader, G. M. Syed. In major cities of Sindh, the local Sindhi students smashed Mohammed Ali Jinnah’s photos from their educational institutions and replaced them with those of G. M. Syed’s. The “Sind United Front was critical of the policies of the federal government over the issue of the repatriation of 2,60,000 Behari Muslims from Bangladesh. The Jamaat-i-Islami was strongly pleading for the rehabilitation of Behari Muslims in “Urdu-speaking” areas of Sindh specifically in Karachi and Hyderabad. This was strongly opposed by the local Sindhis who were demanding specific safeguards for the protection of their distinctive socio-cultural interests. Their interests were grossly endangered by the heavy influx of outsiders.²³

In a series of swift moves to reassert federal authority, Bhutto imposed central rule in Baluchistan and the NWFP in February 1973.²⁴ To counter the challenge of mounting provincialism, Bhutto installed puppet governments replacing the democratically elected NAP-JUI coalition governments.²⁵ Besides this the federal government, deployed units of army in these two provinces under the supervision of General Tikka Khan, who, in addition to his earlier notoriety in erstwhile East Pakistan, earned the stigma of “butcher” of the people of Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier Province.

The challenges, thus were several and manifest, complex and exacting. Shrewd and calculating as he proved, Bhutto succeeded in contriving the support of all the major political parties for the proposed constitution.

²³ See: News Review On South Asia, institute of Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, May-June, 1973

²⁴ In a bid to strengthen his hold and curbing the threat of regionalism, Bhutto appointed loyal and faithful persons as governors of Baluchistan and the NWFP. In Baluchistan the former Governor Bizenjo was replaced by Akbar Khan Bugti and Aslam Khattak was appointed the Governor of the NWFP replacing former governor Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil.

²⁵ On 15 April 1973, a coalition government (PPP, PML (Q) and United Front of Independents) headed by I. K. Gandapur was installed in the NWFP. Similarly, on 27 April, 1973, a three-men coalition government (PML (Q), JUI and PPP) headed by Ghulam Qadir Jam was installed in Baluchistan.

The New constitution was finally approved by the National Assembly on April 10, 1973. It was notable that out of 128, 125 members present and voting, out of the 146 members in all, put the stamp of their approval. On August 13, 1973, Bhutto assumed the office of Prime Minister of Pakistan the new constitution came into force on August 14, 1973. Z. A. Bhutto, thus, completed a significant phase of his tenure in the political life of Pakistan. What preceded that, and what eventually followed, give a reasonably reliable clue to the success and failure of a mercurial Asian politician.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION (1973): AN EXPERIMENT

With the adoption of the new constitution on 13 August 1973; Pakistan embarked upon the Parliamentary-federal phase, which remained suspended for almost two decades. In the beginning it was thought that Bhutto would succeed in some measures in resolving the multifarious challenges within the parliamentary – framework. Knowledgeable people characterized the adoption of new constitution as a significant landmark in the annals of Pakistan. There was reason enough to expect that Bhutto would have learnt the relevant lessons from Pakistan’s antecedents, especially the military’s role and apprehensions about its comeback. His repeated call to establish secular socialist processes could not be lightly dismissed and yet, as time passed, it became evident that Bhutto was not seriously concerned with translating his zealous ideas into systemic realities. It seems he did not take the challenge of nation-building and integration as priorities. It was no alternative to take recourse to the convenient myth that once he was firmly in the saddle, nation-building and integration would automatically become settled facts. If, in fact, Bhutto believed in such a miracle, it did not happen, ultimately.

On the one hand, Bhutto was armed with the potential of institutional assets of a parliamentary system, and, on the other, the people were rightly cultivating hopes and aspirations, in keeping with representative democratic norms and traditions. A hiatus between the two contexts could spell disaster. Perhaps, that was Bhutto’s greatest challenge, and his calculated neglect of one or the other, or both, was beset with serious consequences, Was Bhutto cognizant of that is another matter.

In the beginning, however, it seemed Bhutto was endeavoring to be acceptable to all segments of society. Nevertheless, it soon became apparent that he was primarily concerned with means and measures for the smokescreen of parliamentary federal democracy. He grew unreservedly committed to concentrating absolute powers in the office of the Prime Minister. It might be recalled that successive Pakistan leaders floundered in ventures to give the nation a new constitution. Their exclusive preoccupation with partisan objectives led to their political failure and also precluded them from giving Pakistan a viable and purposive constitution. Pakistan continued to suffer from the recurrent irony of neglect of nation-building and integration, so very vital, for the diversities of political culture of Pakistan.

Like his predecessors, Bhutto also failed in developing a positive outlook towards the ideals of democracy and secularism. He failed to completely liberate himself from the clutches of “Islamic theocracy”. In fact, Islam was revived by Bhutto as a symbol and as a rallying point, his so-called socialistic expressions notwithstanding. That duality in his style ultimately proved the undoing of Bhutto. The more he leaned on Islam, the more vulnerable his stance became, though, for all practical purposes he did not relent in his efforts to consolidate his own powers and position. Despite the constitutional framework, he was not overtly concerned with resolution of the major and pressing problems and challenges of the common men.

In retrospect, it might be stated that Bhutto’s quest for establishment of a federal-parliamentary constitution in the image of the Westminster model, was basically a lever to extend his own authority. Soon after assuming power Bhutto started justifying the Presidential form of government. He assumed the office of President under an Interim constitution. That was against the promises made by the election manifesto of PPP during 1970 general election. The PPP manifesto vehemently criticized the former presidential governments of General Ayub and Yahya Khan and promised to introduce parliamentary government in Pakistan if voted to power. However, in the context of Pakistan’s disintegration, Bhutto also changed his preference favouring a presidential form of government. He reiterated that the presidential system would be more suitable for the integration of the remaining Pakistan. In his public speeches Bhutto squarely pointed out that in the light of past experience the Westminster model of government could not be adopted in the country. Such attitude confirmed the fears of his critics that in the name of political stability, Bhutto was trying to perpetuate personal power.

Contrary to Bhutto’s changed preferences the opposition leaders wanted a parliamentary system based on Westminster framework. They misted that the permanent constitution of Pakistan should explicitly recognize the absolute sovereignty of Parliament and unmitigated executive interactions. Bhutto ultimately agreed to introduce parliamentary form of government though he did not follow the Westminster tradition. He wanted to have a parliament without ultimate sovereignty, and a president without requisite legislative and judicial checks on his authority.

As if enthused by the tradition of authoritarianism in Pakistan, Bhutto ensured in full measure retention of specific provisions in the new constitution, which enabled him to realize his authoritarian ambitions to a considerable extent. In a way, owing to considerable modifications, it was given out that, the new

constitution was no more than “quasi—Presidential” constitution.¹ That assuredly was no way to ensure credibility or stability of parliamentary system.

As one turns to the major aspects of Bhutto’s constitution, one finds that it was inherently a document full of paradoxes and contradictions. To begin with, it incorporated a confusing dualism of western-democratic framework and Islamic theology, reinforced by a curious mixture of feudalism and modern concepts of social justice. Secondly, within the federal-frame-work one could discern a high degree of centralization of powers in the chief executive. It was not surprising that the new constitution came to be identified as a conglomeration of divergent and contradictory trends, pulling in different directions.

The Preamble of Bhutto’s constitution stated: “Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Almighty Allah alone and the authority to be exercised by the people of Pakistan within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust;

“And whereas it is the Will of the people of Pakistan to establish on order:

“Wherein the state shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people, wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed; wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice, their religions and develop their cultures; wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality....”

It is interesting to note that part IX of the constitution has been specifically devoted to “Islamic provisions” which could be seen as replica of previous efforts in this regard, in a bid to satisfy, *Islam Pasand* parties and orthodox Muslims. On the other hand, Bhutto conceded the demands of progressive and democratic elements providing socio-economic and political justice. However, in practice the theoretic and obscurantist provisions hampered the process of

¹ See : G. W. Choudhury "New Pakistan's Constitution" (1973) *Mirdel East Journal* (28; 1, 1974) 10-18. For a comparative perspective refer to G. W. Choudhury. *Constitutional Development in Pakistan*. (London, Orient Longman) 1969.

implementing and enforcing provisions pertaining to assurance concerning socio-economic and political justice.

Although the preamble declared: "adequate provision.....for minorities freely to profess their cultures", in practice, Bhutto's government treated the minorities as political outcasts. The highest political office (President) was constitutionally denied to the non-Muslims. The very caption of the constitution as "Islamic Republic" of Pakistan² and declaration of Islam as the "State religion"³ were clear pointers to perpetuation of theocratic priorities.

The constitution provided that: "All existing laws shall be brought in conformity with the injunction of Islam as laid down in the Holy *Quran* and *Sunnah*....."

As if extending the provisions of Ayub's constitution, Bhutto's constitution provided an "Islamic Council" headed by a President consisting of experts who could pronounce views both on interpretation of Islamic laws and their application to Pakistan. Similarly, for the first time in Pakistan's history, the constitution indicated directly that the "President of Pakistan must be a Muslim".⁴ More over, the systemic theocracy of Pakistan was extended to her foreign policy and principles of policy.

Article 40 states:

"

The State shall endeavor to preserve and strengthen fraternal relations among the Muslim countries based on Islamic unity and brotherhood". Pakistan's tilt towards Islamic countries in preceding decades notwithstanding, there was no statutory provision to that effect in previous constitution of Pakistan. That indeed was a significant constitutional induction.

To a very minor extent like India's "Directive Principles", Pakistan's new constitution included "Principles of Policy", which were predominantly inspired by Islamic theocracy:

² Article I of the 1973 constitution designated Pakistan as an "Islamic Republic of Pakistan" like, 1956 constitution. In 1962 constitution there was no such mention. After some time through a constitution amendment Ayub re-designated Pakistan as an "Islamic Republic."

³ Article 11 states, Islam shall be the state religion of Pakistan." This was a new addition in Bhutto's constitution.

⁴ Article 41(2) states: The President of Pakistan must be a Muslim believing in the finality of Prophet Mohammad as laid down in Holy Quran and Sunaah." For details See: The Constitution (1973) of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Karachi, Government of Pakistan, 1973).

“Steps shall be taken to enable the Muslims in Pakistan, individually and collectively, to order their lives in accordance with the fundamental principles and basic concepts of Islam.”

It is conceivable how such a heavily loaded theocratic constitution could be conducive to operational effectiveness of democracy and socialism subservient to the fiats of the Mullahs and Islamic theologians. For his own political survival, Bhutto, to a considerable extent, “Islamized” the political process of Pakistan rather than evolving a secular tradition.⁵

The new constitution introduced a Parliamentary framework in a modified version. As stated earlier, unlimited power were vested in the office of the chief executive *i.e.*, the Prime Minister. The theoretical contents of the constitution, notwithstanding, in practice the parliamentary frame work got converted into ‘Prime-ministerial’ form of government, Bhutto modified the west minister model making the prime minister “supreme” through statutory provisions :

Article 91 (2) states

“The Prime minister shall be elected by the votes of the majority of the total membership of the National Assembly; the real executive authority will be vested in the office of the Prime minister.

According to Article 48 (1)

“The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall act in accordance with the advice of the Prime minister and such advice shall be binding on him”.

Bhutto’s constitution also deviated sharply from established convention of the Westminster parliamentary process concerning ‘no confidence’ against Prime Minister:

According to Article 96 (2) the resolution for a vote of no-confidence against the Prime Minister will not be passed unless the successor to the Prime Minister is identified and the vote of no confidence must be passed by a majority of the total membership of the National Assembly. As if the preceding provisions were not adequate to ensure a particular incumbent in office.

Article 96 (5) provided that the adverse vote of a member belonging to a political party shall be disregarded if the majority of that party does not support the vote

⁵ For an interesting study of the role of Islam in Bhutto's constitution, see Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and The New Constitution of Pakistan," *Journal of African and Asian Studies* (VIII : 1973) 190-224.

of no-confidence. This provision was specifically inducted with a view to counteracting any dissent or rebel group within the ruling party for years to come, as it were.

It might also be recalled that the tradition of *primus inter pares*, affecting the Prime Minister, was calculatedly subverted. Bhutto's intentions were obviously tainted in favour of presidential authority of the US model under the garb of parliamentary, responsible prime ministership of the U. K. model.

Perhaps, Bhutto provided all such stringent safeguards against what he termed – "political instability", which also characterized Pakistan during the preliminary phase of parliamentary system (1947-1958). Field Marshal Ayub Khan, also provided a number of constitutional devices against political instability, but ultimately those safeguards were denounced by Bhutto himself as crude attempts to perpetuate personal rule. During Bhutto's regime, opposition leaders like Khan Abdul Wali Khan and Asghar Khan alleged that the so called safeguards were no more than authoritarian assertions of Bhutto's quest for unchallenged power.

Provisions regarding the federal structure were provided in parts V and VI of the new constitution. These federal provisions were similar to those of Ayub's (1962) constitution to a considerable extent. Bhutto's constitution provided for a bi-cameral legislature, comprising the Senate and the National Assembly. The National Assembly, like lower Houses of other parliamentary systems, was to be elected by adult franchise and was empowered with greater authority than the Senate. The constitution mentioned that the National Assembly would consist of 200 elected members and the Senate by 65 elected members from the four provinces.

The process of constitutional amendment was meant to be tilted towards flexibility. The constitution stated that "for any amendment, 2/3 majority of the National Assembly and simple majority of the Senate shall be required". It was owing to this flexibility that Bhutto was able to declare 40,00,000 Ahmadis as "non-Muslim" minority under the IInd constitutional amendment.⁶ Through III, IV and V constitutional amendments,⁷ Bhutto succeeded in curbing the powers of the judiciary, and extended the sphere of executive power.

⁶ Both the Houses of Parliament unanimously passed on 7 September, 1974, II constitution Amendment Bill declaring as "non-Muslim" any person who did not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of Prophet Hazrat Mohammed or who claimed to be a prophet after Prophet Mohammed or recognized such a claim as prophet.

⁷ Through the III constitutional amendments (April 1975) the scope of certain preventive detention laws was clarified: The limitation of detention laws on charges of creating law and order situation and other charges will not apply to those working under instructions from enemy in a prejudicial manner to the

Bhutto's constitution did not make any mention of Judicial Review, almost an accepted norm of federal constitution. However, there was a stipulation that "the judiciary would become independent within three years." In practice, that did not happen.

As we turn to the powers of provinces, it would be seen that subjects within their purview were left undefined, but were intended to cover all matters which did not fall within the federal or concurrent lists of subjects. Perhaps, Bhutto's aim was to provide some measure of decentralization in legislative sphere, and, at the same time, to ensure the authority of the centre regarding administrative and financial affairs. This dualism of Bhutto ruined the very spirit of federalism and gave rise to provincial unrest and centrifugal forces.

Unfortunately, Bhutto did not learn much from Pakistan's dismemberment in 1971 and outstanding economic and political issues. He had a ready made opportunity of making a fresh start in the new constitutional framework. He, however, bungled the opportunity and the outcome was also blatantly dismissed by him as of little significance. Consequently, conflicting claims of regional fixations erupted and prospects of national integrating and viable federal system were blurred. It Bhutto had made sincere efforts; the new constitution would have become an effective vehicle of social change and nation-building. It was in retrospect, a folly to adopt harsh measures to curb regional aspirations and his *outward-bound* adventurist policy concerning Baluchistan and the NWFP was to prove suicidal. In retrospect, it can be stated that no government in Pakistan at any time of its existence gave priority to reconcile national sovereignty with provincial aspirations. In spite of the plural context of Pakistan's society, the rulers supported a strong central government for Pakistan. They rejected the demand of regional autonomy as antithetical to the very creation of Pakistan and its Islamic character. Like former rulers of Pakistan Bhutto also gradually became an advocate of strong centre. The entire constitution making phase witnessed conflicts between the government and the opposition on the issue of the quantum of regional autonomy that the new constitution envisaged. Interestingly, the PPP and NAP, in their (1970) election manifestoes were almost equally committed to maximum provincial autonomy. After assuming power, Bhutto found it difficult to fulfill the promises made in the PPP manifesto. However, in view of the mounting opposition by the NAP, Bhutto agreed to

country's integrity and Security. The IV constitutional amendment (April 1976) clarified the jurisdiction of the Executive regarding the issuance of orders of preventive detention.

The V constitutional amendment (September 1976) restricted the powers of the Judiciary with regard to the emergency regulations and fundamental rights and empowered the Parliament to bring amendments in the basic structure of the constitution.

adopt a federal constitution. Though the new constitution provided for a federal frame work the provisions regarding relations between the centre and provinces were contrary to established norms of federalism.

The 1973 constitution provided for a 'federal list' containing 60 subjects, and a 'concurrent list' containing 47 subjects. The residuary powers were vested in the provinces. Ironically the federal list included a wide range of subjects-much more than defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications which constituted the charter of autonomy originally demanded by the parties (NAP-JUI) ruling in NWFP and Baluchistan. For instance, it included foreign trade, railways, mineral, oil and natural gas, industrial development, nuclear energy, taxes on income other than agricultural income, national planning and economic coordination, and so on. These were certainly not subsidiary subjects'. Moreover, the constitution did not clarify which law was to prevail in the event of a conflict between central law and provincial law, on any subject in the concurrent list. The Senate, which was visualized as the Upper House of the central Legislature, was devoid of power. In all matters on the federal list with the exception of three-it would only have recommendatory and delaying powers. If the Senate differed from the National Assembly, the matter would be resolved by a joint session of the two houses, through a majority vote. Thus even the Senate had hardly a role to perform as the watchdog of the interests of the provinces.⁸

There was specific inclusion of "Fundamental Rights" and the "Principles of Policy", though, there was no remedy against violation of rights through recourse to judicial action. The Principles of Policy were declared non-justifiable. It was also provided that "loyalty to the state shall be the basic duty of every citizen". This was a new addition in Bhutto's constitution. However, the operational validity of fundamental rights was jeopardized, to begin with by Bhutto's reluctance to be committed to the spirit and the value of a provision, and secondly, owing to flouting of rights during Bhutto's heavy handed crushing of dissent and protest.

As a safeguard for the perpetuation of his rule, Bhutto provided for a specific provision in the constitution against its abrogation. Article 6 of the constitution provided for continuing with the constitution even in unprecedented circumstances and described the act of abrogating the constitution as an act of "high treason". This provision was obviously included to check the military intervention. However, the '*Coup*' of July 5, 1977 shattered Bhutto's vision. Though the military intervened in the political affairs of Pakistan, it has not completely abrogated Bhutto's constitution as the previous army rulers had done.

⁸ For details refer to Satish Kumar, *The New Pakistan*, (New Delhi, Vikas, 1978), pp. 68-70.

In 1958 Ayub abrogated the 1956 constitution and later Yahya Khan abrogated Ayub's constitution in 1969.

It would, therefore, be seen that though Bhutto revived the constitutional apparatus, its operational aspect was subverted. That did Bhutto little credit in the ultimate analysis. It is surprising that on the one hand, he apparently showed some concern for popular aspirations. to begin with, on the other hand, when it came to consolidating his support base, he faltered and renounced the very opportunity which he had helped establish, Assuredly the common man had not bargained for such flouting of heightened expectations and negation of rightful aspirations. Bhutto, unfortunately for his own political survival, seemed intent to prove that his democratic pronouncements were no more than a facade.

SECTARIAN AND PROVINCIAL CHALLENGES: BHUTTO'S CAPITULATION

Sectarian and Provincial challenges have always existed in Pakistan. These, however, became more pressing and complex during Bhutto regime, especially when the new constitution (1973) proved incapable of resolving them in a positive manner. The entire national ethos witnessed widespread sectarian and regional challenges threatening the so called compactness of Pakistani nationalism. Not that the orthodox forces had become more incisive and articulate but that Bhutto seemed to have lost grip on system's priorities. The orthodox *Ulema*, therefore, were only too willing to resume pressure tactics to force Bhutto to revive Islamic theocracy and two-nation psyche. That seemed to be the revivalists' trump-card to neutralize apprehensions of postures of socialism and secularism. What was worse was Bhutto's ambivalence in his paradoxical stance of bringing about "Islamic revolution" and evolving "secular political culture" under the banner of "Islamic Socialism". Bhutto was naive to have created such a self-defeating framework. For his political survival, Bhutto ultimately yielded to the pressure of orthodox *Ulema*. Throughout his rule, Bhutto exploited religious fervour, though it is doubtful if he ultimately emerged victorious.

It is, therefore, understandable that, his understanding of Pakistan's situation notwithstanding, Bhutto failed to consolidate the bases of Pakistani nationalism, even in its truncated shape.¹ Bhutto's failure to contribute to the evolution of an integrated Pakistan's identity was also an index of his inhibited style. During his regime religious and sectarian issues were politicized to a considerable extent. He did not bring together the disparate provinces into the fold of a cohesive nation, What is so much more surprising is that despite, his commitment to "Islamic Unity" and call for Islamic "brotherhood" at international forums, Bhutto found himself a helpless failure on internal level: he could not take any substantial steps to remove protracted animosity and hatred among the various sects of Muslims in Pakistan.

The Year 1974 began with spurt of tirades among orthodox Muslims and *Ahmadiyahs* and *Sunnis* and *Shias*. The dominant orthodox Muslims wanted the Ahmadiya (Qaidiani) sect to be statutorily debarred from claiming themselves

¹ Pakistani nationalism is a unique conception, because it was not based on territorial factor as such, In fact, communalism, separatism and religion provided for the framework of Pakistani nationalism. The Islamic ideology and two-nation theory, it became evident, were no more than tools of Muslim political elite soon after the creation of Pakistan. Interestingly Pakistan appeared "Unique" even in her dismemberment with the majority province seceding from the minority province." For details refer to: Saleem M. M. Kureshi, "Pakistan Nationalism Reconsidered," Pacific Affairs (45:4 winter 1972-73) 556-72.

true Muslims. Historically speaking, animosity between these two sects is based on religious fanaticism. The orthodox Muslims believed in the “finality” of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad as mentioned in the Holy *Quran* and *Sunnah*. While the Ahmadiya sect regarded Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as their Prophet.² The Ahmadiya sect, claimed that the Almighty Allah will send more prophets after Prophet Mohammad for the benefit of the followers of Islam. That was cause enough to create serious dissensions on an issue which affected the susceptibilities of both the sects. In addition, socio-economic factors also sharpened the hiatus between the two. Owing to their higher socio-economic status and political influence,³ the Ahmadiyas had always been suspected by orthodox Muslim sects. Traditional conservative elements had, therefore, always exerted pressure on every ruling elite to take effective measure against those who did not believe in the “finality” of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad. During Bhutto’s regime they came in open confrontation with Ahmadiyas. Specifically *Islam Passand* Parties like, Jamat-i-Islami, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam and Jamiatul-Uelma-e-Pakistan politicized the Ahmadiya issue and demanded a complete ban on the organisations of the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. They also pointed to the provisions of the new constitution which specified that non-believers in the finality of *Quranic* interpretation about prophet hood were to be denied the highest offices.⁴ The Islam Pasand parties and groups launched a nation-wide protest movement for socio-political and economic boycott of the Ahmadiyas. The right-wing opposition press alleged that the Ahmadiyas were

² The Ahmadiya sect was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1889 at his birth place Qadian (in Gurdaspur district of East Punjab). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed that he had attained the status of a Prophet through Holy benediction and launched a Divine mission to preach and spread the teachings of Islam. After the partition of India Ahmadiyas settled in Pakistan's West Punjab near Layallpur. The Ahmadiyas have also established well-knit missionary agencies throughout the world, especially in African countries.

³ The orthodox Muslims were not happy with Ahmadiya sect ever since the establishment of Pakistan. The leaders of Janwat-i-Islami, time and again, accused the rulers of Pakistan of favoring the anti-Islamic Ahmadiya sect. During Bhutto's rule the anti-Ahmadiya stir became more violent. Leading Uleina, who had launched the campaign to keep Ahmadiyas out of the fold of Islam, welcomed the decision of Bhutto government declaring the sect as a non-Muslim minority and called it significant not only in the history of Pakistan but also of Islam. Bhutto's government also assured the 18-party "Council of Action" that matters relating to the property and trusts of the Ahmadiyas would be investigated. Even after the passage of second constitutional amendment (September 7, 1974), the conservative Mullahs insisted for a total social boycott of Ahmadiyas. They demanded ouster of Ahmadiyas from sensitive administrative and military posts. The 18-party Council of Action demanded that Ahmadiyas should be given representation in the legislatures and government jobs according to their population. For details See ; POT (Pakistan series) September 11 & 20, 194.

⁴ Article 2 of the 1973 constitution declares that "Islam shall be the State religion." Article (41) 2 states that "any person aspiring for the posts of country's President must be a true Muslim believing in the finality of Prophet Mohammad." Though, there is no direct mention in the constitution that the Prime Minister must be a Muslim the text of the Oath that the Prime Minister takes is entirely identical to the one indicated for the President.

intent upon launching a conspiracy against the state of Pakistan with the help of Pakistan's enemies. It was also alleged that a secret army of Ahmadiyas was being raised with foreign connivance.

By the mid of 1974, all the major cities of Pakistan came under the grip of anti-Ahmadiya riots. It appeared that the *Ulema* were more powerful and assertive than the ruling PPP. For the first time, Pakistan witnessed such bitter and intensive political intolerance and religious bigotry. Perhaps, for the first time all opposition parties and pressure groups unanimously opposed the Ahmadiya community. The opposition parties of Pakistan boycotted, the National Assembly and the provincial assemblies in a bid to statutorily debar the Ahmadiyas. After prolonged discussions, on September 7, 1974, both the Houses of Pakistan's parliament unanimously passed the II constitutional Amendment Bill, declaring the 40,00,000 Ahmadiyas as "non-Muslim minority" like Christians, Parsis and Hindus.⁵ Prime—Minister Bhutto, speaking during the final reading declared that "the decision to amend the constitution was a national decision. It was a difficult decision which could not be taken without democratic institutions and democratic authority."

The whole controversy brought out clearly Bhutto's failure to discipline orthodox sections of Pakistan. Also, it showed the inherent limitations of Bhutto's style of functioning. Though Bhutto acquiesced in the narrow and irrational policies of the *Ulema* he could not ultimately ensure his own political existence. While it was one thing to rake up the Ahmadiya issue and gain some populist acclaim, it was a dangerous exercise in the total context of national integration. Whipping up mass hysteria has been Pakistan's bane for decades and if Bhutto also succumbed to that temptation, it did no credit to his oft-repeated sense of political perspective. The anti-Ahmadiya controversy did sentimentally divide the nation. Bhutto might also have earned popular plaudits. And, yet, it was in Bhutto's personal interest and also in the interest of Pakistan, that he should have decried, opposed and suppressed the anti—Ahmadiya movement. It was true that the majority succeeded in disqualifying the Ahmadiyas but Bhutto should have distinguished between the pressures of numbers and the rationalism of sober second thought. Having once succumbed to the pressures of the orthodoxy, it was evidently beyond him to liberate himself from their influence.

Similarly, relations between *Sunnis* and *Shias*, as ever, also caused considerable disquiet and concern during Bhutto's regime. The dominant Sunni sect alleged that Bhutto favoured the cause of *Shias*, the minority sect, because he was himself

⁵ The had constitutional amendment states : "Any person can be declared as 'non-Muslim' who did not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of Prophet Hazarat Mohammad, or who claimed to be a prophet after Prophet Mohammad or recognized such a claim as Prophet." Pakistan Times, September 8, 1974.

a shia. The Shias insisted that the government should ensure specific safeguards for their socio-cultural integrity. The Sunnis, on the other hand, were not happy over Bhutto government's decision to introduce "separate Islamiat syllabus for Shias". In the National Assembly, leaders of Sunni sect introduced an adjournment motion against that decision.⁶ During Bhutto's tenure Shias and Sunnis confronted each other on several religious ceremonies and the controversy became much more acute. It might be stated that Bhutto failed on this score also. He could not convince the warring sects that tolerance and mutuality alone could ensure harmony and unity. While, analysts have gone hysterical over condemnation of communalism in preparation India, it was surprising that Pakistan's existence hitherto failed to resolve the eternal conflict between Shias and Sunnis, both Muslim sects, and that no substantive efforts were made to ensure Pakistan's national integration.

Similarly Provincial instability had always been a bane of Pakistan politics. It became alarming during Bhutto regime in the new (west) Pakistan. It might be recalled that Pakistan's integration (administrative) under "one-unit" plan in 1955 so as to be on par with erstwhile East Pakistan gave a new dimension to provincial unrest. After the abolition of one unit scheme (1970) distinct socio-cultural groups and sub-nationalities came on the surface Regional and intraregional tensions became pronounced in the constituent provinces of Pakistan. Despite the federal framework, it was obvious that the real spirit neither existed nor attempted. The call for "Islamic" bonds also failed to cement diverse pulls and pressures of various cultural entities.

It was not wholly idle to expect Bhutto to accept the challenges of regionalism and endeavor to resolve the manifold ramifications thereof. Perhaps, Bhutto thought that the issue would be resolved in due course of time if left to fend for itself. That however was not to be, regional tensions were heightened consequent upon Bhutto's dalliance. Instead of any possibilities of resolution, regionalism emerged with greater vehemence and regained momentum. And, in the Process, Bhutto antagonized the various provincial interests as well.

Bhutto's strategy seemed to be to exercise complete control over provincial government and that he achieved by interfering in making and unmaking of governments. Those who toed his line were patronized in several ways, by award of effective portfolios or influential offices.

⁶ Maulana Abdul Haq (MNA) introduced an adjournment motion in the National Assembly to that effect. He argued that "the demand of separate syllabus was against national solidarity and Sunnis had never made such separatist demand. Maulana Mufti Mahmood of Jamaitul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) supported this adjournment motion. Nawai Wagt December 13, 1974.

In Punjab and Sindh, however, owing to the support—base of his party, Bhutto succeeded, in some measure, in containing the inter-regional and intraregional problems. However, in the two less developed provinces-Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province, Bhutto proved a failure in curbing regional forces. Throughout Bhutto's rule the two prosperous and traditionally influential provinces—Punjab and Sindh successfully bargained with the central government for greater developmental benefits. The Punjabi regionalists raised the bogey of Sindhi domination, whereas regional chauvinists in Sindh complained of neglect of their vital interests. For his political survival Bhutto maintained a balance in satisfying the regional aspirations of both Punjab and Sindh. The other two less developed and economically backward tribal provinces-Baluchistan and the NWFP did not gain the favour of the federal government. Their regional aspirations were suppressed as they raised the banner of regional autonomy" in accordance with the federal framework of the new constitution. These provinces persisted with a protest against the domination of Punjabis and Sindhis as well as Bhutto's growing authoritarian postures.

Punjabi Regionalism: As one looks back, it would be recalled that Punjab, being the most influential and prosperous province, was acutely apprehensive of Sindhi domination in national politics since Bhutto belonged to Sindh. However, despite his close identity with Sindh, Bhutto found it very difficult to ignore the specific economic and political interests of Punjab. Bhutto was well aware of the fact that even slight neglect of Punjab's interests could prove disastrous to his political survival since, Punjab accounted for 65% of Pakistan's population nearly 80% of its armed forces and 55 out of 86 ruling party's members of Provincial Assembly. It was Bhutto's tactics of playing a dual game of distribution of benefits and threatening deprivations. To a considerable extent he tried to appease both radical elements and feudal interests. It also became evident that Bhutto encouraged most of linguistic, sectarian and religious controversies and turned the advantages to his favour.

Bhutto's excessive personalism and radical postures displeased the militant Punjabi regionalists. The most potential challenge to Bhutto's leadership came from the former Governor and the Chief Minister Malik Ghulam Mustafa Khar, though previously he was a staunch supporter of Bhutto. Ghulam Mustafa Khar having massive support of big industrialists and affluent Kulaks, bargained with the Prime Minister for "Punjabisation" of the politics of Pakistan. He was against Bhutto's nationalization and land reform policies⁷ which had adversely affected

⁷ Influential industrial groups and lobbies, in Punjab, like vanaspati ghee producers, and cotton traders did not favour Bhutto's nationalization measures and, therefore, for safeguarding their interests they lined up behind Bhutto's opponent G. M. Khar. Pakistan Economist (27 April. 1974). Similarly Punjab's influential Peasant organization "Pakistan Kisan Council", was unhappy with Bhutto's forcible wheat procurement

the interests of Zamindars and big industrialists. As a counter to Khar's mounting challenge, Bhutto appointed Mohammad Hanif Ramay (a member of the middle urban class) as the Chief Minister of Punjab.⁸ But he proved less effective in carrying Bhutto's partisan motives and countering the growing threat of Punjabi regionalism. Ramay was also ousted from power.⁹ Then Bhutto appointed Sadiq Qureshi a feudal landlord and politically less effective as the Chief Minister of Punjab realizing that in a politically conscious and ambitious province it was dangerous to appoint active and over-zealous persons to power. However, Bhutto's strategy of replacing the politically active persons with less effective and less politically ambitious persons did not yield desired results. Even after their ouster, Ghulam Mustafa Khar and Hanif Ramay threatened Bhutto through their "Save Punjab Movement". Demands of separate provinces¹⁰ and regional languages perturbed Bhutto to a considerable extent. The demand for a separate Bahawalpur Province caused considerable tensions in the Province. The militant Punjabis insisted upon the federal government to declare *Punjabi* as the regional language. They also endeavored for the restoration of the pristine core of Punjabi based on Gurmukhi to save it from the heavy influence of Urdu, Arabic and Persian dialects.¹¹ Interestingly the conservative Punjabi elite harped on the revival of "Islamic fundamentalism" and the "two nation theory" highlighting the traditional hegemony of Punjab in the national politics. They also propagated that Pakistan ought to become a unitary state with a view, to ensuring that no other region could exert pressure and subvert the interests of Punjab. The liberal organisations like, "Punjabi Adabi Sangat" insisted upon integrating the two Punjabs (East and West) of the sub-continent on the basis of common socio-cultural heritage.¹²

policy". The Pakistan Kisan Council was also critical of the differences in cotton rates in Punjab and Sindh (See : POT (Pakistan series) 31 July, 1974.

⁸ In March 1974, Bhutto ousted G. M. Khar from the office of Chief Minister owing to severe ideological and personal differences.

⁹ Mohammad Hanif Ramay was also forced to quit the Chief Ministership on July 12, 1975 owing to his excessive radicalism.

¹⁰ The inhabitants of Bahawalpur area, a former Princely state, demanded an autonomous Siraiki speaking province of Bahawalpur. The local leaders rationalized their demand on two points: Firstly, their language Siraika was a different language from Punjabi; Secondly, their movement was a reaction against the domination of "Central Punjab", which was causing immense problems to their region. For details see LINK 10 August, 1975.

¹¹ See POT (Pakistan series) 3 December, 1975.

¹² The conservative Mullahs and pro-establishment forces criticized the view of "Punjabi Adabi Sangat" and alleged that the phenomenon of integrating the two Punjab was a calculated Indian move. They accused India for countering the very rationale of two-nation theory through cultural offensive" by TV and Radio.

Besides his policy of changing the governmental and administrative apparatus, Bhutto also maneuvered to create the bogey of external threat in curbing the regional threats. Being an astute politician Bhutto succeeded in countering the regional challenge from Punjab which emanated from curious mixture of rightwing. "Islamism" and left-oriented "Punjabism".¹³

Sindhi Regionalism: In his own home province - Sindh, Bhutto, also faced mounting challenges in the form of inter-regional and intra – regional issues. Prolonged conflicts between indigenous Sindhis, known as "Old Sindhis" and the "New Sindhi immigrants" (Muhajirs), engulfed the entire provincial politics. The militant Sindhis launched a protest movement against the alleged hegemony of the new "Urdu-speaking" Sindhis. They took a strong line in favour of reinstatement of "classical" Sindhi culture and language which, allegedly, had been threatened by the massive influx of Muhajirs. Militant members of "Jiye Sind Front" led by G. M. Syed also threatened to launch a secessionist movement for separate "Sindhudesh". Earlier the "Jiye Sindh Front" had been insisting upon greater regional autonomy and not on secession.¹⁴ On the basis of the theory of "sons of the soil" old Sindhis demanded equal opportunities in governmental jobs and also called for rural development since the new Sindhi settlers were enjoying, a virtual monopoly over trade, industry and administration in the developed urban centers of Sindh. It might be mentioned here that the "New Sindhis" constituted about 40% of the entire population of the province and 70% of the population in the metropolitan city of Karachi.¹⁵ They also constituted about half of the population in other cities like Sukkur, Jacobabad and Rohri.

The deepening rivalry and misunderstanding between the local Sindhis and the new settlers caused political instability, violence, student unrest and language riots, on a large scale in the province. It might be recalled that the rivalry between the "old" and the "New" Sindhis was originated in Sindh University in sixties. The Sindh University Engineering College set up a quota system for admission, providing for separate seats to rural and urban areas. Consequently the Liaquat Medical College students followed suit, and thus, gradually, but

¹³ Link 7 December, 1975.

¹⁴ "Sindhu Desh Movement" was basically secessionist in nature. The "Jiye - Sind Movement" was essentially a positive move for furthering the cause of Sindh and its people for greater regional autonomy.

¹⁵ The new Sindhis called for establishment of "separate Karachi Province" on the plea of their numerical strength in the area. It might be recalled that the movement for separate Karachi province was similar to the demand of separate Bahawalpur Province" in Punjab. For details refer to: POT, 13 November, 1974.

steadily, two Sindhis were created in one province. This contamination ultimately spread in governmental jobs and services.¹⁶

Besides their grievance against the New Sindhis, the indigenous Sindhis insisted upon Bhutto's administration to save Sindh from the hegemony of Punjab in national politics, economy and administration. Militant Sindhi regionalists alleged that the federal government was biased in its developmental schemes. They demanded equitable distribution of water and power resources between Sindh and Punjab. The influential *waderas* (land-lords. of Sindh) complained that Sindh was deprived of modern agricultural technology and other facilities which were available in Punjab.¹⁷ Interestingly, they insisted for the release of 60% Sindhi programmes from Sindh Radio Station on the pleas that Sindhi was the oldest language of the province.¹⁸

Bhutto tried to tackle the mounting regional tensions in his home province through constantly touring the important areas of the province calling the common man's attention to alleged protracted involvement of foreign enemies in the domestic politics of Pakistan. In addition, as part of his strategy, Bhutto often appointed his own people to offices of responsibility. He did not face the problem of constantly removing the Chief Ministers in Sindh as he faced in Punjab. Though, he had to replace his own cousin Mumtaz Ali Bhutto from the Chief Ministership of Sindh with another person Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, his replacement did not cause much of trouble for the Prime Minister because Mustafa Jatoi was also one of his trusted associates. Mustafa Jatoi carried out smoothly all the directives of the federal government and imposed strict restrictions on the regional chauvinists. Provocative Sindhi literature was banned by the provincial government. The veteran Militant Sindhi leader G. M. Syed throughout Bhutto regime was kept under heavy restrictions. On the whole, Bhutto's PPP was in sound position in the province.¹⁹ Bhutto very tactfully controlled the regional threat from Sind and appeased both the Old and the New Sindhis awarding them privileged positions in government jobs.

Baluchi and Pakhtoon Regionalism: It has been mentioned earlier also that "multiethnic" frontier provinces-Baluchistan and the North West Frontier

¹⁶ See: Outlook, 27 April, 1974.

¹⁷ See: POT, 27 November, 1974.

¹⁸ A Former Food Minister of Sind, Syed Abdullah Shah moved a resolution in the Sind Assembly asking the Federal government to fix 60% programmes from Radio Pakistan Karachi, and 30% national broadcast in Sindhi language. Morning News, 6 December, 1974.

¹⁹ After winning the bye-election in December 1975, the PPP secured 45 out of the 61 seats in the Provincial Assembly of Sind. Morning News 31 December, 1975.

Province,²⁰ which were, for long, neglected posed a real challenge to Bhutto's authority. What seemed to have irked people of these areas was that Bhutto's approach and methods proved no different from those which had been applied by Ayub and Yahya Khan earlier to crush regional movement in erstwhile East Pakistan.²¹

Since the dismissal of NAP-JUI coalition governments in these provinces, the federal government did not hesitate to apply fascist and militant tactics in suppressing the regional aspirations. Sidetracking the constitutional issues, pro-establishment media widely publicized that the real issues in these provinces were basically those of "economic development." Lacking a substantial support-base in these provinces, the ruling PPP throughout Bhutto regime tried to suppress the popular elements through coercive and unconstitutional measures. The National Awami Party which took up the cause of restoration of democracy and regional autonomy²² was banned by Bhutto government. It might be recalled that following Pakistan's 1970 general elections, three major political parties emerged with popular support in well defined geographical regions. The Awami League in erstwhile East Pakistan, PPP in Punjab and Sindh and the NAP in Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province. Right from his coming to power, Bhutto adopted militant and fascist methods for his political survival and did not allow the operation of normal democracy in these two provinces.

In Baluchistan, the situation had deteriorated considerably and posed a veritable challenge to Bhutto administration after the dismissal of NAP-JUI popular government. The puppet government installed by Bhutto proved incapable of resolving mounting tribal unrest and regional tensions in the province. Despite heavy military "crackdown" by the federal government, the Baluchi regionalists continued their struggle for regional autonomy and restoration of constitutional processes.

²⁰ For an interesting historical analysis of Baluchistan and the NWFP Anslie T. Embree (Ed.) Pakistan's Western Border Lands: The Transformation of Political order (New Delhi, Vikas 1977) pp. 158-160.

²¹ The veteran Red Shirt leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan stated: "As far as the Baluchis and Pathans are concerned there is in any case Military rule, worse than what could have been envisaged even, during the days of Ayub and Yahya Khan". Press Asia International (PAI, Pakistan Service) 26 June, 1974.

²² The NAP launched its struggle against Bhutto regime on three point programme for the restoration of normalcy in Baluchistan and the NWFP:

- 1) Withdrawal of contingents from civilian areas except the Border outposts;
- 2) Release of all political prisoners in both the provinces and
- 3) Restoration of NAP-JUI governments in both the provinces.

Interestingly Bhutto's strategy of changing the provincial government structure did not yield desired results. Former Governor Akbar Khan Bugti, who was one of Bhutto's loyalists and staunch critic of Khan Abdul Wali Khan and his NAP also resigned from his post. According to reliable sources he did not approve of military action in the province which came down heavily on the tribal people. Moreover, Akbar Khan Bugti was not satisfied with the constitutional position of the Governor, which had created serious problems in the relationship between the Governor and the Chief Minister.²³ There upon, Bhutto appointed Khan of Kalat (another feudal sardar) as the Governor of Baluchistan. Khan of Kalat readily accepted to act as Bhutto's spokesman in latter's communication with NAP leadership and as a counter weight to army hawks and the Chief Minister.²⁴

Without paying adequate attention to the real causes of unrest, Bhutto tried to put up a facade of policies aimed, at "economic reconstruction and development." In a determined bid to teach dissidents a lesson, operation "annihilation" was vigorously launched through indiscriminate armed force. It is believed that China and Iran provided massive military assistance which enabled Bhutto to execute such a wanton policy.²⁵ His regime did not hesitate to apply a veritable "economic blockade" to squeeze tribal insurgents out of their entrenched positions.

As events showed, Bhutto did not succeed even minimally in this context. The vicarious satisfaction of having applied oppressive machinery might have assuredly belonged to Bhutto but the determination of Baluchis, some chose to call it tribal insurgency", was not to be cowed down by Bhutto's indiscretion and lack. "Baluch Student Organization" (BSO) and "Baluchistan People's Front. For Armed Resistance (BPFAR) were active in underground guerilla warfare. It is strange that Bhutto ignored the lesson of history that even the British chose to stop at a point and did not go beyond it vis-a-vis Baluch affairs.

Throughout his tenure, Bhutto calculatedly undermined the real constitutional problem of Baluchistan. He harped on the theme that the problem of Baluchistan, was, infact, one of economic advancement. The pro-establishment media

²³ Refer to: Far Eastern Economic Review, 19 November 1973.

²⁴ See, LINK, 20 October, 1974.

²⁵ According to reliable sources, with the help of Iran and China, Military cantonments were established in strategic areas of Baluchistan: for instance *Mushki*, *Kharan*, *Khuzdar* and *Turbot*. It was reported that Iran also constructed air bases in a 16 Sq. Km, area at *Bandar Abbas* and *Chahbahar*, in close proximity of Baluchistan. Chinese instructors were operating vital pro-establishment elements in the Military staff college, Quetta.

highlighted that tribal insurgency was against feudal Sardars and not against his regime.

The White Paper²⁶ issued by the federal government presented false data and contrived analysis concerning the provincial turmoil and blatantly justified deployment of army units. Moreover, Bhutto's action against the "National Awami Party" further aggravated the problem. The strategy of federal government proved a failure in appeasing the militant Baluchis. For instance, the declaration of "general amnesty" and abolition of "Sardari system"²⁷ bore little fruits and the confrontation continued unabated till Bhutto's fall. It would not be entirely wrong to say even thereafter the new military regime finds itself in no better, or different, position vis-à-vis Baluchistan.

In the NWFP also federal government employed tactics similar to those which were used in Baluchistan. After the removal of NAP-JUI government in the province (Feb. 1973) the puppet government presented a picture of despair, helplessness and desperation. Bhutto's government imposed strict restrictions on the activities of regional activities. Frontier Gandhi Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was kept under severe restrictions. Militant organization "Zalme Pakhtoon" was banned under Defence of Pakistan Rules. Like-Baluchistan the military was deployed to convert the province into "iron curtain". Aimed at creating misunderstanding between the Pakhtoons and Baluchis the federal government also adopted a strategy of spreading of wild and unsubstantial rumours. It might be recalled that the story of the murder of Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, Baluch Gandhi was widely publicized by establishment media to drive a wedge between the Baluchis and Pakhtoons²⁸. Like Baluchistan the puppet government proved a failure in NWFP also and the federal rule was installed in the Province in February 1975²⁹. The federal government imposed "military crackdown" in the NWFP to cowdown dissident elements.

Bhutto's intention became obvious when, consequent upon his failure to curb the regional movement, he went back to the dubious theme of "foreign interference and conspiracy", being responsible for Pakistan ills. The media were blatant in

²⁶ For details See: "White Paper on Baluchistan", (Government of Pakistan (Islamabad, 1974).

²⁷ See : News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, Sapru House, New Delhi) April, 1976.

²⁸ Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, *Baluch Gandhi*, leader of the Pakhtoon Khawa (Pro-Pathan faction) was assassinated on December 2, 1973 in Baluchistan. According to the former Governor of Baluchistan, Akbar Khan Bugti, the murder was a deliberate attempt of the federal government to ensure estrangement between Baluchis and Pathans. See : News Review on South Asia, January 1974.

²⁹ News Review on South Asia, March, 1975.

identifying Afghanistan as directly responsible for disharmony in the NWFP. India and Soviet Union were also attacked indirectly.

Throughout Bhutto regime the Province presented a worst picture of turmoil and instability witnessing unprecedented student unrest, agrarian conflicts and politics of violence and terrorism. Pakhtoon regionalists accused Bhutto regime of converting Parliamentary democracy into a mockery through brutal military action, Even after the imposition of ban on the NAP, they continued their struggle based on NAP's stand: for "self-determination for Pakhtoon People", residing in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and greater regional autonomy to the province³⁰. The "Khudai Khidmatgar" (Red Shirt Party) led by Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan continued its underground activities and became more vociferous for recognition of distinct Pakhtoon culture and identity. The Pakhtoon Student Federation was also actively involved in opposing federal government suppressive politics. The Pakhtoos never recognised the Peoples Party as a popular force. However, they alleged that movements launched by the Muslim League and the PPP were basically movements of and for Punjab, and Sindh and not for the Pakistani nation as a whole.³¹

In retrospect it might be stated that Bhutto inherited sectarian and regional challenges. His initial policy pronouncements had given some hope to elements aspiring for integrated and viable Pakistan. There was adequate evidence in Pakistan's history since independence, to indicate how under unimaginative regimes, sectarian and regional fixations came to assume threatening proportions. Bhutto was expected, therefore, to imbibe suitable lessons from the dilemma resultant from quest for national identity, on the one hand, and, ethno-religious parochialism, on the other. Instead of meeting the challenge squarely, Bhutto also faltered and failed to rid himself of the populist appeal to religious susceptibilities. Islam alone did not emerge as a positive and effective instrument of forging national integration as amply vindicated during preceding decades. Bangladesh was a cruel reminder of that realistic situation. But, it seemed, Bhutto was not prepared to see the writing on the wall and learn appropriate lessons thereof. Bhutto's motive clearly was retaining power and extending it, like any ambitious politician. But, he did not give evidence of clarity of perspective, when he bowed to the pressures of the *Ulema* and, to the same time, did not tire of raising a radical banner for reforms. That, evidently, was neither opportunistic judgment nor statesmanship. It was thoughtless of Bhutto to have lightly dismissed regional aspirations and passed on the onus to feudal elements,

³⁰ The National Awami Party put forward the demand of self-determination for Pakhtoos as a prelude to the problem between Pakhton and Afghanistan.

³¹ For a useful analysis of the problem of the NWFP, refer to Sukha Ranjan Chakravarty: "The Pakhtoon National Movement", Foreign Affairs Reports (XXV, I Jan., 1976).

insensitivity and foreign conspiracy. Systemic realities were taken non-seriously, perhaps, owing to overconfidence in the potential of political administrative, militant and diplomatic alternatives, with which Bhutto proposed to out-manuever the dissidents and the protestant. But he did not fully reckon with the imponderables of forces of “festering nationalism”. Above all, Bhutto failed to give a national response to sub-national challenges. And, therein lies some answer to the continuing dilemma of Pakistan.

ECONOMIC SCENE: A BRIEF SURVEY

With the breakaway of the erstwhile Eastern wing, Pakistan's economy came under abrupt strain not only because a large area of productive potential was thus taken away but more so because, consequent upon the war of 1971, Pakistan as it stood truncated and humiliated, has to reassess and reformulate its economic priorities and prospects. The political system stood at cross-roads and the economy was in shambles after the fiasco of 1971. It was imperative for Bhutto to announce programmes and policies which could catch the common man's imagination, whatever the ultimate operational relevance thereof. In a bid to building-up a popular base for himself, Bhutto had very few alternatives available. That context, in a way, explains his pronouncement concerning Islamic Socialism." Basically an extension of mixed economic system, Bhutto, time and again, emphasized that Pakistan had to undergo smooth transition to become full-fledged "Socialized Economy."

More, specifically, Bhutto embarked upon variety of radical and reformatory programmes, such as, nationalization, land-reform, federal programme for population-planning and revitalization of education system. However, as events eventually showed, the quest for consolidation of personal power overshadowed Bhutto's promised revitalization of Pakistan's economy. That also diluted the flavor and intensity of Islamic Socialism. In the long run, Bhutto's oft-repeated declaration of "distributive justice" (ensuring bread, clothes and houses to all) did not convince anybody as a serious attempt to alleviate sufferings of the people. In fact, the operational aspect of his economic policies did not ultimately satisfy the capitalist and feudal critics nor did they fulfill the rising expectations of the radical element. Being a shrewd politician, Bhutto attempted "to use both the carrot and the stick with business, in much the same fashion as he dealt with the Army and the Civil Service."¹ Broadly speaking, Bhutto's economic measures, did give some inkling of the overall reformist vision that had emerged in Pakistan after 1971, and which undeniably could form the core of initial steps towards nation-building.

However, Bhutto's economic policies and measures did not positively affect the common man and, thus, failed to formulate and implement an integrated and viable economic plan. Official claims notwithstanding, it is doubtful if the pace of economic development during five and a half years of Bhutto's leadership was either brisk or effective. The other side of the economic scene was: growing

¹ Robert La Porte, *opcit*, p. 113.

inflation, fall in production-agricultural and industrial, and deteriorating balance of payments position. That posed a severe challenge to the economy of Pakistan.

It was not unexpected that, during his tenure, Bhutto tried to explain away the hiatus between promises and performance by putting the blame on national and international determinants, such as, inflation, price spiral, natural calamities-heavy rains and floods, locust and pest menace. What Bhutto did not reckon, however, was recurrence of political instability, emergence of antagonism and challenges against his own legitimacy. Assuredly with such challenges growing steadily, Bhutto could not give even minimal attention to the priorities of economic revitalization.

As one goes back for an evaluation, it would be seen that the initial year (1972-73) of Bhutto's rule saw a good enough beginning towards economic survey conducted by the government of Pakistan. It would be recalled that the war with India over Bangladesh was a catastrophe, politically and economically, and Bhutto did give some evidence of his commitment to rehabilitate Pakistan's national identity. If the common-man discovered in the process some sort of initial participatory enthusiasm, it was not entirely unexpected.

However, it would be unjust to ignore Bhutto's perception of the primacy of socio economic measures or to belittle his boldness as a political leader to formulate policies and measures accordingly. Perhaps, a far more convincing answer would be found in the systemic constraints which Bhutto could not remove or resolve at will and which had to be accepted as part of the socio-economic reality. It was unfortunate that Bhutto inherited not only a truncated Pakistan but also a sluggish economy. 1972, the initial year of Bhutto's rule, proved to be perhaps the most critical year in Pakistan so far as the economy was concerned. Spiraling prices set off by the impact of the economic burdens of Indo-Pak war (1971) on an acutely stagnant economy posed serious problems.

According to the official annual economic survey for 1972-73 (released in the second week of June, 1973), though the economy had shown signs of remarkable recovery in 1971-73 it had barely succeeded in overcoming the setbacks of the past two or three years. The GNP showed an increase of 0.5 percent, but the per capita income had hardly regained the level of 1971-72. Even with a bumper wheat crop of 74,00,000 tons harvested in May 1973, the country had to import substantial quantities of food grains from abroad. The investment ratio was considerably lower than attained during 1964-65 Domestic savings financed only 6.9 percent of gross domestic investment. The wholesale price index showed a steep rise of 18.5 percent during July 1972-March 1973 with prices of food items spiraling substantially.

However, explaining the economic trends the survey pointed out that the progress during 1972-73 had prepared the economy for a major thrust forward. The revival of economic activity was led by the export sector, which recorded a remarkable increase of 30 percent over the preceding year. Imports largely consisting of raw materials, increased by 24 percent. Agriculture, which continued to occupy a pivotal position in the economy (contributing 38 percent to the total value of gross domestic produce and absorbing 55% of the entire labour force), recorded a growth-rate of above 3%. Wheat production increased by 9% and sugarcane production by 7%. Industrial production increased by 6.3% mainly owing to better utilization of existing capacity. Construction activity expanded by 13%. Also foreign exchange reserves increased from \$ 170 9 million in December 1971 to \$ 341.7 million in March 1973. The net utilization of foreign aid was about \$ 200 million. The foreign trade sector expanded much faster than the national income, with exports amounting to \$ 750 million showing an increase of 27% over the preceding year.² The ratio of exports to GNP was estimated at 14.5 percent.

However, the economy was considerably strained due to abnormal price hike. The worst phase of price spiral was reflected in the indices for the first half of 1972. Renewed price pressures were observed during 1972-73 due to various factors such as rupee devaluation, relaxation of anti-inflationary phenomenon originating in developed industrial countries.

The wholesale price index increased by as much as 19.5% during July 1972-March 73, over the corresponding period of 1971-72 when the price rise was only 7.4%. The consumer price indices at different places recorded increase ranging from 10% to 16%.

By the end of 1973; Pakistan was confronted with serious economic problems, some owing to natural calamities and some as a fall-out of absence of balanced and rational economic planning. The worst even floods hit the country in August 1973, not only creating a colossal problem of human rehabilitation, but also disrupting the entire economic system. The heavy destruction of crops and food grains, accompanied by large-scale disruption of communication channels created a serious problem in the availability of essential items like, wheat, vanaspati, sugar, kerosene and vegetables.

Major crops, such as wheat, rice and cotton, were heavily damaged. Nearly 4.3 million bales of cotton (the major foreign exchange earner), almost a quarter of the total annual produce, were destroyed. It was proposed to increase exports during 1973-74 by 12.5% over the previous year's figure of Rs. 825 crores.

² Far Eastern Economic Review, 25 June, 1973.

Pakistan's cotton produce constituted 33 to 40% of total world cotton exports during 1972-73. But the achievement of the aforesaid target became extremely difficult, particularly due to the ban on cotton export in order to fulfill the essential requirements of the domestic market. Also, spurt in cotton prices in the world markets made it difficult for Pakistani cotton to achieve competitive viability.

The economic survey (1973-74)³ released by Pakistan's Finance Ministry revealed a not-so-gloomy" picture of the economy, particularly in the context of natural calamities. In addition, the oil crisis, following the 1973 war in West Asia, created problems for Pakistan also. Pakistan's domestic production of crude oil meets hardly 15% of its total consumption of crude and finished product. The oil import bill increased from \$60 million to \$225 million in 1973-74, and was placed at \$387 million in 1974-75. Similarly, fertilizer prices were considerably affected and the country had to spend \$150 on fertilizer imports, as against \$40 million in the preceding year. The same was true of wheat, edible oils, chemicals and other technical equipment.

According to official estimates, Pakistan lost nearly \$500 million after adjusting the gains due to high export price of rice, against losses due to high import prices of petroleum, fertilizers, raw materials and technical equipment. The import bill was estimated to have gone up to \$1450 million in 1973-74, as against \$797 million in 1972-73, without any significant increase in the quantities imported. The year, it was expected, would close with a balance of payments deficit of \$165 million⁴

The year 1974-75 proved worse for the economy of Pakistan. In an interview to Kayhan International in October 1975, Bhutto stated: "Let us make no bones about it; we are facing a serious economic situation. The nightmare is receding into the past. But we still, have numerous difficulties to overcome". There was reason for that statement. During 1974-75, the GDP fixed at 7.2% was reduced to 2.6% as against the population growth rate of 3%. The GNP came down from the envisaged growth of 10 percent to 4.4 percent. The regression in per capita income which had been caused as consequence was projected at 4%. There had been a general decline in both agricultural and industrial production as compared with that during the previous year. On the other hand, the expenditure on defence continued to rise. According to reliable sources, Pakistan was spending Rs. 615 crores out of Rs. 12000 crores of its revenue income on defence. The amount considerably increased during 1974-75, when the budget had earmarked Rs. 583 crores for defence expenditure. The wholesale price index

³ See: New Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, July 1974.

⁴ Satish Kumar, The New Pakistan, (Vikas New Delhi, 1978), p. 145.

maintained an upward trend and rose by 25.9% during 1974-75. The deficit in the balance of trade increased to an all time high of Rs. 1038.3 million. Exports during the year increased by 12%, while imports went up by over 53%. The gross domestic savings (GDS) rate came down from 7.5% in 1973-74 to 6.8% in 1974-75.

Though the fiscal year 1975-76 began in a climate of hope and optimism, this economic progress made by Pakistan during this period was less promising. As during the preceding years, the domestic as well as international factors adversely affected the economic situation. International prices of quality rice declined drastically during 1975. The market for cotton textiles also did not show the level of recovery anticipated earlier. On the other hand, the enhanced prices of petroleum and petroleum products further strained the economy. On the domestic scene, too, a few adverse developments occurred. Continued problems at Tarbela dam restricted the additional flow of water for irrigation. Cotton production fell owing mainly to heavy rains, floods and a massive pest attack. Against the target of 40 lakh bales, the actual production was only 29 lakh bales. Pakistan was also denied its share of upsurge in international cotton prices. Difficulties of the textile industry were considerably aggravated, as a consequence. Furthermore, the decline in the availability of cotton-seed oil led to larger imports of edible oil.

According to the economic survey, Pakistan's Gross Domestic Produce (GDP) recorded a growth rate of 5% during 1975-76 agriculture sector registering a 4% increase. Despite the heavy damage of Tarbela complex, wheat production went up to 8.1 million tonnes, a half million tonne more than in the previous year. The country also registered increase in the production of maize, rice and sugarcane. Substantial increase was also recorded in sugar, Vegetable oil and fertilizer production. The GNP rose to 4.3% against the preceding year's (1974-75). In spite of the world-wide recession the export of yarn and cotton cloth had shown 8% increase in 1975-76 over 1974-75. Figures for population growth, however, far exceeded expectations, thereby adversely affecting economic plans during 1975-76. Population figures, in July 1976, estimated at about 72.37 million showing an annual growth rate around 3.6%.⁵

Similarly, during the final fiscal year (1976-77 of Bhutto regime) the economy showed considerable stagnation. The GNP grew only at the rate of 1.2% against the projected 8.1% target. Excluding the effect of net remittances by Pakistani nationals abroad, the upward trend was a bare 0.5%. With population (about 74 million) growing at 3%. Growth of GDP during the same period was stalled by a fall in cotton output, as seen earlier. Also, political unrest consequent upon PPP-

⁵ For details refer to POT, Pakistan Series, June 16, 1976,

PNA confrontation after March 1977 general elections inhibited developing economic projects and scared investments. Tax collection went down and remittances from abroad also showed decline. In all, industrial production was in dismal state.

Textiles accounted for 26% of large - scale manufacturers but production, declined by 18.3% for year and 13.2% for cloth (with the cotton crop estimated at 2.4% million bales) almost 40% below the 4 million bales target. Overall agricultural output rose by only 2% with the result that per capita availability of food grains fell more owing to population explosion.

Exports amounted to \$1,129 million against a target of \$1,400 million. Imports rose to \$2,301 million from \$2,947 million during the previous year (1975-76) leaving a deficit of \$1,172 million. Home remittances of \$575 million provided major support to balance of payments. The large current-accounts deficit was about \$ 7 billion compared with about half of that, in 1971. Domestic inflationary pressures persisted, revised estimates for 1976-77 showing a tally of Rs. 2,230 million but the actual deficit adding up to Rs. 5,650 million. Though 33% of the annual development out-lay of Rs. 17,000 million came from deficit financing, the result was a staggering monetary expansion amounting Rs. 8,310 million, *i.e.* 18.6%.⁶

The aforesaid brief economic survey shows that, like his predecessors, Bhutto also failed to restore viability to the economy of Pakistan. It seems that successive regimes and rulers in Pakistan only succeeded in giving undue importance to political survival rather than making concerted efforts to revitalize the national economic infra-structure. True, there was never a let-up in pronouncing impossible promises, raising popular expectations but the hiatus between commitments and actual systemic outputs continued to widen and deeper. Perhaps, the failure was compounded by the choice of a developmental model, quite beyond the inherent capabilities of Pakistan's economy to sustain. On a bedrock of semi-agrarian economy, was sought to be raised a structure of mass consumption society, to be enjoyed by the fast growing middle class. In addition to inadequacies of such a proposed edifice of economy, the rulers of Pakistan failed to identify specific dimensions of modernisation and industrialisation and also did not heed the likely consequences of dovetailing Pakistan's economy with international economy. In fact, Pakistan's vulnerability to world influences is several times more than that of, for instance, India, since 40% of the former's economic activity is susceptible to world influences.

⁶ Ibid June 12, 13, 1977.

It is against such a backdrop that one should assess the role of Bhutto regime with regard to Pakistan's economic deterioration in the over-all specificity of domestic constraints, natural, calamities and international economic pressures.

Like the preceding ruling elite Bhutto also squandered the national exchange on the proliferation of security agencies, paramilitary organizations and massive administrative net work. More over Bhutto did not lessen Pakistan's heavy reliance on foreign-aid and multiplying armaments spending. Foreign Economic aid, ultimately, is not expected to boost and prop up national economic development and growth. There was a five-fold increase in OPEC aid (from \$ 110.5 million in 1975-76 to \$ 555.4 in 1976) and marked decline in consortium aid from \$809.0 million to \$730.7 million during the same period. Besides changing the terms of trade, heavy consortium debts reduced the utility of aid, since about 25% of export earnings went to service external debts. On a rough calculation, every \$100 of aid granted \$33 of income but \$11 out of this was paid back as interest and other charges⁷. Unfortunately, during Bhutto regime more than half of the total budget were allotted to defence which heavily retarded the developmental potential of other important sectors. According to reliable sources, Pakistan's defence budget had gone up to Rs. 702 crores in 1975-76 from Rs. 560 crores in 1974-75. While, Pakistan's defence budget, before the liberation of Bangladesh, totaled Rs. 444 crores which during Bhutto regime registered an increase of 58% (Rs 702 crores) more for less than half the earlier area.⁸

Giving a detailed analysis of the working of Pakistan's economy under the ousted PPP government, Pakistan's prominent economist, Zafar, Iqbal published significant analyses in the Dawn of August 7 and 8, 1977. Facts and figures in the following analysis are largely collected from Zafar Iqbal's articles, as mentioned above.⁹

It would, therefore, be seen that although the period of political uncertainty started in 1968, its main impact on economic performance was felt in 1970-71 and 1971-72, when Pakistan passed through a period of political crises which culminated in the dismemberment of the country in December 1971. As seen above, despite Bhutto's specific or vague promises, there was little evidence of detailed specificities of purposive reforms effecting maximum number of the people, if only to give some credibility to Bhutto's vociferous commitment to people's welfare. Gradually the elements of populism became obvious and it was

⁷ India Today, March 1-15, 1978, pp. 46-47.

⁸ Hindu, 7 April, 1976.

⁹ For the text of Zafar Iqbal's article refer to POT, August 10, 11, 1977.

not without reason that the discerning among his supporters as well as critics, realized the futility of Bhutto's assurances.

A look at comparative economic situation shows that up to 1970-71, over 60% of imports related to capital goods or raw materials for capital goods. The average for the period 1972-73 to 1975-76 was 40% for capital goods and raw materials for capital goods, and 60% for consumer goods or raw materials for such goods. Obviously, the composition of imports decisively shifted from development goods to consumer goods. As a matter of fact, finished consumer goods which accounted for 10% in 1969-70 accounted for almost 30% of total imports in 1972-73 and in 1975-76, accounted for about 22% of total imports. The main purpose of imports came to be increased consumption instead of increased investment. That could not be called productive or welfare-oriented.

Similarly, between 1970 and 1975, savings in the private sector dropped from over 12% of the GDP to 6.5% and in the public sector from + 0.9% to – 0.9%.

As we turn to investment in the private sector, it might be recalled that Bhutto's ambivalence concerning private and public sectors did not help either the prospects of investment or extension of benefits of nationalization. In fact, extended pronouncements concerning the latter acted as disincentive to the former. In 1969-70, investment in manufacturing industry accounted for about 35% of all private investment in fixed assets. By 1975-76, capital formation in the private sector (while inflation continued to provide high profits, instead of being invested productively), either led to wasteful consumption, hoarding and speculation, or flights of capital abroad.

In the public sector also, things were far from satisfactory. Deployment of investment in public sector was, by and large inefficient. A large number of schemes were started, but none proved to be productive. Also, by subjecting public servants to insecurity, one could see emergence of a sycophant breed of careerists which adversely affected decision-making in the public sector. In addition, development resources, instead of being concentrated for maximum effect, were squandered away owing to partisan decision-making.

It is interesting that while the total amount of investment in the public sector went up, Pakistan's own contribution diminished. Foreign resources available to the public sector increased from Rs. 2180 million in 1969-70 to Rs. 12,580 million in 1975-76. Pakistan's abject dependence on foreign borrowings led to serious economic consequences. In 1969-70, external resources contributed 44% to development expenditure financed by the federal government. In 1975-76, such contributions were total (100%). As a matter of fact, external resources were far in

excess of development expenditure and Pakistan's own contribution to development in the public sector came down to a mere formality.

It needs no undue emphasis that in the specific context of an under-developed country, with limited natural resources, savings and investment are one of the imperatives of the development process. There is, in such situations, a natural presumption that avoidable expenditure would be tightly controlled. That, however, was not in evidence considering the consistent manner in which successive regimes in Pakistan paid little attention to thrift savings and economy. For instance, while revenue receipts in 1975-76 were a little more than double the level prevailing in 1969-70, expenditure in 1975-76 was more than three times the level of 1969-70. Reckless expansion also took place throughout. Government secretariat had 700 section officers in 1971, whereas their number rose to more than 2,000 in 1975-76.

In the agriculture sector, from 1964-65 to 1969-70, agriculture output had grown more or less steadily at an average rate of over 6.3% per annum. In the subsequent period up to 1975-76, agricultural output went down to an average rate of 1.4% per annum. The situation of agricultural crops was equally dismal. Though between 1964-65 and 1969-70, crop production increased more or less steadily at the rate of 7.8% per annum, after 1969-70, it stagnated and rate of production went down to 1.2% per annum. Output per acre of Wheat and Maize, to begin with, steadily rose. Rice output behaved erratically and Sugar-cane output per acre also declined over this period. Cotton reached a level of 3.9% maunds per acre in 1971-72 and retained it till 1973-74. However, there was deterioration in this respect, and in 1975-76, yield per acre and fallen by 10% as compared to that in 1969-70. Growth in agricultural productivity, as a whole, became a cause for concern.

The industrial output also showed decline though during the period 1964-65 to 1969-70, industrial output grew at an average annual rate of 8.2% per annum, from 1969-70 to 1975-76, average annual rate came down to 2.0%.

As one recalls the fact that almost one-third to a half of manufacturing industry had been nationalized since 1972, the bulk of investment during the next five years was diverted to the public sector. However, the results did not vindicate such heavy reliance on expansion of public sector. It also became obvious that the objectives of nationalization were neither economic nor social, but only to acquire additional levers of political power regardless of economic consequences. There is one more dimension to the preceding analysis, When we consider that the rate of growth of population went on increasing by 3% per annum, per capita agricultural and industrial outputs kept on declining, and the economy, indeed, showed terrifying prospects.

As one looks back to the steadily declining state of economy, one recalls the unnecessary and ill-timed devaluation in 1972, which only proved how ill-conceived the monetary and fiscal policies gradually became, which, in turn, led to extravagant public expenditure and severe inflationary pressures on the economy. A word about the consumers plight is called for. Prior to 1971-72, the prices in Pakistan were relatively stable. Between 1959-60 and 1969-70, prices rose at an annual rate of 2.8%. Between 1969-70 and 1971-72, a period of uncertainty and political turmoil, prices rose at an annual rate of 6.7%. Since 1971-72, in sharp contrast to past trends, the prices rose by about 22% per annum till 1975-76 giving the overall situation in which prices rose, by and large, by about 2 to three times from the time the Pakistan People's Party took over. Bhutto's tenure, therefore, did not alleviate the plight of the common man.

We referred earlier to the Universal consequences of price hike in oil and oil products. It is the view of Zafar Iqbal that "while oil prices have had influences mainly through changes in the terms of trade with developed countries, their effect on Pakistan's economy has been grossly exaggerated. In 1969-70 petroleum products valued at about \$44 million were imported. In 1975-76, these imports rose to \$378 million. Between 1972-73 and 1974-75, the value of imports increased five times, however, only about 3% of the GDP". It is stated that: "As far as the foreign exchange impact of oil prices is concerned, it has been compensated for by increased remittances from Pakistani workers abroad. Between 1973-74 and 1975-76, such remittances have increased about \$ 200 million per annum which more or less matched the increased outlay on oil imports over the same period. In addition, such earnings (not passing through banking channels) are also financing imports of luxury items as well as a considerable amount of smuggling, which has further increased the availability of consumer goods in Pakistan" Zafar Iqbals logic seems impeccable.

The position with regard to currency in circulation was also not very encouraging. During June 1965 to June 1970, the currency in circulation increased by 41% (which gives an average annual rate of a little over 7%). During June 1972 to June, 1976, the currency in circulation registered an increase of 140% yielding an annual rate of 25%. Total money supply over the same period expanded at the rate of 17.2% per annum as, compared to about 11% during June 1965 to June 1970. It might be recalled that Pakistan also fought a war with India during this period.

The preceding analysis amply shows that during the period under review, the interactive effectiveness between money supply, prices and physical output was of a low order. Instead of bringing about stability to the economy, loud-mouthed pronouncements went astray with regard to fulfillment of objectives. Political

priorities and unthinking economic formulations resulted in a situation which was bound to be beyond retrieval.

It is surprising that the government to contain inflation, sought to import consumer goods, either through official channels or through a highly permissive attitude towards smuggling, which made the development outlook utterly inconceivable. Basic economic premises prove that unless domestic savings are rapidly raised, an adequate level of investment to achieve a respectable level of economic growth would be impossible. Zafar Iqbal is of the view that even if exports attain a growth level of 6% per annum and if domestic savings are conserved, it might be estimated that \$ 2,000 million, as external resources, would be needed by 1981 if there is to be any perceptible growth in per capita income. "Given Pakistan's sharply declining credit-worthiness, such large funds through aid or loans may not be forthcoming. In any case, the present economic structure of the country is extremely wasteful of both domestic and and foreign resources".

Zafar Iqbal rues the fact that systematic emasculation of academic institutions, the media and the civil service which had gone on since 1958 in one form or another, precluded discerning analyses of Pakistan's economic fluidity. His words of caution are relevant: "A reversal is overdue. Otherwise the public will continue to be hood-winked and deprived of all opportunity of informed analysis and criticism which is inconvenient to whoever happens to be in power at any given moment. Things ultimately surface but by that time the country had paid a very heavy price".

A large share of the blame, however, goes to Bhutto's policy for keeping partisan interests over economic priorities and development obligations.

The preceding analysis shows that much of where Bhutto erred was in his declarations seeking national revival of Islamic Socialism. There was no identification or explanation of the idealistic concept, especially how Islamic philosophy was sought to be linked with that of socialism. For the consolidation of his political base, Bhutto sought to woo the common man by inviting slogans and symbols of socialism whereas he was helpless in challenging the base of entrepreneur and big business. Besides his call of socialism, Bhutto insisted upon evolving a 'mixed economic system' in Pakistan. It is obvious that Bhutto's socio-economic precepts and objectives notwithstanding his primary consideration were political. Given the systemic reality of Pakistan, he could not afford to alter or reverse the order of priorities. It could not, however, be denied that Bhutto was the first political leader of Pakistan to have initially identified and recognised the urgency for socio-economic welfare of the people. He could not be

faulted on that score, specifically in the over all context of his radical socio-economic reform.

BHUTTO'S FOREIGN POLICY

In the formulation of foreign policy of any country, there are multi-dimensional determinants, such as, geo physical context, politico-economic realities and given international environment, such as, interests and objectives of global powers, nature of the balance of power in a particular region and bilateral and multi-lateral alignments. These are as relevant as the nature and impact of outlook and perception of national leadership. In the specific context of Pakistan, Bhutto could be considered one of the major architects of that country's foreign policy. His domestic preoccupations notwithstanding Bhutto continued to demonstrate an indentifiable perception of international linkages. During his tenure as Pakistan's foreign Minister in Field Marshal Ayub's cabinet, Bhutto enjoyed wide latitude in establishing the framework for Pakistan's foreign policy.

Prior to that, Bhutto voiced disenchantment with Pakistan's total reliance on the United States of America. His views were a reaction against the feudal-orthodox elite who believed that Pakistan was the only Asian country which the United States could truly depend upon, given the latter's interest in the containment of international Communism.¹

From 1954, until the Sino-Indian border conflict (1962), 'Pakistan's foreign policy could be said to be predominantly determined by the US factor, which displeased the radical forces led by Bhutto. When Bhutto became the foreign Minister, he strongly affirmed that the country must modify its policy of exclusive reliance on the US. It was not without reason that Bhutto gave a fresh perspective to international postures and a new dimension to foreign policy formulations.² After Pakistan's disillusionment in two Indo-Pak wars (1965 and 1971), Bhutto thought in terms of the theory of "interdependence" and "bilateralism" in foreign affairs. He realized geostrategic situation of Pakistan which was caught up in superpower machinations. Moreover he seemed to have realized that in the South Asian region, India had come to attain a distinct level and significance. If he interpreted that situation to mean a threat for Pakistan, it was another matter.

It was during Bhutto's tenure that the full significance of Pakistan's geo-religious affinity with South and West Asia was realized. The location of Iran, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf assumed added significance. Pakistan's strategic location to

¹ Lawrence Ziring: "Bhutto's Foreign Policy." 1972-73, in Contemporary Problems of Pakistan, Ed. J Henry (E. J. Brill, Leiden, The Netherlands, 1974) p. 57.

² For details refer to: Z. A. Bhutto, The Myth of Independence, (London, Oxford University Press, 1969).

the north of the Arabian sea, gave that country considerable importance specifically owing to the fact that it is also the point of entry to the oil rich Persian Gulf and also because almost 80% oil meant for South-East Asia and the Mediterranean, passes through Pakistan's strategic port at Karachi.

It was interesting that Bhutto wrote a 38-page signed article, entitled "Bilateralism-New Directions" in which he asserted that the concept of bilateralism, adopted as the guiding principle of Pakistan's foreign policy-was not incompatible with alliances with great powers and multilateral arrangements. Prior to the adoption of bilateralism he had said, Pakistan's foreign policy was, "at worst capricious and at best one of pragmatism planted on half-forgotten ideology". Bhutto claimed that with the adoption of bilateralism, Pakistan had steered itself through the treacherous shoals and currents that menaced the passage of strategically placed states in the complex, contemporary age. Bhutto thought that bilateralism was an affective strategy for the transformed international situation.

Along with Bhutto's article were also issued, as annexure, 17 documents supplied by the cabinet Davison and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Information. Bhutto stated that for Pakistan, its membership of the Islamic conference, bonds with Iran and Turkey and links with Saudi Arabia as cradle of Islam, governed considerable segment of its external relations. "The cause of the Arab world, Africa's struggle against racism, residual of colonialism and the general interest of the Third World in the establishment of an "equitable economic order can not but decisively influence our attitude towards international issues and to that extent, mould our external relationships".

While praising non-alignment as morally the "only valid and practically the only effective policy", Bhutto complained: "But there has been a canker in the rose. This had been generated by the assumed or professed leadership of the group of non-aligned states by one or more powers that have sought to use non-alignment as a level for their own diplomacy in pursuance of their own chauvinistic ends." He said "if non-alignment were to become a movement of great value once again, it had to be restored to its pristine image by redefining its objectives and redetermining its priorities. Pleading for the inclusion of all the third world countries, "regardless of geographical location, power alignment, race, religion or ideology", Bhutto warned that "any movement, grouping, any maneuver retarding third world's unification for mobilisation of its energies would involve the cause of being little minded."³

³ Morning News, 31 October, 1976.

In a 14 - page signed article released on 5 September, 1976, Bhutto further gave a blue-print for "Third World mobilisation" and called for a Third World summit around March 1977 in Pakistan, because for the year 1977, he was elected as the chairman of the Group of 77 at the United Nations. Bhutto affirmed that the conference of third world countries would "signal the turning away from the threat of a simmering and potentially disastrous confrontation to the promise of global partnership---The Third World message should not be clothed in the jargon of a by gone age, nor be tailored to the political ends of any country, or group of countries. If the opulent and the powerful can combine, as they invariably do at critical movements, to maintain their dominance on the basis of their wealth and technology, it would be perpetrating a wrong on humanity if the poor nations should dissipate their relatively limited strength in dividing their own ranks, in creating a gulf between the poor and the poor."⁴ Assailing the nuclear armaments race Bhutto advocated for declaration of Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans as "Peace Zones."

Thus, the central features of Bhutto's foreign policy were: evolution of bilateralism, Third World mobilisation through the creation of a new economic order, criticism of nuclear proliferation and establishment of special relations with the Muslim countries of the world on the basis of "Pan-Islamism," These value postulates notwithstanding, the operational aspect of Bhutto's foreign policy was not very different from that in the past. In political context, Bhutto did not succeed in dismantling Pakistan's long standing bias especially, with regard to India and Afghanistan. Despite his bitter criticism of foreign interference in third world affairs Bhutto himself relied on foreign powers for economic and military assistance. Posing himself as a staunch socialist at home, Bhutto showed definite leanings in external affairs towards "Pan-Islamism." Bhutto's foreign policy ventures can be briefly discussed here, in the context of Pakistan's relations with some major countries.

Pakistan's foreign policy towards South Asian region during Bhutto's rule did not appear to be significantly different from that in the past. Though he initiated the process of bilateralism, he could not implement it fully. Bhutto always suspected India as a potential threat to the existence of Pakistan and rejected various attempts to rectify matters on one prefect or the other. He did not stop rushing to super and major powers to intervene in the affairs of South Asian region. It was interesting that instead of strengthening understanding and mutual goodwill with the neighbouring states. Bhutto sought super-power support and prop. Such policy could not ensure an operational distinction between alliance based support and going beyond the critical parameters of non-interference by super and big powers. Such postures only precluded extension of

⁴ Dawn, 6 September, 1976

areas of agreement and development in the region, and, as events amply vindicated strains and stresses continued to adversely affect the politics of South Asia. It was in this context that Bhutto's search for equilibrium' in relations between super and big powers, in South Asia specifically, should be viewed.

Bhutto's postures concerning South Asia were ambivalent. He pleaded for bilateralism or equilibrium depending primarily on how far it suited his objective to consolidate internal politics and economic stability of Pakistan. He also wanted that whatever policies he pursued, did not adversely affect "big-power equilibrium" in the region.

As one takes closer look at Pakistan's relations with India, it would be seen that there was protracted history of ill-will and tension. Right from the Simla agreement (July 1972) to Indo-Pak agreement (14 May 1975)⁵ for the restoration of full diplomatic relations, the spirit of "Coexistence" did not take reliable roots. As during the preceding years, Bhutto continued to project the Jammu and Kashmir issue as a bone of contention, thwarting amicable resolution of conflict between the two countries. Owing to unpredictable domestic situation, Bhutto resorted to political propaganda with a view to creating favorable public opinion. Like his predecessors, Bhutto kept harping upon supposed threats to Pakistan's sovereignty. India-baiting took new proportions, primarily to dilute political opposition at home. There was a systematic building up of Bhutto's image as the saviour and 'heroic figure,' who alone was capable of ensuring Pakistan's integrity and stability.

Bhutto concluded the historic Simla agreement (1972) with India as a leader of the defeated and dismembered nation,⁶ Bhutto was adequately seized of the transformation in the balance of power in the sub-continent. His primary concern was to get the release of Pakistan's 93,000 POWS, interned in India. It might be presumed that he would never have agreed to the delineation of the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir, had he foreseen that the withdrawal of Indian troops from the occupied areas of Pakistan could be achieved otherwise: From the very beginning, he was under concerted pressure, especially in Punjab and Sindh, his main stay of power, for release of the POWs, because the majority of the POWs belonged to these two provinces. Even after agreeing to restore diplomatic relations with India, in May 1976, Bhutto persisted with Kashmir issue more to assuage the mounting domestic opposition and also for refurbishing his party's image in the forthcoming general elections. Addressing the National Assembly on 21 June, 1976, Bhutto reaffirmed the view that there

⁵ For details See: The Hindustan Times, 15 May, 1976.

⁶ Refer to Satish Kumar, The New Pakistan, chapter 7 and 8 (Vikas, New Delhi, 1978).

could be no compromise on fundamental issue regarding the problem of Jammu and Kashmir. He said:

“We remain committed to the right of self-determination for the people of Jammu and Kashmir”. Bhutto strongly criticized opposition leader’s allegations that the Kashmir issue had been by-passed at the 1972 Simla conference. To soothe his political rivals at home, Bhutto claimed to have revived the Kashmir issue and had made it clear that “it was the only issue left to be resolved between India and Pakistan following the settlement on other outstanding issues, and on this settlement depended friendly relations between them.”⁷

The recurrent appeal to keep Kashmir issue ‘live’ thwarted all efforts of developing happy relations in South Asia in general, and Indo-Pak amity in particular. In that at least, Bhutto showed consistency of performance, without manifestly deviating from policies of the preceding regime.

Pakistan’s relations with Bangladesh also were as sour as could be expected in case of a country’s dismemberment into two sovereign states. So long as Mujib was alive, Bhutto was evasive and reluctant to accept the political reality of Bangladesh. It was only after Mujib’s assassination that Pakistan’s postures showed signs of change. Pakistan recognized Bangladesh during the Islamic Summit held at Lahore in February 1974. It would be recalled that Bangla-Pak relations were set on the course of Normalization, only after the change of regime in Bangladesh. Bhutto seemed to have presumed that Bangladesh during Mujib’s regime would, automatically be tilting, towards India; and, against Pakistan. In December 1975, Bhutto initiated the course of improving Pak - Bangladesh relations through concluding a treaty almost on the pattern of “Indo Bangladesh treaty”. In 1976 both the countries resumed diplomatic relations, and restored, postal and telecommunication links. It would be recalled that time and again, Bhutto repeated his slogan of ‘special relations’ with Bangladesh respecting its sovereignty and integrity. Bhutto,, also, gave wide publicity to Bangladesh’s desire to have closer links with “Islamic world” as the vindication of “two nation theory”, despite that country’s birth in violence and confrontation against West Pakistan’s hegemony. Bhutto took pains to stress the point that Bangladesh was basically “Muslim Bengal”.

Pakistan’s relations with other South Asian countries Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutto did not show any controversial aspects during Bhutto regime. By his pronouncements to strengthen the unity of the “littoral” state of the region, Bhutto gained considerable good will among these nations and succeeded in developing mutual economic and cultural ties.

⁷ Dawn, 22 June, 1976.

With the exception of Afghanistan, Bhutto persisted with seeking better and “special” relations with Muslim countries of the world, specifically, west Asian countries. The relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan remained tense and strained on the question of self–determination of “Pakhtoone” residing in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. Bhutto who talked of “self-determination” of Kashmir people, would not agree to an identical policy for the Pakhtoons. It was only in 1976 that he took initiatives to restore friendly relations with Afghanistan⁸. However, no specific outcome was in evidence owing primarily to the legacy of distrust and strains. Even as Pakistan was founded Afghan leaders did not accept the Durand Line (1893) which established the frontier between the two countries. Afghans also supported creation of a separate Pathan state in the sensitive region of Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province ever since.⁹

It is to be noted, however, that Unlike India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have avoided any major confrontation. On the whole, relations between the two countries, therefore, could be said to have differed from ‘poor’ and ‘Luke-warm’.¹⁰

Bhutto’s constitution (1973) specifically mentioned that Pakistan would strive for preservation and strengthening of fraternal relations among Muslim countries based on “Islamic Unity and brotherhood” (Article 40). Soon upon assumption of power, Bhutto singled out the “Muslim bloc of nations” as having demonstrated the greatest friendship toward Pakistan. After the emergence of Bangladesh, Bhutto gave a new orientation to Pakistan’s policy ensuring the dimension of amity towards the Muslim countries in the context of changing geo-political relations :

“The severance of our eastern limb by force has significantly altered our geographic focus. This will naturally affect our geopolitical perspective. There is whole uninterrupted belt of Muslim nations.... Clearly we have to make a major effort in building upon the fraternal ties that already bind us to the Muslim World.”¹¹

Whether that new - found affinity with Muslim countries, during Bhutto regime in West Asia was a tactical overture, is hard to verify. But, thereby, it might be

⁸ News Review on South Asia, November 1976.

⁹ For details refer to : Ainslie T. Embree (Ed.), Pakistan's Western Borderlands (Vikas, New Delhi, 1977).

¹⁰ Lawrence Ziring, Opcit, p. 65

¹¹ Pakistan Affairs, May 16, 1972, Quoted by Lawrence Ziring, Opcit, p. 63

presumed that he wanted to legitimize his own rule at home and his foreign policy. Bhutto developed close relations with Turkey and Iran on the one hand, and with the Sheikhdoms on the other, as the manifestation of Pakistan's affinity with "Pan-Islamism".

The holding of Islamic Summit (1974) at Lahore, gave Bhutto considerable popularity in Arab countries in particular, and the Islamic world in general. Addressing the International *Seerat* Congress in Rawalpindi on March 3, 1976, Bhutto strongly put forward his determination to make Pakistan "a mighty fortress of Islam", and made fervent call for the unity of the Arabs and other Muslim countries.¹²

Bhutto developed politico-economic and cultural relations with Iran and Turkey by reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to CENTO and RCD. Perhaps, after the USA and Red China, Iran was the other country which gave massive military assistance to Pakistan. With the collaboration of Iran and Turkey, Bhutto also set-up several agro-industrial projects to strengthen the economy of Pakistan.

Pakistan's relations with Arab countries, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Syria and Jordan were improved to a considerable extent. According to well informed sources, the Arab countries provided massive economic assistance to Pakistan. Up to 1975, during Bhutto's time, Pakistan received economic assistance amounting \$ 1,000 million from oil producing Arab countries.¹³

It was shrewd perception of Bhutto to have extended Pakistan's relations towards Muslim countries in west Asia. It was considered an adequate enough umbrella to safeguard Pakistan's interests. Bhutto successfully equated Pakistan's geo-political interests and Islamic objectives. It was not without reason that after winning the March 1977 general election, Bhutto sought to ensure his legitimacy by expecting these countries to bolster his claims. It seems the PNA leadership chose to take a leaf out of Bhutto's strategy and pretended, obviously successfully, of far greater allegiance to Islam, which seems to have earned the PNA greater credibility among the West Asian Muslim states. Consequently, when the inevitable parting of the ways came vis-a-vis Bhutto and the PNA, the former commanded much less support from the West Asian World. To extend this presumption further, West Asian states seem to prefer the present military (Gen. Zia's) dictatorship in Pakistan primarily because the latter has gone out of the way to prove its bonafides as Islamic regime.

¹² Dawn, 4 March, 1976

¹³ The Hindustan Times, 13 March, 1976.

It is interesting that while Bhutto succeeded in developing balanced relations with the two Super Powers and Major Powers, Pakistan's search for these diplomatic sureties was, by and large, determined by her relations with India. Theoretically speaking, Bhutto claimed to maintain "bilateral" approach in foreign affairs with a view to equating Pakistan with the USA, USSR, UK, People's Republic of China, and France. In an article published in Foreign Affairs, Bhutto stated:

"By maintaining friendly relations with all the great powers on the basis of principles and not expediency, Pakistan hopes to avoid involvement in disputes and struggles between them. It is a part of our new policy that one should refrain from participating in multilateral pacts directed by one bloc of powers against another".¹⁴

However, in practice, Bhutto did not disengage Pakistan from global power - politics. Biased with the phobia of "India's hegemony" in South Asian region, in general, and the sub-continent, in particular, Bhutto kept on his quest for military aid from various sources. It might also be recalled that Bhutto's foreign policy ventures came up in the larger context of protracted Sino-Indian estrangement and Indo-Pak distrust, on the one hand, and Pakistan's growing understanding with the USA and Communist China as a policy of diplomatic vision, on the other, especially the Indo-Soviet treaty (1971) further explained Pakistan's search for diplomatic allies. And, yet, Pakistan's relations with the USSR, even during the systemic crisis of December 1971, however, non-specific, were not estranged, and, mutual economic and trade relations continued to be maintained. At no time did Bhutto permit his personal or his government's unhappiness over the Soviet Union's role during the conflict of 1971, to be transformed into diplomatic rupture with the USSR. Bhutto's greater reliance on the USA and China was also aimed against any possible threat from the USSR also. On the other hand, it might also be said that Bhutto's persistence with cordiality with the USA, did not prevent him from forging mutual understanding with China and France. Bhutto's foreign policy options, therefore, were considerably extended as the aforesaid context seeks to show. And, yet, the other side of the issue was equally valid; precisely, that Pakistan could not wholly dispense with US assistance and alliance, of a variety. Bhutto's Foreign Policy formulation, therefore, was not without adequate hard - core calculations and long term perspective.

While it is true that during the 1965 Indo-Pak war, the USA did not gift away substantial and decisive military hardware to Pakistan, during the crisis over Bangladesh (1971), the role of the USA was much more specific. Sale of

¹⁴ Z. A. Bhutto: "Pakistan Builds Anew", Foreign Affairs, 51:3, April 1973, p. 552.

armaments rose about \$ 82 million even before lifting the arms embargo (1975) and it was promised that ammunition, anti-tank missiles and Jeeps and other military vehicles worth about \$ 100 million would be supplied to Pakistan.

As a signatory to the 1954, mutual assistance pact with the USA, Pakistan is entitled to military aid and other concessions and Bhutto often reminded the US of its “treaty obligations” to supply conventional arms to Pakistan. The long period (almost a decade) of US arms embargo perhaps forced Bhutto to lean towards China and France for military and economic assistance. That the USA, Pakistan’s professed ally for years, could not digest. In that situation perhaps Bhutto came at crossroads of diplomatic options, which compelled him to go for nuclear reprocessing plant (1976) from France, Bhutto threatened to dissociate Pakistan from military pacts sponsored by the USA, including CENTO.¹⁵ Bhutto later alleged that he was ousted by a military ‘coup’ at the instance of the USA so, also, the search for nuclear reprocessing plant was aborted.¹⁶

During Bhutto regime, relations between Pakistan and the People’s Republic of China became more cordial than ever before. Even Bhutto had persistently tried to involve China as a countervailing power vis-a-vis India. When Bhutto assumed complete control over administration, Pakistan heavily relied on Chinese military and economic assistance and also got maximum support regarding political issues. In 1971 China agreed to provide Rs. 1000 millions of free long – term loan to Finance development projects in addition to Rs. 540 millions pledged in the past.¹⁷ At Bhutto’s request China also agreed to cancel a \$110,000,00 debt growing out of the 1965 Indo–Pak war. Though, China declined to sign a defence pact with Pakistan to counter balance the Indo–Soviet Treaty, it gave the assurance that, it would give Pakistan every assistance as and when the occasion demanded.

China helped Pakistan not only to make–up the war losses suffered during the conflict of 1971, but also to build up capacity for increasing arms production and in modernization of Pakistan’s defence system. During Bhutto regime Pakistan was the biggest recipient of Chinese military aid among non–Communist countries. Pakistan received Chinese arms aid worth more than S 300 million.¹⁸ Bhutto not only restored cordial relations between the two countries but also played a historic role in seeking detente between the USA and China. Bhutto always supported the cause of China in international forums. He persistently

¹⁵ The Statesman, Nov. 7, 1976.

¹⁶ The Times of India, Dec. 28, 1978.

¹⁷ The Pakistan Times, Nov. 15, 1971.

¹⁸ For Details: News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, June, 1976.

supported China's entry into the United Nations and also called for representation of China in Asian Development Bank (ADB). Bhutto vociferously asserted that "there is no point in denying the rightful place to the "Asian Giant"¹⁹. The PRC in turn, also provided ample support to Pakistan to contain super power rivalry in the South Asian region and, to a considerable extent, hardened the militaristic tendencies in Pakistan. It would not, however, be an exaggeration to state that during Bhutto's tenure Pakistan's relations with the PRC remained relatively consistent.

In Summation, it would be seen that despite his academic training in international politics and diplomacy and attempts to formulate a broad perspective of inter-state political realities. Bhutto regime resulted in dilemmas emanating from a mix of emotional and realistic contradictions. Bhutto was obsessed with parity vis-à-vis India and that led to alternatives which had their respective inhibiting factors. In the context of fluctuating relations with neighbouring states, Bhutto relied on favourable alliance with super and big powers, and, consequently, economic resurgence was relegated to secondary level with military priorities taking precedence. In addition, Bhutto's foreign policy sought to elicit maximum advantage out of a situation of super and big power interests in South Asia, an alternative which had infinite imponderables and hazards, as later events showed Bhutto was also instrumental in giving West-Asia dimension to foreign policy, in keeping with his pronouncements of Islamic national core.

However, Bhutto's contribution in the field of Pakistan's foreign policy can not be overlooked. In addition to playing a leading role in formulating and implementing domestic policy, Bhutto also gave a fresh and realistic perspective to Pakistan's foreign policy. He was the first political leader who visualised a self-respecting role for Pakistan in the arena of international politics. He was also aware of the fact that exclusive dependence on either super power would only preclude Pakistan from exercising the freedom to identify foreign policy options. Bhutto also deserves credit for supporting bilateralism in international politics. Moreover, Bhutto's concern for third-world unity and establishment of a new economic world order were indices of his conscious efforts to create a place for Pakistan not only among the developing world but also at the global level.

¹⁹ Dawn, 26 April, 1976.

THE PPP AND THE OPPOSITION PARTIES: INTERACTIVE DILEMMAS

Having tasted power Bhutto not only adopted coercive measures against the opposition parties, he also took care to ward off disgruntled elements within his own Pakistan People's Party. By resorting to extra - constitutional forces --- army, para-military force and police, he crushed progressive and left-wing elements thereof. On the national political sense, Bhutto endeavored to make the PPP as dominant Party, with a view to establishing one party hegemony. That, however, was synonymous with Bhutto's quest for personal power.

Bhutto and the Pakistan People's Party

Before we proceed further, it would be relevant to state that the PPP, during its first phase of inception (1967-70) acted as an opposition party with generous sprinkling of what looked like radical postures and policy declaration. However, as the PPP assumed political power, its second phase (1971-77) showed considerable departure from its former radical stance and perspective. As the party in power, the PPP came to show considerable obduracy in its functional aspect. But, it was not so much owing to its institutional and ideological strength that the PPP succeeded in being at the helm of affairs as it was owing to the ineffectiveness and helplessness of the opposition such as they were.

To begin at the beginning, Bhutto formed the PPP in November 1967. The Pakistan People's Party emerged in response to growing awareness among the common man concerning the socio-political and economic problems during Ayub's military regime. That seemed an opportune time for Bhutto to appeal to the masses and announce the four – point programme of the PPP

“Islam is our Faith;
Democracy is our Polity;
Socialism is our Economy and
All Power to the People.”

The inherent contradictions of the four – point – Programme notwithstanding, Bhutto succeeded in presenting himself as a champion of the masses and a crusader against military dictatorship. Consequently, the image of the PPP was also refurbished. It was not unnatural for factory workers, labourers, peasants and students to rally behind Bhutto and give massive support to Bhutto's criticism of the Ayub government as “illegitimate and anti – people.” In its bid to become a progressive party, the PPP concentrated on three objectives:

1. Opposition of Ayub's dictatorial and undemocratic methods ;
2. Establishment of democracy in Pakistan and
3. Transformation of Pakistan into a Socialist Society.

In the larger context of developing society, the common man in Pakistan was also lured by the glamour and promise of slogan – symbolism and various classes of people were attracted by Bhutto's call. One can not blame the people for looking upon Bhutto and the PPP as saviors considering the fact of Pakistan's political experience and antecedents.

By 1968 anti–Ayub feelings in Pakistan were widespread. Bhutto's PPP succeeded in mobilising popular resentment against the Ayub regime. The masses who were getting increasingly politicized through PPP's revolutionary and secular calls, provided considerable support to Bhutto and his Party ultimately persuaded Ayub to quit. Though Ayub left the political scene in 1969, he transferred power to the then army chief, General Yahya Khan. General Yahya Khan like his predecessors, failed to make any appreciable dent in the growing popularity of the PPP. The extent of People's Party's popular image could be assessed by the fact that it was the first opposition party which succeeded in persuading the military Junta to declare general elections in Pakistan, and eventually transferring power to the representatives of the People of Pakistan.

After elections were announced to be held in December 1970, Bhutto's PPP reiterated radical and revolutionary postures which were amply reflected in the election manifesto of the PPP.

The orthodox and conservative political elements were not happy with Bhutto's apparently radical programme. In both, East (erstwhile) and West Pakistan, the *Ulema* belonging to both *Shia* and *Sunni* sects assailed PPP's radical stance as repugnant to Islamic philosophy. They organized meetings for expressing Fatwa (formal declaration of Islamic propriety or impropriety on an act) against Bhutto's conception of socialism. The ideology of the PPP was criticized as "*Kufr*" (anti-Islam) and anti-Pakistan. The *Islam Pasand* Parties - Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam and Jamiatul-Ulema-e-Pakistan raised the slogan "Socialism Kufr Hai" during the 1970 general election campaign.

In view of the mounting criticism of religious elite and right-wing parties, Bhutto introduced some modifications in the PPP's ideology. During the election campaign (1970) PPP's original ideology of "Socialism" was identified as "Islamic Socialism". In-fact, in order to gain massive popular support, Bhutto gave a call for "restructuring Pakistan's society in accordance with the principles

of egalitarianism as mentioned in the Holy *Quran* and *Sunnah*". The Islamic term *Musawaat-e-Mohammadi* (equality according to Islamic Principles) was specifically added in the PPP manifesto.¹ Thus, through this modification in keeping with "Islamic value postulates" Bhutto's PPP not only acquired massive popular appeal but also neutralized the growing challenge of rightist and obscurantist forces.

After the resounding victory at 1970 general elections, Bhutto's political ambitions got aroused to a greater extent. Conveniently forgetting the democratic and socialistic ideals of the PPP, for whatever they were worth, Bhutto made little secret of his ambition to rule the "entire Pakistan". However, that was not immediately possible, in view of Sheikh Mujib's victory in the erstwhile eastern wing. As events turned out to be, Bhutto succeeded in carving a political position exclusively for himself negating the accepted norms of majority's right to govern in a parliamentary system. What transpired, however, was that Bhutto's PPP in an overall minority refused to play its role as responsible opposition in the national legislature and, instead, chose to thwart all efforts of Sheikh Mujib to ensure reconciliation. The rest of the story of Pakistan's dismemberment does not need recounting here. It is notable that Bhutto's PPP after winning the 1970 general election repeated the haughty tactics of the Muslim League when the latter had also sought to disregard the parliamentary norms of the majority's right to form the government. Similarly Bhutto's decision to stay away from the National Assembly reminds the Muslim League's refusal to participate in the Indian Constituent Assembly in 1946-47 just before the partition. A strong and determined minority felt that the only way it would safeguard its vital interests was to opt out of the democratic process to seek extra parliamentary solutions.²

After the emergence of Bangladesh, Bhutto's PPP assumed power in what was left of Pakistan and ruled the country for five and a half years. During the power phase (1971-77), the complexion and ideology of the PPP underwent considerable changes. Bhutto became growingly ambitious and traits of authoritarianism were apparent in his handling of the party affairs as well as governance. He did not tolerate criticism even when it came from tried and trusted colleagues³. There was little doubt that the PPP after 1970 became a

¹ Bhutto rationalized the addition of Islamic contents in the socialistic framework of his party ideology on the ground that, since, there were verities of Socialism in the world as in the USSR, China and elsewhere, why can not there be a Pakistani form of Socialism suitable to that countries genius. For details see ; Dilip Mukherjee, (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto : Quest For Power (New Delhi, Vikas, 1972) (pp, 179-180)

² Ibid (pp. 113-114)

³ Pakistan People's Party leader from Dacca Nuruzzaman was the first among those who vehemently criticized Bhutto's excessive personalism and running the party on "purely dictatorial lines." He was

convenient tool for Bhutto's personal rule. Owing to Bhutto's excessive personalism and repressive style, the PPP could not succeed in becoming a national party. True, it was popular in Punjab and Sindh. But, in Baluchistan and the NWFP, it failed to enlist any reliable mass support.

During 1970 general elections the Pakistan People's Party became an amalgam of new pressure group and old vested interests.⁴ With a view to earn massive popular appeal, Bhutto opened the party membership to all kinds of persons, who were prepared to follow his dictates. Consequently, the reactionary forces and feudal elements and middle class professionals became the "band waggoners" within the PPP. Thus, the very content and character of the PPP got converted into an "hybrid complexion", which threatened the ideological rationale and organizational viability of the PPP and antagonized the leftist forces within the PPP. Consequently, the PPP could not earn popularity in remote rural areas, where *Islam pasand* parties were in dominant position. The PPP's popularity and support bases remained centered in urban areas dominated by the middle class. The founding and committed members of the PPP became apprehensive of the transformation of the party into an "elitist party" dominated by reactionary and feudal forces and drawing - room politicians.

Bhutto was satisfied with keeping himself in power. Being chief of the Party and the head of the government, he showed little concern for issues likely to threaten the integrity and solidarity of the ruling PPP. He could not successfully harness the roots of "socialism" in the PPP. It became apparent, that Bhutto's inclination towards socialism enabled him to acquire some semblance of popular appeal and, yet, it would not be idle guess to state that his personality traits and popular image had made 'socialism' popular and not vice-versa⁵. The weak ideological roots caused intra-party cleavages. Increasing conflicts between the "doctrinaires" versus "bandwaggoners" challenged the credibility of the Pakistan People's Party to a larger extent.

The Pakistan People's Party convention for rejuvenating the internal solidarity of the party held at Islamabad in November 1972, revealed formidable intra-party weaknesses rather than renaissance. The process of delegate selection crystallized intra-party bickerings between the founding leftist members and the new entrants.

immediately expelled from the Party membership for criticizing the role of the Chairman of the PPP. See: Pakistan Observer, Feb. 2, 1970.

⁴ For details : Elliot L. Tepper, "The New Pakistan: Problems and Prospects", Pacific Affairs, (47:1, Spring, 1974) p. 63.

⁵ See : Khalid Bin Syeed, "How Radical is the PPP" ? Pacific Affairs, (48:1, Spring 1975) pp. 42-60.

Throughout his rule Bhutto showed little concern for institutionalizing the party structure. He did not establish substantial unity within the party ranks. Through his constant Purge of the ruling party he succeeded only in maintaining a fragile unity. The feeling of uncertainty within party ranks posed insurmountable challenges in the process of evolving a cohesive and integrated party. From Bhutto's mounting personalism and growing authoritarianism, it appeared that he was more concerned with short-term gains rather than consolidating long-term objectives. It was obvious that the objectives of establishment of egalitarian society and democratic and secular principles, earlier announced by the PPP, were ignored as Bhutto came to consolidate his power at the helm.

By the end of 1974, the PPP was completely "personalized" by Bhutto's charisma. He openly started insisting that "I am the People's Party and they are all my creatures"⁶. Bhutto's increasing boastful postures irritated the leftist forces within the PPP. Consequently, Bhutto dispassionately ousted several founder members of the PPP, like Mahmud All Kasuri, Ghulam Mustafa Khar, Mohammad Hanif Ramay, Khursheed Hasan Meer, Malik Mohammad Khan, Mukhtar Rana and J. A. Rahim from the party. All persons were very close to Bhutto in his wilderness during Ayub regime. They provided full-fledged support to Bhutto in his anti Ayub and anti-Mujib crusades. But, Bhutto, for his own political survival expelled them from the party membership. In their place Bhutto preferred associates who were not troublesome and who had no ambitions of their own because only such persons would toe his line. That led to increasing influence of rightist and reactionary forces in the affairs of the party. Thus, the growing influence of the rightwing elements not only weakened the solidarity of the party but also tarnished its progressive and radical image. The PPP having shed its socialistic character lost its revolutionary clan and enabled the rightists to increase their political influence.⁷

In January 1975, the chairman of the PPP (Bhutto) called a major convention to reorganize the party structure on ideological lines. The convention agreed upon the resolution of key-problems within the party, and emphasized on the creation of grass root level party organizations, implementation of steadfast socialist programmes, and keeping a constant check on the trends of intra party factionalism. Operationally, however, not much transformation occurred thereof. In reality, Bhutto was still dominant in party affairs.

PPP's ambivalence and disorganization continued, since Bhutto's major priority was to stabilize his personal rule, Bhutto, continued to avoid the issue of party elections on one pretext or the other. His plea was that the party elections would

⁶ Quoted in Lawrence Ziring: "Pakistan: A Political Perspective" Asian Survey (XL: 7 July 1975) 629-644.

⁷ See: POT (Pakistan Series) August 12, 1974.

be held only after the general elections. On the basis of this argument, Bhutto succeeded in keeping himself as the chairman of the Party throughout his rule.

The year 1976 was devoted to preparation of the next general elections. Since the party was in a complete mess and confronting insurmountable challenges both national and provincial levels, Bhutto thought it relevant to overhaul the entire party structure. Addressing a party meeting at Muzaffarbad on 29 April, 1976, Bhutto said

“I want the People’s Party to be reorganized on sound and solid foundations with complete discipline in its ranks”.⁸

Consequently, a massive drive was initiated for reorganization of the party, at central, provincial, district and tehsil levels. Again the membership of the party was opened to all, and, it was inevitable that opportunist forces entered with relative ease. By the end of December 1976, the PPP, enrolled about one crore new members who were defectors either of the opposition parties or from various tribes and minority groups. Such a contrived drive could neither rebuild the popular base of the PPP nor ensure reliable rank and file with a view to strengthening the institutional core.⁹

Thus, through his reorganization move Bhutto chiefly concentrated on enhancing the numerical strength of the party and not on its organizational and ideological infighting and disorganization in the PPP. Bhutto held three types of party members responsible for causing splits and disharmony within the party ranks. Of the first type were those who did not have a clear understanding of the historical processes which brought the People’s party manifesto into being, such elements were liable to be swayed by petty considerations, much to the detriment of principles and party discipline. The second type comprised small land lords whose only purpose in politics was attainment of power. Bhutto believed that they caused maximum damage to the party by creating factions and caused divisions among party members as “progressive” and others as “non-progressive”. The Third type comprised idealists who were sincere in their motivations but were inexperienced and hasty. They wanted to do everything in short-time by forcing the pace of change. They were unaware of the realities of adjustment and strategy.¹⁰

⁸ Dawn 12 May, 1976.

⁹ PPP's Secretary General Mubashir Hassan admitted that "vested interests, like Waderas, Jagirdars and capitalists were trying to infiltrate PPP ranks en bloc." See: News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, Dec., 1976.

¹⁰ The Hindustan Times. Feb. 2, 1976.

In his various party speeches during 1976 Bhutto reiterated the achievements of his regime and sought to project the PPP as a “revolutionary” party and castigated the opposition as no more than a conglomeration of self-seeking and opportunist elements. However, Bhutto’s leadership of the PPP did not corroborate his declarations and his handling of the party affairs was neither democratic nor conducive to bringing about cohesive integration. Similarly, the basic issues bearing upon nation-building and integration were not given priority. He seemed to have been more concerned with stability of his rule rather than with the stability of the nation.

After the announcement of March 1977 general elections, Bhutto controlled the entire political scene of the country and planned a full-fledged scheme for rigging the general elections because he was not very confident of PPP’s resounding victory in the March 1977 general elections as compared to its victory during 1970 general elections. Through massive rigging Bhutto succeeded in capturing more than adequate seats for the ruling PPP. That, however, was not to be an asset and came out to be a liability. The PNA refused to recognize the legitimacy of the electoral verdict and assailed the PPP and Bhutto’s leadership for unprecedented malpractices in the general elections. After a period of indecision, and uncertainty, Bhutto was overthrown by the army.

Despite, its limitations and short comings, it would be correct to say that the PPP did emerge as a powerful and single influential party in the political system of Pakistan. Even the Muslim League did not attain that stature after the creation of Pakistan. It was more owing to shifts in Bhutto’s objectives and methods that the PPP had to bear the brunt of people’s dismay and opposition’s wrath, and which also caused considerable harm to the unity and integration of the party. As seen earlier, Bhutto did not care to utilize the PPP as an instrument of attaining national objectives. One- in saddle, Bhutto cared to ensure his personal survival at the helm and the PPP became an instrument at his command. And once the PPP lost its identity, it was too much to expect it to perform the basic functions of a popular and strong political forum.

Bhutto And The Opposition Parties

Bhutto’s quest for survival also extended to his approach towards the opposition parties, which did not escape the consequences of his authoritarian tactics. With a view to refurbishing the image of the PPP rule, Bhutto resorted to coercive and repressive policies towards the opposition instead of following a competitive approach based on principles of democracy and constitutionalism. Through various statutory laws and regulations, Bhutto succeeded in suppressing the opposition. On the other hand, the opposition parties were also responsible, to a greater extent, in giving opportunity to Bhutto for extending one-party

hegemony. Bhutto was aware of the disunity and parochialism of the opposition parties soon after the formation of the PPP.

A brief estimate of the opposition parties would show that they lacked reliable ideology and were organizationally weak. Their tactics were ineffective and popular base fragile. Being primarily reactionary and dogmatic, they wanted to take Pakistan back to medieval practices, and values which could not be termed either secular or progressive. In addition with the exception of the National Awami Party (NAP), other opposition parties proved vulnerable to government's pressure tactics and failed to assert themselves as viable opposition parties. That further eroded their popular base for whatever it was worth. Singly or unitedly, they failed to pose a challenge to Bhutto's dictatorial measures and adventurism. Perhaps lack of modern priorities and historical perspective made the opposition parties prisoners of indecision and inaction. Though they made Islam the plank of their survival, the tactics failed to click.

In fact, the opposition parties were more concerned with the formality of contesting general elections and assuming power than with long term objectives of nation-building and integration. Intra party factionalism, ideological incredibility and lack of political will, left the opposition parties in chaotic condition. The maximum semblances of concerted opposition was seen at the time of elections, which was not only transitory but lacked any purposive perspective of the totality of political process.¹¹

As for leadership of opposition parties, it would suffice to say that most of them failed to go beyond the confines of self seeking, opportunist and traditional postures. Most opposition leaders were religious leaders first and they joined politics only for convenience, whereas there were some who were retired military officers and bureaucrats. Such a conglomeration could not be expected to have risen equal to the political acumen of Bhutto. In the general elections of 1979 and 1977, the opposition failed to present itself in an authentic fashion and very fact that they appealed to orthodoxy and yet failed to convince the electorate was a measure of Bhutto's image at that time.

It might be recalled that after assuming power, Bhutto persisted with the martial law, primarily to deter his political opponents. He realized that despite

¹¹ In January 1967, Some opposition parties like Council Muslim League, The Jamaat-e-Islami Nizame-Islami and the Awami League Unitedly formed "Pakistan Democratic Movement" (PDM) to oppose Ayub's Military dictatorship. In 1973 some opposition parties after the failure of PDM formed another joint front namely the "United Democratic Front" (UDF) to oppose Bhutto's dictatorial postures. The UDF constituents were: Jamaitul-Ulema-e-Islam, The Jamaat-e-Islami, Muslim League (Pagara group), The Pakistan Democratic Party, Muslim Conference and Khalcsar Tehrik. While on the eve of 1977 general elections the nine major opposition parties formed "Pakistan National Alliance" to jointly contest elections against the ruling PPP.

commanding support of 88 members in a House of 144, the opposition, comprising the remaining 56 members, could create enough trouble for him. Bhutto also delayed convening the National Assembly, with a view to deferring issues of immediate concern arising out of Pakistan's dismemberment as well as those flowing from formulations of a permanent constitution. Throughout the constitution-making process, Bhutto did not follow established constitutional norms. Under the Interim constitution, Bhutto exercised unlimited authority as the President of Pakistan. Despite the repeated demand of opposition for the end of the state of emergency, before drafting a permanent constitution, Bhutto persisted with national emergency. Bhutto violated the constitutional accord of October 20 1972, which he had concluded with the opposition parties. Nearly all the opposition parties had appended note of dissent to the report of the constitution committee presented to the National Assembly. The opposition alleged that Bhutto was intent upon making the executive authority dictatorial. For instance, Bhutto retained both the Political Parties Act (1962) and the provision of a two-third majority for a no-confidence vote on the Draft Constitution. Despite controversies and conflict between government and opposition, Bhutto ultimately succeeded in securing adequate support for the approval of the new constitution by the National Assembly on April 10, 1973. In a House of 144 members, the constitution was approved by 125 votes out of 128 present and voting. Surprisingly, the voting pattern was over whelming in favour of Bhutto and gave the lie to the potential of the opposition. After assuming the office of Prime Minister under the new constitution on August 13, 1973, Bhutto seemed to have ignored the challenge of opposition parties.

It was not merely that he belittled the opposition on specific issues; his whole approach towards the opposition parties was that of intolerance. He wanted the opposition only as a show piece and a facade of a democratic dispensation to silence critics at home and abroad. In actual practice, he spared no opposition leader and party worth any reckoning, in a calculated move of vilification, which seemed to have become a built-in mechanism of Bhutto's political style.

Of all opposition parties, Bhutto administration showed utmost intolerance towards the National Awami Party.¹² Led by Khan Abdul Wali Khan, the NAP came under concentrated attack on different occasions from 1972 to February 1975 till it was finally banned. It appeared that Bhutto was intent upon crushing Khan Abdul Wali Khan's charisma and popular image which he gained after

¹² The NAP was formed in 1956; it was an offshoot of the Awami League. During 1970 general elections, the NAP emerged as the single largest party in provincial assemblies of the NWFP and Baluchistan. While in the National Assembly it won only six seats. Being a relatively progressive party, the ruling elite had apprehensions about its objectives and activities. General Yahya Khan banned the NAP in November 1971. Bhutto acted like wise in February 1975.

1970 general elections. Through its propaganda offensive the federal government extensively publicized NAP's role as anti-national aimed at the further disintegration of Pakistan. In February 1973 the NAP-JUI coalition government of Baluchistan and the NWFP had been dismissed. And the NAP was finally banned on February 10, 1975¹³. Khan Abdul Wali Khan and more than 300 leaders of the NAP were arrested on fabricated charges of operating in a prejudicial manner to the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan. Through III constitutional amendment the detention of NAP leaders had been extended indefinitely¹⁴. The Supreme Court also toed the line of the federal government since it upheld the ban on the NAP.

As events showed, the progressive members of the defunct NAP formed a new Party viz; the National Democratic Party under the leadership of Sherbaz Khan Mazari and Begum Nasim Wali Khan. NDP launched a seven- point programme; lifting of emergency; restoration of civic liberties; release of all political detainees; political solution of Baluchistan problem; implementation of the constitution as was unanimously approved by the National Assembly in 1973; grant of admission to all educational institution, purely on merit basis; minimization of unemployment, job security and unemployment allowance.

However, owing to the split¹⁵ in the party and lack of ideological commitment and nation-wide popularity, Bhutto succeeded in neutralizing the challenge of the NDP.

Similarly, other rightist opposition parties comprising reactionary, traditional and religious forces did not provide effective challenge to Bhutto and his PPP. These opposition parties were either cajoled or coerced tactfully by Bhutto's government. Though in 1973 the rightist parties jointly formed the "United Democratic Front" to oppose Bhutto's autocratic policies, but it did not yield expected results. Intra-party factions and splinter groupings marred the efforts of the UDF. The component parties of the UDF maintained their individuality which hindered the process of taking joint and collective action against the

¹³ According to the Gazette of Pakistan notifications, the NAP was dissolved under Sub-Section (I) of Section 6 of the "Political Parties Act" of 1962 on February 10, 1975.

¹⁴ The III Constitutional Amendment (April 1975) amended certain detention laws of Article (10) of the constitution. It was specified: "The limitation of detention on charges of creating law and order situation and other charges will not apply to those working under instructions from the enemy in a prejudicial manner to the country's integrity and security." See News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, May, 1975.

¹⁵ The NDP was split in June 1976 when Saif Khalid, a former office bearer of the defunct NAP formed a new wing of the NDP. Saif Khalid claimed that his NDP was more progressive and radical and accused Sardar Sher Baz Khan Mazari of violating the manifesto of the party both in letter and spirit, and, instead of making it anti-imperialist organization, converting it into a reactionary forum: Refer to POT. July 5, 1976.

government. In view of the continuing domination of religious parties, it could not attract the other opposition parties like the NDP, Tehrik-e-Istiglal and Jamiatul Ulema e-Pakistan (JUP) and Pakistan Muslim League (Quayyum group). Most of the UDF parties, like Jammat-e-Islami, Jamiatail Ulema-e-Islam, after experiencing ruthless coercion of the ruling PPP, adopted a pro-PPP and Pro-Bhutto stance. Bhutto through his "Islamic fervour" minimized the challenge of these religious parties. The Muslim League (Pagara group) was one of the main parties of the UDF which was ruthlessly coerced by Bhutto. The government launched a heavy crackdown on the Pakistan Muslim League (Pagara) because of the growing popularity of Ghulam Mustafa Khan and Hanif Ramay-the staunch critics of Bhutto and the erstwhile founder members of the PPP.

The Tehrik-e-Istiqlal of Air Marshal (Retd) Asghar Khan and Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan were the two rightist and reactionary parties which refused to join the UDF. The former party throughout Bhutto's rule remained an outright critic of Bhutto's dictatorial postures. The latter proved vulnerable to government's pressure tactics and finally adopted a pro-Bhutto stance.

It might be noted that parties which succumbed to such pressures were financed by the establishment, whereas parties critical of Bhutto such as the NDP, Tehric-e-Istiqlal, Pakistan Muslim League were ruthlessly suppressed. Their leaders were charged with causing threats to the integrity of the nation and were arrested by the regime. The opposition parties owing to their internal bickerings and ideological weaknesses, failed to project a united and integrated approach to stand up to the tactics of Bhutto's government. The UDF could not positively and constructively guide the government in parliament. Staging boycotts of the National Assembly, the UDF either criticized Bhutto's policies or demanded unambiguous declaration of the date of general election. After the declaration of the date of general election the nine opposition parties formed another alliance viz; the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) in order to contest the general elections. But the components of the PNA remained united only for a limited period. Within less than a year's time, the PNA also started disintegrating.

Thus, owing to ideological and organizational hiatus among the opposition, Bhutto conveniently imposed "one-party hegemony" in the country and maintained a facade of Parliamentary democracy for five, and a half years. However, the transitional phase of unity among opposition parties compelled Bhutto to hold general elections and face the people again to test his legitimacy. That perhaps, was the only contribution of the short lived unity of opposition parties.

THE MARCH 1977 GENERAL ELECTION AND DISENCHANTMENT

Despite harsh emergency regulations and use of coercive methods, Bhutto was confronted with insurmountable challenges to legitimacy of his leadership. By the end of 1975, the opposition parties were determined to extract from Bhutto a definite and categorical declaration of the date of the general elections. The opposition parties put up a unanimous front to challenge Bhutto's leadership at the hustings. For purposes of popular image-building, the opposition parties observed a "Black Flag Day" on December 19, 1975,¹ and turned down offers of dialogue with the federal government. They also boycotted the sessions of the National Assembly. There was widespread apprehension among opposition quarters about Bhutto's willingness to hold free fair general elections. It seemed that owing to allegations of manipulations in by-elections held in the country since 1972, the opposition parties had lost faith in Bhutto's bonafides. Some opposition parties apprehended that the government might hold piecemeal elections instead of holding nationwide elections in view of the prevailing controlled political atmosphere. So no quarters did not hide their apprehensions and held the view that Bhutto might not hold elections at all.

Insisting upon the declaration of the date of general elections, the opposition parties vociferously argued that Bhutto's prolonging of despotic measures and harassment of democratic forces would only cause hindrances to the integrity and viability of the political system. Law and order situation was deteriorating day by day. It was alleged that more than 50,000 political detenus were in jails. Political activities of the opposition parties were curbed drastically through specific presidential ordinances and 'Defence of Pakistan Rules'.² The Federal Review Board' had been set up to watch the activities of important opposition leaders. Under "Criminal Law Ordinance" the federal government tried several political opponents in special tribunals.³ With the help of such harsh measures Bhutto planned to immobilize potential threat of opposition parties and political rivals. More specifically, he seemed to have aimed his coercive tactics against Khan Abdul Wali Khan and his National Awami Party.

¹ The Tribune, December 26, 1975.

² On December 26, 1975, The President of Pakistan issued an ordinance for the disqualification of the members of a dissolved political party from holding any seat in the National Assembly or Provincial Assemblies for five years: Pakistan Times, Dec. 27, 1975.

³ For details refer to: News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, January 1976.

Being more than reassured of the popular base of the PPP, and the disarray in the opposition Bhutto seemed to have eliminated any serious challenge to his legitimacy, and, therefore it was not surprising that on January 1, 1976, Bhutto announced his decision to hold free and impartial general elections before the expiry of the term of the National Assembly. But, he did not fix any date for the announced general elections, on the plea that the experience in the past showed that before elections the political climate tended to degenerate into utter chaos and confusion which could prove detrimental to the solidarity of the nation. He argued that the freedom shown during the first general elections (Dec. 1970) caused Pakistan's dismemberment. According to Bhutto the provincial elections held during the life time of "Shaheed-e-Millat" Liaqat Ali Khan spread the virus of provincialism and sectarianism.⁴

Perhaps, Bhutto envisaged the forthcoming general elections as some kind of a "war" against the opposition. Soon after the announcement of the holding of general elections on schedule, Bhutto gave primacy to create a built-in mechanism to ensure PPP's massive victory. The government throughout the year 1976 indulged in pre-election preparations. At the very beginning of the year (1976) Bhutto embarked upon a strategic move to overhaul governmental, administrative and military structures of the country. This move had been defended in terms of facilitating the establishment of the "Vigilant Democracy". On February 5, 1976, Bhutto reshuffled his cabinet and ordered the reorganization of the Federal Secretariat and the revival of the ministry of broad-casting and information. More faithful persons were promoted to higher ranks and several trusted fellows had been appointed as special advisors on defence, agriculture and economic affairs. The governmental and administrative structures of the various provinces had also been overhauled in order to ensure PPP's massive victory at the, forthcoming polls. Changes in the army were also brought about to avoid the fear of further military intervention. Bhutto appointed the then chief of the Army Staff-General Tikka Khan as special assistant for national security to the Prime Minister and the then, Lt General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq was made the Chief of the Army Staff.⁵ Obviously these changes in the military and governmental structures were brought about to ensure the victory of the ruling party in the forthcoming general elections as much as to forestall any moves and challenges against Bhutto's continuing supremacy.

Besides these measures, Bhutto ordered his special assistants to prepare a detailed working plan, dealing with the infrastructure, techniques and credibility of general elections. The then information adviser Pir Ali Mohammed Rashdi

⁴ Dawn, January 2, 1976.

⁵ See: News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, February 1976.

was specifically designed this pre-electoral plan. Bhutto's special secretary Rao Rashid suggested a drastic revision of electoral laws and to prevent opposition parties from spreading emotional and divisive issues. Rao Rashid also suggested weeding out "undesirable and undependable officials" and outlined plans to preclude prospective candidates of the opposition parties from filing nomination papers, Muhammad Hayat Tamman the then political adviser to Bhutto, suggested that the forthcoming elections should be so "controlled as to flow in regulated channels". For this purpose, he advocated establishment of a Secret cell/Policy cell, a Publicity cell, a Communication and Information cell, a Mapping cell, a Statistical cell, a Finance cell, an Administration and Transport cell, and a Field cell.

On October 9, 1976, the then Minister for production, Rafi Raza called a special meeting to consolidate various electoral plans and blueprints. Among those who attended were: Maulana Kausar Niazi (Minister for Information and Broadcasting) Mohammed Hayat Tamman (Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for Political Affairs), Mohammad Yusuf Buch (Special Assistant to the Prime Minister for information) Pir Ali Mohammed Rashdi (Adviser, Minister of Information and broadcasting) Rao A. Rashid Khau (Special Secretary, Prime Minister's Secretariat) and Hamid Jalal (Additional Secretary, Prime Minister's Secretariat). Bhutto immediately approved the consolidated plan forwarded by Rafi Raza Committee.⁶

Along with these pre-electoral master plans and blueprints for the conduct of general elections, Bhutto government put in special efforts to strengthen "propaganda" tactics in preparing firm ground for PPP's sweeping victory, which he planned to ensure as a foregone conclusion.

The federal government instructed the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to prepare a "broad publicity strategy" projecting the achievements of Bhutto regime on national and international fronts in view of the forthcoming general elections. More specifically, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting asked to project the pivotal role of the Prime Minister in Pakistan - as a builder of Pakistan and a defender of its ideology; as an exponent of a new social-economic order; as a great Muslim and Third World leader and as a world statesman whose views got appreciation all over the world"⁷. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting specifically directed the editors of National Press Trust (NPT) to project Bhutto as following the basic principles of the tradition of Quaid-e-

⁶ For details see : White Paper on the Conduct of The General Elections in March 1977, (Government of Pakistan, Rawalpindi, July 1978) pp. 1-25.

⁷ Refer to: White Paper on Misuse of media, (Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, August 1978) pp. 232-23.

Azam M. A. Jinnah and counter the criticism of opposition parties highlighting their internal weaknesses. In order to equip the information set-up for general elections, the budget allocations including the supplementary grants of the information media were considerably increased for 1976-77.⁸

The Ministry of Finance sanctioned additional economic assistance for field publicity. The "Directorate of News Documentaries" prepared eleven films costing about Rs, 10 lacs projecting achievements of the Prime Minister Bhutto. In addition, the Directorate of News Documentaries produced five special films in 1976-77 at a cost of over Rs. 13 lakhs as part of the pre-election publicity undertaken by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting:

- 1) A Nation Reborn (*Pakistan Ke Pichley Panch Saal*),
- 2) Achievements of the People's Government.
- 3) Dharti Ke Lal
- 4) Prime Minister Bhutto-The Man of People (*Eik Hi Rasta*).
- 5) Prime Minister Bhutto-The Servant of Islam (*Khadim-e-Islam*).

Several books were also produced- highlighting the image of the ruling PPP and Prime Minister Bhutto. The mass Media, including Radio, T.V., Films and the press gave full-fledged publicity to Bhutto's tours to different regions from May 1976 to December 1976. Moreover, the federal government arranged a whole series of weeks on Minorities, Women, Peasants and Defence from June 1976 to January 1977 to project the performance of Bhutto regime in various walks of life. According to reliable sources the expenditure on the celebration of the Peasants week alone costed the public exchequer more than Rs. Twenty four lakhs.⁹

The "Publicity cell" established in November 1976 gave priority to Islam emphasizing that the People's Party government would take no step contrary to the teachings and the spirit of Islam.¹⁰ The media widely emphasized that it was during Bhutto regime that for the first time it has been guaranteed in the constitution that no law which was in conflict with Islamic injunctions would be

⁸ The grant of the "Pakistan National Centre" (PNC), an organization almost totally devoted to political work for the party in power, jumped from about fifty lakhs in 1975-76 to about one crore and twenty five lakhs of rupees. In addition, the PNC was given 38,68,000 rupees for "New Measures" in 1976-77, The Pakistan Broadcasting Service grant increased from about five crores in 1975-76 to about - Seven and a half crores in 1976-77 including a supplementary grant of about one crore and sixty lakhs of rupees. Similarly, allocation for publicity of government activities on Television increased from sixty-four and a half lakhs in 1975-76 to over five crores seventy lakhs of rupees in 1976-77 more than the eight times: "White Paper on Misuse of Media." opcit, pp. 243-44.

⁹ Ibid, pp. 247-250.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp. 254-256.

enacted and that a society based on sublime principles of Islamic justice would be established in Pakistan.

Apart from broad publicity strategy Bhutto's government brought about specific constitutional measures to ensure PPP's victory. The National Assembly passed the Fifth (v) constitution amendment Bill on September 5, 1976 curtailing the powers of the judiciary. The powers exercisable by the Supreme Court were made subject to clause 2 of Article 175 of the constitution whereby the Supreme Court could exercise only such powers as were conferred by constitution or under any law and go beyond its jurisdiction. More specifically, the fifth Constitutional Amendment had been brought about to safeguard any law, rule or order made in pursuance of the Emergency Provisions, from any challenge on the ground of inconsistency with any of the fundamental rights.¹¹ The Parliament also passed another important Bill viz; The People's Representation Bill providing for the necessary legal framework for general elections in November 1976.¹² The People's Representation Bill had been specifically designed to debar the leaders of the defunct NAP from contesting the general elections. With regard to the imposition of Defence of Pakistan Rules (DPR), considerable powers were centralized in the bands of the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers of the four provinces.¹³

Through the sixth (VI) Constitution Amendment Bill¹⁴ (December 1976), Bhutto administration provided for the exclusion of special Assistants and Advisers to the Prime Minister and the provincial Chief Ministers and Chairman and members of the Law Commission and the Council of Islamic Ideology from the purview of the definition of the "Service of Pakistan". This amendment obviously implied that persons of the Prime Ministers' choice could enter politics, fight elections and come to power without suffering from any disadvantages or disqualifications.

¹¹ Refer to - News Review on South Asia, Sept. 1976.

¹² The "People's Representation Bill" (November 1976) had been introduced to disqualify a person from being elected as a member of an Assembly incase he was an office bearer of dissolved political party under sub-section (2) of Section 6 of the Political Parties Act 1962. It also provided for a deterrent punishment for corrupt practice in elections. According to this Bill corrupt practice in elections was made punishable for up to three years imprisonments or a fine upto Rs. 5,000. The ceiling on election expenses was determined as Rs. 40,000 for National Assembly and Rs. 25,000 for Provincial Assemblies. See: News Review on South Asia, December, 1976.

¹³ Morning News. Sept. 6, 1976.

¹⁴ For details see: Dawn, 23, December, 1976.

The federal government also took some steps in the economic sphere during the year 1976. To enlist political support the government announced various incentives to farmers of Punjab and Sindh. The price of staple cotton had been raised from Rs. 215 to Rs. 300 per maund for 1976-77. The government also lowered the prices of all chemical fertilizers and removed permit system for the sale of tractors. Similarly, prices of maize, potato, and onions were fixed at Rs. 32,25 and 18 per maund respectively.¹⁵ The amount of agricultural credit was increased from Rs. 120 crore (in 1971) to Rs. 1000 crore to boost agricultural production. The expenditure on fertilizers was raised five-fold as compared to that in 1971. The amount of subsidy, which was Rs. 20 crore during 1975 was raised to Rs. 36 crore.¹⁶ Pakistan's major industrial projects were sanctioned loans totaling Rs. 6.2 crore including a foreign exchange component of Rs. 5.30 crore by the "Board of Directors of the Industrial Development Bank of Pakistan"¹⁷. The investment corporation of Pakistan also sanctioned Rs. 9 crore assistance to major industrial projects. The deluxe hotels in Karachi also got ample financial assistance from the government¹⁸.

Bhutto's government also announced that foreign capital invested in Pakistan would not be nationalized. In an interview with Iranian Journalists in Karachi, Bhutto promised to provide a favourable climate to foreign investment because large-scale investment was expected from Iran and oil-rich Arab countries.¹⁹ In May 1976, the government announced introduction of a national scheme for cooperative farming and agro-industries under an ordinance passed by the parliament. The scheme envisaged formation of cooperatives with a minimum area of 500 acres with the exception of the North-West Frontier Province where it was 300 acres.²⁰

On June 30, 1976, the federal government announced a "liberal import policy" for fiscal year 1976-77, with the Free list increased from 389 to 407 items and the Tied list reduced from 29 to 18 items. The import policy sought to accelerate the liberal pattern of imports introduced by Bhutto's government in 1972, providing ample provisions for import of tractors, fertilizers and pesticides to boost agricultural production. Also, several essential consumer goods were placed on

¹⁵ Dawn, April 16, 1976.

¹⁶ The Pakistan Times, May 9, 1976.

¹⁷ Dawn, April 17, 1976.

¹⁸ Morning News, April 24, 1976.

¹⁹ Dawn, February 17, 1976.

²⁰ The Pakistan Times, May 26, 1976.

Free List.²¹ Besides this liberal import policy the government announced to give full protection and facilities to foreign investment agencies in Pakistan.²² The government gave priority to the publicity on the report of World Bank mission²³ which highlighted the impressive recovery of Pakistan in the economic field since 1971. The report specifically lauded the efforts of Pakistan government in the field of rapid economic growth and self-reliance. It also foresaw prospects of “green revolution” in Pakistan.

By the end of 1976 the government completed its pre-electoral planning ensuring ample safeguards in favour of the ruling Pakistan People’s Party. On the eve of the fifth anniversary (20 Dec. 1976) of his rule and the centenary of Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah, Bhutto reiterated his earlier commitment to hold general elections in Pakistan. Speaking at the Lahore Press Club on Dec. 23, 1976, Bhutto declared: “Elections in Pakistan would not be postponed just because some other Asian countries had done likewise Pakistan had democracy now. It had democratic government, which was also a constitutional government”.²⁴

Bhutto also affirmed the pledge of the people’s government to abide by Quaid-e-Azam’s “undying motto” of faith, unity and discipline and “never allow any one to mute or mutilate it.” Bhutto also insisted that “his government and the party had put the nation back on the course that its founder (M. A. Jinnah) had visualized for it.”²⁵

On January 2 1977 the Election Commission announced the final electoral list for the National Assembly and four provincial Assemblies.²⁶ Bhutto gave a green signal in the National Assembly announcing the date of general elections on January 7, 1977. The then President Fazal Elahi Chaudhury on the advise of PM Bhutto formally dissolved the Parliament on 10 January 1977 and said that the elections to the National Assembly and the four provincial Assemblies would be held on 7 March and 10 March respectively.²⁷

²¹ Dawn, July 1, 1976.

²² Business Recorder, October 29, 1976.

²³ The Pakistan Times, October 30, 1976.

²⁴ Morning News, December 24, 1976.

²⁵ The Pakistan Times, December 25, 1976.

²⁶ Dawn, January 3, 1977.

²⁷ The Pakistan Times, January 11, 1977.

Soon after the announcement of the date of general elections the government launched election campaign. The government massively used the media of communication to project the popular image of Bhutto vis-à-vis Pakistan People's Party. However, the government received a severe jolt when the nine opposition parties made a surprise announcement for the formation of the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) on January 11, 1977. The nine parties of the PNA which agreed to contest the elections for the 216 National Assembly seats and more than 400 seats in the four provincial legislatures, were: The Muslim League (Pagara group) Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam, Jamat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP), Tehrik-Estiglal, Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan Democratic Party, Khaksar Tehrik, Muslim Conference and the National Democratic Party."²⁸

On January 20, 1977, (then Information Minister) Hanif Khan submitted a note to Bhutto giving a preliminary review of the election oriented projection." He said: "So far the major thrust of the projection campaign is directed towards a ruthless exposure of the Pakistan National AllianceThe objective is to alienate the masses from the Alliance by portraying it as a worthless combination of different political elements with the ability to serve the masses either before or after the elections There is also an effort to impress upon the masses that the Pakistan People's Party is the only party which has the capacity to serve the masses."²⁹

In view of the increasing anti-opposition propaganda by Bhutto's government, the PNA declared its intention to boycott polls in Baluchistan. Maulana Mufti Mahmood, President of the PNA, decided not to put up candidates for any of the seven National Assembly and 40 Provincial Assembly seats of Baluchistan.³⁰

It was believed that through manipulative tactics, the PPP secured 17 National Assembly seats, as its candidates were declared elected unopposed in the process of scrutiny of nomination papers by the Election Commission on January 21, 77. Interestingly, fourteen of them, including PM Bhutto, were from Sindh and three from Baluchistan. Bhutto was elected unopposed from his home constituency Larkana.³¹ The PNA denounced Bhutto's unopposed election and alleged that it was done after the abduction of Bhutto's rival Maulana Jan Mohammad Abbasi. The Election Commission dismissed the complaint filed by Maulana Jan

²⁸ The Pakistan Times, Jan., 12, 1977.

²⁹ See: White Paper on Misuse of Media, op. cit, pp. 254-265.

³⁰ The Pakistan Times, January 18, 1977.

³¹ Dawn, Jan. 22. 1977.

Mohammad Abbasi and finally declared Bhutto elected unopposed to the National Assembly.³²

The pro establishment media gave wide publicity to the unopposed election of the PPP candidates and especially of Prime Minister Bhutto. Reports of kidnapping and arrest of Maulana Jan Mohammad Abbasi, who was forcibly prevented from filing his nomination papers, were first suppressed, later denied, and finally sought to be drowned in the loud din raised over Bhutto's victory.³³ The correspondents of major newspapers were asked to link up the unopposed election of the Prime Minister with his massive popularity and highlight in their reports his services to the people of his constituency, the province of Sindh and the nation as a whole; various reforms introduced by him to establish an egalitarian socio-economic order in the country; and his family tradition of philanthropy and service to the people.³⁴

The government controlled media gave priority to highlight the election Manifesto (1977) of the ruling PPP as the most "revolutionary" and progressive document and bitterly criticized the manifesto of the PNA as obscurantist and reactionary. In his various election speeches, Bhutto himself asserted that "Pakistan would be mortgaged to its enemies and face disintegration" if the opposition coalition won the general election. The PNA was identified as the motley group of capitalists and feudal lords who had joined hands "to usurp the rights of the people"³⁵

The entire election campaign, lasting two months, was marked by mounting violence and hatred between the PPP and PNA. The ruling PPP had made considerable efforts for ensuring its victory at the polls through institutionalized coercive methods aided by the vast apparatus at the behest of government.

Before the commencement of general elections as seen earlier, the PNA leaders apprehended massive rigging by the ruling PPP. PNA's (then) President, Maulana Mahmood, demanded that the Election Commission should seek assistance of the army for supervising the conduct of the elections at every polling station in the country³⁶.

³² Hindu, February 13, 1977.

³³ White Paper on Misuse of Media, op. cit p. 265.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 266.

³⁵ The Tribune, February 8, 1977.

³⁶ The Pakistan Times, March 5, 1977.

The government had drastically curbed the freedom of Press. Publicity of PNA's election promises was discouraged by the government. Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) demanded unfettered freedom of the press in their Seven-point demand charter³⁷ and alleged that the forthcoming general elections without a 'free press' would be an exercise in futility so far as democracy was concerned.

Knowledgeable sources predicted PPP's sweeping victory at the polls, which was what ultimately happened. Bhutto's PPP swept the polls at both the National Assembly and the four provincial Assemblies. The PPP again returned to power with considerably increased strength, capturing 155 seats in a House of 200 (elected) seats to the National Assembly.³⁸

In view of its heavy defeat in the National Assembly the PNA boycotted the Provincial Assembly polls. That further ensured PPP's clean sweep. Consequently the PPP bagged 435 of the 460 seats of the four provincial Assemblies. Sixteen seats went to independents and two to Pakistan Muslim League (Qayyum group). Results of seven constituencies were not declared. Interestingly in Sindh, the PPP made a clean sweep capturing all the 100 seats, while it had gained an overwhelming majority in other three provinces.

In Punjab, the PPP secured 232 of the 240 seats, seven went to independents and the result from one constituency was awaited. Of the 80 North West Frontier Province seats the PPP captured 69 seats. Qayyum Muslim League took two and Independents got four. Results from five snow-bound and far-flung

³⁷ The Seven-Point demand charter of the PFUJ specified : (1) repeal of all undemocratic laws; (2) an announcements by the government that it would not resort to arbitrary and abnormal action against the Press and Journalists; (3) an unequivocal commitment by the government against the use of official advertisement and newsprint quota as instrument of political favour or chastisement; (4) dissolution of the National Press Trust; (5) reconstitution of the Press Commission; (6) freeing of Radio, T.V., and News agencies from the government control and (7) complete freedom of trade-union activities as guaranteed by ILO convention, Bangladesh Observer, Feb 5, 1977.

³⁸ **Final Party Position in the (March, 1977) National Assembly Election.**

Parties	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Baluchistan	Total seats
PPP	116	43	34	7	200
P N A	108	32	8	7	155
PM L (Q)	8	11	17	-	36
Independents	-	-	1	-	1
Other Parties	-	-	8	-	8
	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Dawn, March 9, 1977.

constituencies were not received, In Baluchistan the People's Party secured 34 of the 40 seats.³⁹

A notable feature of the polling for the National Assembly was the size of the turn out of voters according to a survey conducted by All Pakistan Press (APP). Estimates showed that over 17 million men and women, out of 31 million registered voters had cast their votes. This worked out to about 50% turnout. During the 1970 general election, the turnout of voters in West Pakistan was about 52%. This estimate, however, did not take into account the 19 uncontested constituencies which had about 3 million voters.

Out of the estimated 17 million votes cast in the NWFP, the PPP candidates polled 937,000 votes and the PNA 816,000 votes—a difference of about 11% between the votes polled by the PPP and PNA candidates.

In Punjab, about 12.5 million votes were cast. Of these, the PPP polled 61%, namely 76 million votes, and the PNA 36%. The difference in the votes cast for the two parties worked out to be 3.2 million. In Sindh, out of the total 2.7 million votes cast, the PPP polled 1.7 million and the PNA 843,000. The percentage for the PPP came to 64, and that for the PNA 31 which indicated that the PPP secured more than twice the votes compared to those polled by the PNA.

Of the 135,000 votes cast in Baluchistan, about 50% of the total.....The PNA did not contest the election in Baluchistan. It might be recalled that in the 1970 general election to the National Assembly, the turn out was 66.48% in Punjab, 46.83% in the NWFP including tribal areas; 39,04% in Baluchistan and 58.33% in Sindh.⁴⁰

Though the PPP succeeded in securing sweeping victory in March 1977 general election, the opposition parties alliance PNA rejected the results of National Assembly polls accusing Bhutto administration of massive "rigging". The PNA insisted for fresh polls under the direct supervision of the army.⁴¹ Widespread disenchantment among the populace was also reported. The opposition parties openly alleged that the government and the PPP colluded in massive rigging of elections to ensure continuance of Bhutto's autocratic rule. The expectations raised by electoral alternatives were thus, neutralized and the common man in Pakistan seemed to be confused, for, it seemed that public opinion, by and large, expected PPP's victory in any case. The alleged rigging therefore, was considered

³⁹ Morning News, March 2, 1977.

⁴⁰ Dawn, March 13, 1977.

⁴¹ Dawn, March 11, 1977.

to be a thoughtless action which was considered neither necessary nor productive.

PNA'S PROTEST MOVEMENT AND BHUTTO'S DOWN FALL

The landslide victory of the PPP in March 1977 General Elections became a hot bed of controversy in Pakistan. The nine opposition parties comprising "Pakistan National Alliance" (PNA) accused Bhutto and the PPP of rigging the general election and misusing governmental, bureaucratic and military machine at the hustings. On March 9, 1977, the General Council of the PNA unanimously rejected elections to the National Assembly held on March 7, 1977. The PNA nominees declared elected to the National Assembly were asked to resign with immediate effect. The General Council demanded that fresh elections should be held in the country under the direct supervision of the army with a care-taker government in office. The Council also demanded immediate resignation of the Chief Election Commissioner in view of the "blatant failure" of the Election Commission to conduct "free and impartial" elections. The PNA leaders appealed to the people of Pakistan to stage a peaceful, country-wide strike on March 11, 1977, as a protest against the alleged rigging of elections.¹

The establishment denied the alleged rigging in elections. Bhutto warned the PNA leaders to accept the election result and told them that he would never allow them to "bring death and destruction to the people." Despite Bhutto's initial warnings, the PNA observed a mass strike on March 11, 1977. According to reliable sources more than 200 persons including PNA's eminent leaders were arrested in Karachi.²

On March 12, Bhutto seemed to have relaxed in his countenance and offered to have a dialogue with the opposition if it had "any complaints." In a broadcast to the nation Bhutto, however, rejected any suggestion for re-election to the National Assembly. Making an impassioned plea to the opposition to accept their defeat in "good grace," Bhutto insisted that "he was always ready to a dialogue, except for re-thinking over the National Assembly elections, which were a settled matter and could not be discussed."³

The PNA was firm on its demand for the conduct of fresh general elections and the resignation by the illegitimate government of Bhutto. The stiff attitude of both the government and the opposition further deepened the crisis.

¹ The Pakistan Times, 10 March, 1977.

² The Statesman, 13 March, 1977.

³ The Pakistan Times, 13 March, 1977.

The PNA observed a nationwide protest day in the major cities of Pakistan on March 14, and insisted for the immediate resignation of Bhutto and fresh elections to the National Assembly⁴. Clashes ensued between the armed forces and protest marchers of the PNA resulting in several deaths and injuries to countless agitators. At about that time, Bhutto was reported to have admitted that in some marginal cases rigging might have taken place. As a solace to the PNA Bhutto expressed his willingness to provide PNA additional seats in the National Assembly and countermand the elections to the provincial legislatures which were boycotted by the PNA.⁵ Through a letter to PNA's chief Bhutto conveyed his willingness to discuss all issues of conflict within the frame work of the constitution. The PNA's General Council, however, rejected this offer of the government, like the previous ones.⁶

Consequently, the government arrested important PNA leaders like Asghar Khan, Begum Nasim Wali Khan, Mahmud Ali Kasuri, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani and Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari⁷ and imposed curfew in Karachi.

Demanding the release of its leaders the "Karachi Action Committee of the PNA called for strike in Karachi on 21, 1977. Besides this, the PNA organized processions and demonstrations against "Bhutto's illegitimate government" in Layallpur, Sargodha, Multan, Lahore and other major towns violating section 144.⁸

Bhutto for the third time, wrote a letter to PNA president Maulana Mufti Mahmood conveying his readiness to have an "open and sincere dialogue with the PNA for the resolution of the prevailing crisis. Along with his dialogue offer, Bhutto made it clear that his dialogue offer was not made in the capacity of the Chairman of the PPP but, in the capacity of the "Chief Executive" of the nation. Without paying any heed to Bhutto's third letter, Maulana Mufti Mahmood rejected the dialogue offer thrice, and insisted on implementation of demands made by the General Council of the PNA, and asked for immediate release of detained leaders.

It was reported from reliable quarters that the moderate group in PNA was willing to have dialogue with the government. The extremist leaders like, Asghar

⁴ The Statesman, 14 March, 1977.

⁵ Indian Express, 17 March, 1977

⁶ The Pakistan Times, 18 March, 1977.

⁷ The Hindustan Times, 19 March, 1977.

⁸ Dawn, 20 March, 1977.

Khan, Sherbaz Mazari and Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani described Bhutto's "dialogue" diplomacy as mere facade. The extremist leaders of the PNA were critical of the constitutional approach of the moderates. In their view "dialogue" and non-cooperation movement techniques were impractical. They were in favour of violent tactics such as military intervention. They insisted that unless the "proper and congenial atmosphere" was restored and all arrested PNA leaders and workers were released, it would be futile to have any dialogue with the government. Interestingly these leaders called upon the President of Pakistan, Fazal Elahi Chaudhary to take over the administration and ensure "free and fair" elections. Citing the Indian example, Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari stated that "after the defeat of Indira Gandhi in India the situation had completely changed as events in India are bound to affect Pakistan." He also insisted for the revocation of emergency and release of all political detenus before agreeing to any dialogue offer of the government. The PNA sources revealed that by March 21, 1977 over 10,000 PNA workers were imprisoned, over 100 persons were killed and about 1,000 were injured.⁹

The General Council of PNA put forward a three-point demand charter as a pre-condition for having any dialogue with the government:

1. Resignation of the Prime Minister Bhutto;
2. Appointment of new Election Commissioner;
3. And holding of fresh general election.¹⁰

The government described PNA's stand as not merely unconstitutional but, also as detrimental to the integrity of the nation as a whole. The establishment media accused PNA leaders of fomenting lawlessness and instability in the country through senseless agitational politics. In order to counter the mounting agitation of the PNA, the federal government revitalized its coercive measures. Shortly shoot-at-sight orders were issued and the army was called to disrupt PNA's mass strike on March 26, 1977. In spite of the heavy presence of the police and the army, the PNA's strike paralyzed normal life in Pakistan's major cities and towns.¹¹

The General Council of the PNA through its resolution emphasized that not only the PNA but the People of Pakistan have also, rejected the elections to the National Assembly in view of the heavy rigging.....The nationwide

⁹ Morning News, 22 March, 1977.

¹⁰ Morning News, 25 March, 1977.

¹¹ The Statesman, 26 March, 1977.

demonstrations and strikes have proved that the people do not recognize the poll results and the legitimacy of the National Assembly.

Once again renewing his dialogue offer to the PNA, Bhutto on March 28, 1977 disclosed his willingness to consider the demand for lifting emergency in Pakistan, provided the opposition gave an understanding that it would behave in legal, constitutional and democratic terms, giving up politics of vandalism and agitation, setting scores in the street.

Soon after the Oath-taking ceremony to the office of the Prime Minister, Bhutto said that he was prepared for a “grand consensus” with the PNA. However, he ruled out the possibility of the dissolution of the National Assembly.¹²

Both the government and the opposition, adopted rigid postures. On the one hand, the PNA leaders were insistent upon their three-point demand. On the other hand, Bhutto was determined neither to quit nor let the PNA agitation succeed. The situation, thus, was far from enviable for both the parties to the national confrontation.

The PNA Movement got a new turn, when it gave a call on April 11, 1977, for a nationwide “civil disobedience” to express protest against alleged rigging of March 7 general elections. Leaders of the PNA urged the citizens of Pakistan not to pay taxes to the illegitimate government of Bhutto withdraw savings from banks, refuse to buy public transport tickets, and withhold payment, of loans taken from state organizations. This call for civil disobedience movement exerted considerable pressure on Bhutto’s government and strengthened PNA’s support – base¹³.

With the increasing momentum of PNA’s protest, Bhutto again tried to bargain with the PNA but without tendering his resignation.

On April 13, 1977, Bhutto further offered to dissolve the National Assembly and arrange fresh general elections on the pre-condition that the opposition first wins two thirds majority.¹⁴

The government lifted official ban on public gatherings and pledged to suspend the state of emergency as and when the situation in strife-torn Pakistan returned to normal. Bhutto personally disclosed that he was prepared to

¹² Dawn, 29 March, 1977.

¹³ The Tribune, 12 April, 1977.

¹⁴ The Statesman, 15 April, 1977.

negotiate with the opposition for a “cast–iron system” to ensure free and fair elections. To gain popularity among religious sections, Bhutto dramatically turned to Islam. The government announced a series of measures aimed at enforcing *Shariat* laws which included prohibition and closure of liquor shops throughout the country.¹⁵ But all proved in vain.

The PNA’s General Council on April 18, 1977, outrightly rejected Bhutto’s conditional dialogue offer and firmly reiterated its demand for Bhutto’s resignation.¹⁶ It was stated in the decision of the General Council that the PNA did not recognize Z. A. Bhutto as a legitimate Prime Minister since March 8, 1977 and was not prepared to negotiate with his government. The PNA gave a call to the people of Pakistan to observe mass strike on 22 April, 1977.

In order to crush PNA’s attempts for observing “mass strike” on April 22, 1977, the government imposed ‘Martial Law in major cities of Pakistan: Karachi, Lahore and Hyderabad.¹⁷ Thus, Bhutto ultimately resorted to armed action in political affairs. The PNA bitterly criticized the government for the imposition of Martial Law. The General Council of the PNA, on 25 April, 1977 adopted a resolution condemning the proclamation of Martial Law as a shield to protect the illegal and unconstitutional government led by Bhutto and his PPP”.

In the month of April, 1977 the deadlock between the government and the opposition took a formidable shape and there was a situation of virtual “civil war” in Pakistan. Addressing a joint session of the parliament, Bhutto on April 28, 1977 disclosed that the “current PNA’ agitation to topple his government was not indigenous but a colossal international conspiracy against the Islamic state of Pakistan”, Hiding the real issues Bhutto asserted that the conflict between the government and opposition was not over “general elections” but was related to “the norms of egalitarian society and economic reforms that had been carried out by the People’s government”.¹⁸

Finding no other alternative Bhutto, thus, termed the “domestic crisis” as a “foreign conspiracy”¹⁹. With the mounting pace of PNA movement, Bhutto’s charisma seemed to have eroded substantially. As a result of Bhutto’s dependence on the army, the ruling PPP also started disintegrating. Several

¹⁵ The Times of India, 18 April, 1977.

¹⁶ The Times of Lydia, 19 April, 1977.

¹⁷ The Pakistan Times, 22 April, 1977,

¹⁸ The Pakistan Times, 29 April, 1977.

¹⁹ The Pakistan: Times, 20 April, 1977.

opportunistic members of the PPP renounced Bhutto's leadership and quit the party. In April, 1977 Ahmad Raza Kasuri, along with other dissenters, formed a new political party, viz; the "Pakistan Awami Jamhoori Party"²⁰. It might be recalled that Ahmad Raza Kasuri, a founder member of the PPP was expelled from Party membership in October, 1972. Differences between Bhutto and Ahmad Raza Kasuri became more serious after the assassination of Nawab Ahmed Khan (Ahmad Raza Kasuri's father on November 10, 1974). However, on the eve of March 1977 general elections, Ahmad Raza Kasuri rejoined PPP. Bhutto refused to give him party ticket. Thus, finding no political prospects in the PPP, Ahmad Raza again resigned from the PPP on April 8, 1977.

In the wake of deepening conflict between government and the opposition, the Pakistan's ambassadors to Spain, Greece, France and the USSR, tendered their resignations. It was reported that these diplomats had resigned to express against Bhutto's dictatorial policies. Similarly, three Pakistani army brigadiers also resigned in protest against government's decision to impose Martial Law in the major cities of Pakistan. Lt. General Mohammad Iqbal (then) Commander of Martial Law troops in Lahore also tendered his resignation in protest against the continued use of army to quell anti government demonstrations.²¹

The harsh approach of Bhutto administration provided wider popularity to PNA movement. Several influential pressure groups and political organizations joined the PNA movement and expressed their resentment against Bhutto's ruthless measures. The PNA got massive support of students, labour organizations, trade unions, professional groups and women organizations. The "Pakistan Student Alliance", in support of the PNA movement, criticized Bhutto's unwarranted measures and demanded resolution of protracted political crisis and reopening of educational institutions. About thirty six trade unions and "Pakistan Labour Alliance" (comprising twenty six labour federations) threw their muscle behind the PNA, bringing additional pressure on the government for the solution of the political conflict. The 'All Pakistan Lawyers' Association vehemently criticized Bhutto's unconstitutional attitude and policies especially, the imposition of Martial Law and brutal tactics of the federal Security Force. The Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) condemned the policies of the government restricting freedom of Press and manipulation and distortion of mass media.²² In this context, a development of considerable significance was the active involvement of the traditionally "a - political" women-folk in the agitation. For the first time, women were seen in huge numbers launching massive anti-government

²⁰ Morning News, 9 April, 1977,

²¹ For details see: News Review on South Asia and Indian Ocean, April & May -1977.

²² Ibid, May, 1977.

demonstrations in Rawalpindi, Lahore, Layallpur, Hyderabad and Karachi. Several regional organizations also pledged to join the struggle. The Baluchistan branch of the “National Democratic Party” and the ‘Jiye Sindh Front’ led by G. M. Syed, joined the protest movement.²³

Increasingly deteriorating political situation created additional burdens on the national economy which was already passing through a critical phase owing to natural calamities and unfavorable world prices. Economic crisis, arising from Pakistan’s political dilemma and crop failure, cost the national economy about Rs. 7, 500 million. The cost of damage to the economy caused by government - PNA confrontation, after the disputed March 1977 general elections, had been estimated at between \$ 500 and \$ 1,000 million.²⁴ Pakistan’s total export earnings indicated a decline of about \$ 13 million as compared to the export earnings during 1975-76.²⁵ The prolonged tussle not only weakened the national economy but also negatively affected the economy in various regions. Several prominent economic analysts compared the situation with the 1971 tragedy and apprehended that the drift, if not rectified in time, might lead to total national disaster.

In view of the government’s increasing brutality and coercion and deteriorating economic condition, PNA’s moderate leaders seemed to have lost all hope for restoration of normalcy in the country through constitutional and civil disobedience methods. The extremist PNA leaders then decided to fight Bhutto’s illegitimate government with more effective militant methods. Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan appealed to the armed forces to disobey the orders of Bhutto administration.²⁶ Former Air Marshal Rahim Khan and former Army Chief General Gul Hasan (after resigning from their ambassadorial posts) asked for military intervention in political affairs. Internal dissensions and confrontation assumed serious proportions with the call for army intervention.

The PNA proposed a 32-point plan of proposals on May 5, 1977 for resolution of crisis. The proposals were divided into two phases: In the first phase, the PNA demanded immediate lifting of Martial Law, setting free political prisoners, annulment of II amendments to the constitution not unanimously agreed upon, apportioning time for opposition over Radio and TV, and an end to censorship. The Second phase included dissolution of parliament, to be followed by simultaneous general and local elections within 30 days and Bhutto’s resignation

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ The Economic Times, 12 June, 1977.

²⁵ Business Recorder, 14 April, 1977.

²⁶ Kayhan, 2 May, 1977.

immediately, complete reorganization of electoral machinery, military's responsibility for security at polling booths, the naming of acceptable governors and dismissal of certain senior civil servants. The acting PNA President, Pir of Pagara said that the -Proposals were a basis for negotiation and it was not up to Prime Minister Bhutto to reply.²⁷

Bhutto expressed reservations about fresh proposals of t to PNA on the plea that those demands would create further complications. Obviously, he was not prepared to resign as Prime Minister at any cost. Rejecting demands for his resignation, Bhutto again took recourse to evasive tactics. He offered to bring about the 7th Constitution Amendment Bill to seek a vote of confidence through a nationwide referendum.²⁸ Bhutto insisted that he was placing his fate in the hands of the people of Pakistan because PNA had turned down all his reconciliatory measures. The leaders of the PNA condemned Bhutto's referendum proposal as a calculated device to ensure PPP's illegitimate rule. The General Council of the PNA accused Bhutto of foisting one-party hegemony.²⁹

The PNA vowed on May 14, 1977, to pass on with its agitation against Bhutto alleging that his planned referendum would be, a "fraud upon fraud". One of the main reasons for rejection of referendum proposal by the PNA was the fear generated by Bhutto's speech of May 13 in which he showed inclination for certain administrative changes and reversion to Presidential form of government³⁰ PNA's non-cooperation with Bhutto government assumed new perspective after publication of the report of the Election Commission. The then Election commissioner Justice Sajjad Ahmad Jan said that "he was now convinced that the March 7, General Election had been totally rigged in more than half the constituencies."³¹

In order to get the support of the common man Bhutto described the PNA agitation as a "petty-bourgeois counter revolution" and maintained that the masses were not against his regime. On several occasions he claimed to have stated that it was not given to him to act unconstitutionally or in perverse, political fashion: "I could not be Ghulam Mohammad, who was not a politician and, therefore, dissolved the Assembly. I also do not want to become Iskandar

²⁷ The Times of India, 6 May, 1977.

²⁸ On 16 May, 1977, the Pakistan Government passed Constitution VIIth Amendment Bill to provide for seeking legitimacy for the rule of the PPP through a nation-wide referendum before the end of September, 1977.

²⁹ Patriot, 14 May, 1977.

³⁰ The Times of India, 15 May, 1977,

³¹ Hindu, 15 May, 1977.

Mirza, who, inspite of being a civilian President, had imposed martial law in the whole country.....I will only continue to make political efforts.”³²

In the midst of widening political impasse Bhutto gave a call to Islamic countries to save Pakistan from grave disaster. Prominent leaders from Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Libya approached the conflicting parties for resolution of political turmoil in Pakistan. The Arabian countries were reported to have offered to provide financial assistance for fresh general elections. The Islamic solidarity committee appealed to all political leaders involved in the political tangle, for immediate settlement of problems mutually, in accordance with the spirit of Islamic solidarity and brotherhood.

After protracted efforts by Islamic countries the disputing parties again agreed to resume negotiation for settlement of the conflict. The PNA, on May 26, 1977, announced its decision to resume negotiations with the government. Also, then Federal Religious Affairs Minister and Information Secretary of the PPP, Maulana Kausar Niazi disclosed on 30 May, that the government had decided to hold talks with the opposition with an open mind.

Pir Pagara, then acting chief of the PNA listed a seven-point demand charter for resolution of political crisis:

1. Release of those arrested during the PNA agitation and withdrawal of cases against them;
2. Financial help to those injured during the agitation;
3. Withdrawal of Martial Law;
4. Release of central leaders of the PNA for consultations;
5. Stoppage of propaganda against the PNA;
6. Lifting of the emergency; and
7. Removal of Press restrictions.³³

On June 3, 1977, the government and the PNA resumed negotiations to diffuse the political situation. A two-men Sub-Committee, comprising one nominee of the government and another of the opposition, was constituted to work out details of a formula relating to “basic issues” of disagreement. After the seventh round of talks, it appeared, that the results of the “package-deal” between the government and the PNA would be decisive and positive.

In the second week of June, Bhutto conceded the PNA’s longstanding demand to hold fresh general elections to the National and Provincial Assemblies. However,

³² The Pakistan Times, 26 May, 1977.

³³ Ibid, 2 June, 1977.

he made a surprise statement in the National Assembly on June 16, that a “final accord between the government and the PNA would be signed only after his four-day visit to the Middle East”.³⁴ Thus, Bhutto again tried to gamble with the opposition. In Bhutto’s absence (during his visit to Middle East), differences again cropped up at the meeting of the “sub-committee” entrusted with the task of finalizing government-PNA agreement. After his return from West – Asian Countries, Bhutto introduced certain amendments in the original “agreement formula”. That further annoyed the leaders of the PNA. Negotiations between the government and the PNA aimed at holding new elections in Pakistan were finally stalled on July 4, 1977.

It could be seen in Pakistan’s brief history that at times when alternatives other than civilian government failed to bail out the political system from crisis situations, the army stepped in. Such a situation existed in Pakistan and knowledgeable quarters apprehended return of the army as a foregone inevitability. That actually happened on July 5, 1977,³⁵ when during a bloodless ‘Coup’, Bhutto was overthrown and martial law was declared as the army stepped in.

As events proved, the army take over was not an instant happening. Various factors and forces domestic as well as international proved contributory to such an eventuality. Some analysts thought it was on the cards ever since Bhutto assumed power in December 1971. It seems the growing discontent within the army over Bhutto’s handling of civil and army affairs in ruthless manner, contributed considerably towards re-imposition of army rule. Through ruthless purges and periodic overhaul of the military set-up, Bhutto not only adversely affected the former’s faith in civilian leadership and sharpened intra-military contradictions. Also, it might be recalled that Bhutto’s dependence on the army with regard to the administration of Baluchistan and the NWFP and his massive dependence on military machine during PNA agitation, were reasons which helped the revitalization of military rule. It also showed that when civilian government failed to control and administer, it had to look upon the military for systemic restoration and viability. Such an ethos proved dangerous for Pakistan. Bhutto’s trusted and reliable soldier, army Chief General Zia-ul-Haq, ultimately decided to depose him from power. Even when one concedes that Bhutto wished to keep the military under effective control, his policies only helped in strengthening the military and, what was worse, events gradually convinced the army of its self-imposed role as savior of Pakistan. It was surprising that a person as shrewd as Bhutto failed to assess the implications of relying, time and again, on the military. He paid a heavy price for this misplaced trust in his top-brass

³⁴ Ibid, 17 June, 1977.

³⁵ The Time of India, 6 July, 1977.

and for having miscalculated the potential of his own charisma to maintain overall control over the political system.

The responsibility for revival of military rule was exclusively the failure of Bhutto's leadership. Bhutto's exaggerated promises notwithstanding, owing to failure to strengthen democratic, responsible and accountable norms, rules and structures, spelt his downfall. He did not comprehend the totality of new priorities of nationalism in Pakistan. His overt and covert recourse to two-nation theory did not make sense: in fact, it strengthened the hardcore reactionary elements, which only made his own political survival difficult. His assurances of reforms, obviously, did not convince the common man of his legitimacy nor infallibility. Also, Bhutto seemed to have miscalculated the nature and extent of PNA's agitative politics. If only Bhutto acted with political sagacity and accepted dialogue with the PNA, he could have averted the possibility of the revival of "militarism" in Pakistan and also ensuring his political survival.

Apart from Bhutto's weaknesses and shortcomings, the PNA was also equally responsible for the army take-over. The PNA, owing to its hybrid composition, lack of cohesive unity and somewhat dissipated approach, did not provide a viable alternative to the autocratic Bhutto-regime. The PNA appeared united only from a negative standpoint in opposing Bhutto's rule and did not convince a substantive number of people of its reality and prospects as a native alternative.

Besides these indigenous factors, certain exogenous trends also led to the revival of militarism in Pakistan. After Bhutto's deposition, the pro-Bhutto lobby alleged that the Coup had been engineered by the USA. The CIA was reported to be actively involved in destabilization of Bhutto regime due to his anti-US policies.³⁶ It was given out that Pakistan's nuclear deal with France and the increasing Chinese military assistance to Pakistan posed a direct threat to US military and strategic interests. Pakistan's neighbour Afghanistan was not very happy over Bhutto's policies in Baluchistan and the NWFP. Similarly, several Islamic countries like United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, were not very happy over Bhutto's failure (during PNA agitation) to maintain stability at home. These countries were chiefly concerned with ensuring their own national and strategic interests, which were in peril if Pakistan became unstable. According to these oil-rich countries, Pakistan's continuing crisis also jeopardized Islamic unity and solidarity. Their primary concern was a strong and pro-Arab government in Pakistan. Thus, though for different reasons, several quarters preferred a change in the regime and leadership in Pakistan and Bhutto's failure only prompted matters in this regard. However, tentatively, it

³⁶ Bhutto extensively referred to the US involvement in his deposition in his latest book "If I am Assassinated". (New Delhi, Vikas, 1979) pp. 135-139.

would not be out of place to mention that one may not lightly ignore the presumption that without active help and support of foreign interests, it would not have been possible, nor easy for General Zia-ul-Haq to overthrow Bhutto. One may not shed too many tears over Bhutto's downfall but one can also not accept the military take-over as a very healthy alternative for the national good of Pakistan. Bhutto's fall, therefore, should be seen in the broader perspective of failure of national ethos of Pakistan. It was also the failure of a people to grow and evolve to the stature of constitutional democracy and self-reliance.

THE AFTERMATH

On July 5, 1977, Bhutto was eased out by army 'coup'. On April 4, 1979, he was hanged. Thus culminated a vital chapter of Pakistan's history and political process. As one enters the Post – Bhutto era, one is confronted with manifold challenging issues and situations which emanate from Bhutto's execution. Whether that action solved Pakistan's pressing problems is another issue: What is more relevant is that the General Zia's takeover seems to have failed in giving concrete and purposive direction to Pakistan; and also Bhutto's liquidation seems to have aggravated Pakistan's problems rather than resolving them.

There is considerable relevance in the trends signified by retributive policies towards members of Bhutto family and the PPP, worsening economy, revival of Islamic fundamentalism, and overall atmosphere of despair and frustration, which, put together, heighten apprehensions concerning Pakistan's integrity. Liberal educated people feel that Bhutto's democratic authoritarianism was better and more tolerable than the present military despotism. However, the hard core orthodox mullahs in connivance with military Generals feel that Bhutto's rule proved disastrous and elimination of "Bhuttoism" was thought to be the only alternative for a better Pakistan. Nevertheless the common man in Pakistan is apparently disturbed at the abrupt and possibly unwarranted transformation of the political scene. It would not be out of order to state that at the moment there is vacuum at the level of popular leadership not because any one person is indispensable but chiefly because the military rulers have not been able to fulfill popular expectations

I – BHUTTO'S LIMITATIONS

The aforesaid aforesaid does not necessarily exonerate Bhutto from the several charges of political highhandedness, resort to violent tactics, and coercive policies, and yet, it was he who gave Pakistan some semblance of political process ushering some measures to benefit the common man, the farmer, the worker and the youth and also putting, the army in its place. However, Bhutto's authoritarian political style precluded strengthening institutional framework and for that he paid the heaviest price. Bhutto forgot that once he alienated considerable segments of the masses, the army would only too readily stage a revival and take over reins of power, of which it has some taste in preceding years. It was Bhutto's undoing to have forgotten the insatiable thirst for power among the top-brass of the army. In fact, the army would not have dared to depose him from power and ultimately eliminated him, if Bhutto had not

recklessly enfeebled himself by his several follies. His ebullience, brilliance and capacity to innovate notwithstanding, Bhutto's arrogance and penchant for easing out and humiliating closest associates paved the way to his unpopularity. His self righteous postures made enemies of his former friends. He arrogated to himself exclusive rights to think and act for the people, in the mistaken belief that he had no peers in intellectual attainments, in political skill, in popularity and in international standing. Circumstances enabled him to reach the zenith and he thought of himself to be the man of destiny. He had a vision to become spokesman of the third world "ala Nehru and Nasser".¹

In keeping with his arrogance was his belief in power as an end in itself. The combination of arrogance and authoritarianism in his political makeup resulted in a style of politics in which he had consistently placed end above means, the end being the perpetuation of his own power through "quasi – one party rule". Having greater popularity and charisma, Bhutto found himself as Pakistan's only "Saviour". Therein lies some clue to Bhutto's belief that he was indispensable, almost haunted by a "messiah complex".

Though Bhutto began with abundant fund of faith and good will, trust and expectations, his five and a half years of power found him in an unenviable position. He alienated and antagonized top elite in almost all walks of life in Pakistan – the army, the bureaucracy, feudal lords, Ulema, industrialists and professionals. The last straw was the thoughtless rigging of elections which did not help the PPP at all, because in any case, it would have swept the polls. For the sake of his own survival, Bhutto promoted the interests of the persons of his own liking. On personal preferences, he ordered periodic overhaul of government, bureaucracy and the army, which led to a quick 'coup'.

As one recounts Pakistan's history, it becomes clear that the army has always looked upon itself as a viable alternative to civil authority. Whenever politicians have bungled and failed, the army chose to take over. Whatever be the apology for that, military Generals intervened on the pronounced pretext of safeguarding integrity of the nation. For instance, after the collapse of parliamentary government in Pakistan, General Ayub Khan was the first to stage a coup d'etat in October 1958. He too described army's action to facilitate Pakistan's return to sanity' and identified the army as the "Saviour" of Pakistan from perennial political chaos.²

Later, in 1969, General Yahya Khan gave the same logic rationalizing the imposition of martial law in order to foster civilian rule in the country. In the

¹ The Times of India, Feb. 14, 1979.

² Wayne A. Wilcox: "The Pakistan Coup deat Of 1958", Pacific Affairs, Vol. 38, 1965, 142-163.

same vein, General Zia-ul-Haq intervened in political affairs. With minor variations of expression, it is interesting to note that all generals, hitherto, at the outset, described their action inevitable to safeguard democracy and civilian rule in Pakistan and took pains to reiterate their avowed commitment to hand over power to elected representatives of the people. It would also be seen that the military rulers did never renounce political authority of their own free volition. They renounced political power only when it became impossible for them to survive as the ruling elite. Also, they did not live up to their promises of granting and ensuring civilian rule so long as they could conveniently put off the day of reckoning.

It is, however, true that General Zia took over from the civilian administration in a different context. In the previous two army coups authority to govern was handed over to the respective chiefs of the army. General Zia, on the other hand, staged a coup in a dramatic manner deposing the former prime minister Z. A. Bhutto.³

II - GENERAL ZIA'S QUEST FOR POWER

A look back into Zia's initial policies is called for. Soon after taking over, he promised to conduct general elections within three months and promised to remain politically neutral. He described the coup as a military contingency plan "to end political deadlock caused by the conflict between government and opposition parties on the issue of conducting free and fair elections".

It is interesting to recall his first address to the nation:

I want to make it absolutely clear that neither I have any political ambition nor does the army want to be taken away from its profession of soldiering..... I was obliged to step in to fill in the vacuum created by the political leaders. I have accepted this challenge as a true soldier of Islam. We are absolutely determined to carry out a '90-day operation Fair Play' leading up to free and fair general elections".⁴

It soon became clear that General Zia had no intention to uphold his avowed objective of political neutrality. Once in complete command of authority, he has

³ The intelligence expert's theory on the July 5, 1977 coup which is being outlined in a recently published book: *The Fall of Gilgit: Untold Story of Indo-Pak Affairs from Jinnah to Bhutto.* by K. L. Kak, stated that the army takeover was followed by leakage of General Tikka Khan's plan to topple Bhutto government and assume control of the civil administration. A service group formed by Tikka Khan, who was inducted into the government by Bhutto, as Defence Minister was functioning without any name or number. Quoted in the *Times of India*, August 29, 1977.

⁴ *The Pakistan Times*, July 6, 1977.

gradually been extending his powers and taking decisions which no military general would normally do if he were to consider himself as a mere stop-gap arrangement. He took deep interest in partisan politics in the garb of political neutrality. Through his pro-Islamic postures and anti-Bhutto measures, general Zia tried to legitimize his rule and to a considerable extent neutralized the threat of opposition. Besides crushing Bhutto and the PPP General Zia's nonchalant ambivalence finally divided the PNA constituents. Thus, the military Junta is heavily capitalizing on the weaknesses, bickerings and inaction of wavering politicians and administrators on the pretext of "cleansing the politics of Pakistan" and holding "free and fair" election, General Zia seems to be consolidating his own power base.

In his quest for personal power General Zia-ul-Haq changed the entire complexion of 1973 (Bhutto's) constitution and through "anti-Bhutto hysteria" and "Islamization of political process", he tried to legitimize his rule. For the moment, General Zia seem to be riding on they crest of power without immediate threat, but it is doubtful if his action aimed at Islamization of politics and eradication of "Bhuttoism" would enable him to acquire sustenance, ensure systemic viability and legitimize his position. It is astonishing how without any trace of remorse, an army general makes categorical pronouncements only to falter and postpone action and implementation, there by confirming the apprehension that Bhutto was eliminated not as a consequence of an instant decision but owing to a deep and pervasive plot.

It is also interesting that though with no political experience Zia usurped power without any scruples with the support of the army so far ensured, he has hitherto been executing his policies rather coercively. His avowed commitment to political neutrality notwithstanding, General Zia blatantly indulged in partisan politics. Through sheer politking, he manipulated formation of a "national government" of his own choice and himself assumed office of the president of Pakistan. It is true that he did not abrogate the constitution of 1973, but he changed its complexion suspending and amending its relevant parts.

III- GEN. ZIA'S MOVE FOR PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM

Soon after the coup, General Zia expressed clear preference for change in the preceding governmental structure (the parliamentary framework) as prescribed in the 1973 constitution. He preferred "introduction of presidential form of government" in Pakistan and "constitutional role for the army in times of political crisis". On 1 September, 1977, spelling out his blue-print for the first time at a press conference, General Zia said that he favored Presidential form of government as the major hindrance in bringing about national integration and

cohesion. Unlike the Ayubian model, his conception of Presidential form of government was primarily dominated by 'Islamic overtones'. General Zia said:

"A presidential form of government closest to Islamic ideology with the president or *Ameer* elected by the entire nation was best suited for Pakistan. The President will be checked by a legislature through "*Ijma*" (consensus), an Islamic concept first introduced by Hazrat Bakr, the first caliph providing that the caliph shall be guided by the consensus of opinion (Ijma) in the *majlis-e-Mushawat* (the council of advisors) consisting of the Ulema possessing unimpeachable character. The President will be counter checked by the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister by the National Assembly".⁵ General Zia also suggested introduction of a "shadow cabinet" in the system where the opposition is not dubbed as "traitor" but acts as contributory agency in the governmental affairs. More significantly, General Zia added that such a form of government would also have to have "in-built arrangements to safeguard the integrity of the country which could not be done by politicians alone but could be ensured by the Armed Forces who should have contributory and constitutional role to that extent."⁶

It would be seen that by suggesting these arrangement General Zia resiled from his earlier stand of political neutrality.

The General's suggestions immediately stirred a veritable "hornet's nest". Almost all the leading news papers reacted sharply in a note of rare unanimity and warned the military government that the import of fresh controversy into the already over – charged political situation would only add fuel to the raging fire. Of the two leading political parties, the PPP adopted a cautious posture in the beginning, but after the release of Bhutto on bail on 13 September, 1977, it was declared with considerable flexibility, keeping his options open: "Only parliament and representatives of the people could decide the issue.....the country's present constitution was the only constitution that had been unanimously approved by the different political parties." On these suggestions, the NPA for the first time showed its split personality. The Tehrik-e-Istialal chief, Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan said that the proposal deserved consideration. The secretary general of the PNA Ghafoor Ahmed stated that the central council of Pakistan National Alliance had given a "unanimous mandate in favour of a

⁵ Ibid, September 2, 1977 (Quoted in POT, September 3, 1977).

⁶ Though initially General Zia was not in favour of annulling the 1973 constitution; he wanted more powers for the president who should also be the constitutional head of the armed forces. According to the constitution, Primeminister was more powerful. It is interesting to note that the oaths taken by General Zia-ul-Haq as the chief Martial Law Administrator and other martial law administrators, do not provide for allegiance to the constitution which places the armed forces of Pakistan under the control and command of the federal government (Article 213 (1) names the Prime minister as the chief executive of the federation," (Article 90 (1))

parliamentary form of government". The Pakistan Muslim League chief, Pir Mardan Ali Shah Pagara struck a discordant note as he said on September 13, 1977 at a press conference that "the PNA stood committed to amending the present constitution and providing for checks and balances by relieving the Prime Minister of his dictatorial powers and restoring to the President the powers provided by 1956 constitution thereby ensuring a parliamentary republican system."

The Karachi daily *Jasarat* (Quoted in the Times of India, September 20, 1977) favoring the constitution of Parliamentary system expressed deep concern over Zia's plea for Presidential form of government: "It is our humble submission to General Zia-ul-Haq that instead of being carried away by his sincerity, he should keep in mind the country's past experience. The Presidential form of government functioned in this country for ten years. But what we got as a result of this was not national integration or economic progress but all-round decline.....The General should take into account the fact that Pakistan is a federal state and the units of this federation are highly imbalanced. In such a situation any form, of government which tends to concentrate power in a few hands will only result in alienating the different units by denying them participation in the functioning of the government—It was this feeling of deprivation during the Ayub regime which prompted East Pakistan to seek secession. A repetition of this experiment might create new crises and problems. Therefore, settled matters should not be reopened. It is already settled that the parliamentary form of government is best suited to Pakistani ethos-Even otherwise the present elections are being held for the legislative assembly and not a constituent assembly. To reopen the chapter of framing a constitution for Pakistan, would only create a new crisis".

In the midst of wide criticism from the political parties, General Zia postponed his idea of changing the form of government in order to avert further constitutional crisis and attached greater importance to two issues: "eradication of Bhuttoism" and "islamization of Pakistan's politics".⁷ Perhaps he came to realize that any arbitrary change in the existing system would be troublesome and complicated before holding general elections. Moreover, for perpetuating himself in power General Zia launched a new move for establishment of in "interim national government", till the holding of general elections. For popular consumption, Gen. Zia disclosed that he has proposed the national government scheme with the aim of "associating important politicians in power to gain their cooperation in national affairs". General Zia also said that this sort of interim

⁷ Times of India, September 20, 1977 Pir Pagara at this Press conference was almost echoing the amended views of General Zia-ul-Haq who told an Urdu monthly of Lahore (Urdu Digest) in an interview that all that he had meant by favouring a presidential form of government was to give more powers to the president and place the Armed Forces under his control. According to Zia, the president under the 1973 constitution was totally ineffective.

government will be a “collective enterprise” not monopoly of the armed forces. However, he made it clear that the national government will work under the umbrella of the army.

It took ten months for establishment of such a government. Initially, General Zia was favorable to inclusion of nominees from all major political parties. The proposal, however, had been strongly turned down by the PPP led by Begum Nusrat Bhutto. The other faction of the PPP led by Maulana Kausar Niazi which claims to be a liberal group was trying hard to join the proposed national government. But due to heavy criticism from the PNA constituents, General Zia prevented the entry of this PPP’s liberal faction. The two former PNA parties, The Tehrik-e-Istialal and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema e-Pakistan criticized Zia’s proposal and even severed links with the PNA.⁸ The other parties of the PNA faced a dilemma whether to join or keep out of the proposed government. Before the formation of the national government, the president of the PNA Mufti Mahmud clarified that his party will extend help and support to the present military government in the larger interest of the nation but no representative of the PNA will join the proposed government.⁹

On the eve of the first anniversary of his rule (July 5, 78) General Zia announced the formation of a “federal cabinet”, as the leaders of different political parties failed to arrive at an agreement on the proposed scheme. The 22 – member federal cabinet replaced the previous (19–member) council of advisers. Interestingly in the cabinet no politician was included. That brought uncertainty and indecision in the PNA. Without prior permission of the PNA, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) led by Pir Pagara was first to announce its decision to join the newly formed federal cabinet. Pir Pagara (in Lahore on 19 July, 1978) declared that the Muslim League’s nominees in the federal cabinet would not quit the government. He said that the PM L’s working committee had authorised him to pull the party out of the Pakistan National Alliance if the situation so warranted.¹⁰ The Jamaat – e – Islami led by Mufti Mahmood was another party to

⁸ The Tehrik-e-Istiglal led by Asghar Khan withdrew from the PNA in November 1977. The JUP led by Shah Ahmed Noorani severed its links with the PNA in July 1978 soon after the formation of the National government. The JUP described the PNA as an “ineffective and unconstitutional organization.” The NDP was the third party to withdraw its links with the PNA, In August, 1978 the NDP ended its identification with the PNA as the “national government” did not show a favorable consideration towards the issue of regional autonomy. The PNA finally left the interim national government soon after Bhutto’s execution and the announcement of the date of general elections in April 1979. It was reported that PNA took the decision in view of mounting criticism of Zia’s government with regard to Bhutto’s execution. The PNA appeared a bit hesitant to share the blame. Hence, it ultimately decided to quit the federal cabinet. Afterwards President Zia formed a new 20-member cabinet comprising military men and civilians on April 21, 1979.

⁹ Dawn, June 26, 1978.

¹⁰ Adorning News, July 20, 1978.

join the federal cabinet. In keeping with such a situation PNA president reviewed his earlier stand and after one month's discussions with the CMLA General Zia-ul-Haq, announced PNA's collective decision to participate in the National government. On August 5, 1978 the then seven parties PNA joined the national government specifying its three objectives:

1. Paving the way for holding general elections as early as possible;
2. To maintain close contacts with the people and to seek immediate solution of their problems; and
3. To facilitate introduction of Nizanfre-Mustafa in Pakistan.¹¹

After the formation of interim national government, "General Zia's next political move was "self-elevation as the President of Pakistan." He assumed the office of the President on 16 September, 1978 following relinquishment of the office by Fazal Elahi Choudhury. Reiterating his political neutrality slogan Gen. Zia said:

"There was no other way to fill the vacuum. This was not my choice but the decision was made for me in all the forums (of government).....I never wanted to be a political candidate but technically and legally the appointment was least controversial course. I will remain in office until the next elected President can take over.¹²

Zia's assumption of Presidentship also evoked widespread reaction in the country. According to constitutional provisions, only the National Assembly was authorised to elect the new president. The outgoing president Fazal Elahi Chaudhury refused to continue in office beyond one year's extended term. It was reported that the former President was not happy with Gen. Zia for delaying general elections; for introducing certain amendments in the constitution and formation of PNA dominated cabinet.¹³

The PPP led by Begun Nursrat Bhutto warned that "the country is being driven to disaster and the constitution has been torn to shreds." The Tehrik-e-Istiglal described Zia's decision, as amounting to "expost-facto regularization of a past action in the terminology of the Armed Forces." While apprehending the

¹¹ Morning News, August 7, 1978.

¹² The Times of India, September 17, 1978: According to reliable sources, the decision was taken in an emergency session of the cabinet. The cabinet meeting concluded that "instead of elevating any political figure or nonpolitical personality to the presidentship, it would be better that the defacto head of the state formally assumed the office." It was also announced that the Martial Law Administrators (MLAS) of the four provinces would assume the office of the governor and the outgoing setting governors will be reverted.

¹³ The Times of India, September 18, 1978.

bonafides of Gen. Zia, the JUP identified the move as the first step towards a presidential form of government.¹⁴

But the pro-government PNA parties welcomed the move and expressed their full support to the new President. The PNA collectively identified the new arrangement as only a temporary step which was not a basic issue of apprehension and in no way automatically meant to bring presidential form of government. According to PNA leaders' Parliamentary form of government was a "settled issue in conformity with the 1973 constitution."¹⁵

The preceding sequences show how Zia-ul-Haq concertedly - strengthened his own position, shrewdly combining three statutory offices; President, Chief Martial Law Administrator and Chiefs of the Army Staff. Once Bhutto was imprisoned and Zia had consolidated his power, the latter seemed in no hurry to take steps to thwart any challenge to his entrenched position. Beginning from his announcement that he did not intend either to keep himself in power or meddle with politics, he went ahead demolishing much of what Bhutto has sought to strengthen and consolidate. Under a veneer of forming national government, he found ready partners among the PNA, that measure turned out eventually to be a clever device to dilute the widespread popularity of the PPP (after Bhutto's deposition) and erase Bhutto's popular image. Thereby, Zia placated and humoured the PNA and pretended to be an 'Islamic saviour' of the nation. It was no secret thereafter that the PNA and Zia both wanted Bhutto removed from Pakistan's political scene. Perhaps the only issue agitating both was now best to achieve-that objective. As later events showed, it was a crude and clumsy steps which ensured fulfillment of a well thought out design.

IV - POLITICS OF ISLAMIZATION

General Zia not only took calculated steps to meddle with the constitution, he also took measures for Islamization of Pakistani politics, In fact, the imposition of army rule reinforced the revival of "Islamic era" in Pakistan. The military ruler exploited Islamic fervour both for legitimizing his rule and denigrating Bhutto and "Bhuttoism." Owing to his close identity with Jamaat-e-Islami General Zia gave top priority to establishment of Nizam-e-Islam replacing former structures of parliamentary democracy whatever they were worth. Interestingly, the establishment of Islamic system was brought about in keeping with PNA's major demand for introduction of Islamic system as suggested by Prophet Hazrat Mohammed. Thus, Gen. Zia's military regime gave primacy to bring about what it called "Islamic revolution" in Pakistan.

¹⁴ POT, September 19, 1978.

¹⁵ Morning News, September 19, 1978.

Apart from his domestic religious perspective, General Zia showed greater concern for "Pan-Islamism" in foreign affairs. Since the assumption of power, he has been giving utmost attention to make Pakistan's relations cordial with the Muslim countries, especially with Saudi Arabia. Obviously Zia's Islamic stance gave him strong support both at national and international levels. At the national level all religious and obscurantist forces aided with General Zia to eradicate the "evils of Bhuttoism." While at the international front, Muslim countries assured General Zia of their full-fledged support providing additional military and economic assistance.

It might be recalled that various limitations of Bhutto notwithstanding, he gave some semblance of a perspective which was, if not entirely secular, at least gave manifest evidence of not being dogmatically Islamic. It was a different story that ultimately Bhutto yielded to the pressures of *Ulema* especially in the case of the declaration of Ahmadiyahs as non-Muslim minority. At international front Bhutto strongly adhered to the Philosophy of "Pan-Islamism," and at domestic scene he combined socialistic ideals with Islamic ideology. Though one would not entirely disagree that Bhutto was not doing so not so much for his love for Islamic fundamentalism as for exerting his own version of diplomatic priorities. It can not; however, be denied that Bhutto was the cleverest and the most articulate champion of modernization. General Ayub was a modernizer but he was not charismatic and articulate leader as compared to Bhutto. While General Zia is manifestly a religious bigot lacking popularity and influence among the masses. In the context of Pakistan, General Zia is the first military ruler to have emphasized singularly on Islam as the panacea for all maladies. In order to exercise ruthless power, the army found no other tool than that of Islam. In fact, Islam became a convenient political tool in the hands of military authorities. Whether they were genuinely enamored of Islam and welfare of the faithful, is a matter of considerable doubt. Also the army rulers are not overly concerned with economic progress and socio-cultural harmony.

General Zia identified three broad aspects of the Islamic system: social, economic and legal. In his view the reform of socio-economic conditions was a long term objective which would realized only through a gradual process. According to Zia the easier path was "to introduce certain legal reforms in order to attain socio-economic reformation." Therefore, General Zia gave specific attention to reform the prevailing legal system in Pakistan in accordance with *Shariat* laws. He also justified the introduction of Islamic laws since they were in conformity with the 1973 constitution which provides for establishment of "Islamic Republic of Pakistan" and identified "Islam as the state religion of Pakistan."¹⁶

¹⁶ Refer to POT, April 11, 1978,

In a self-glorifying vein, Gen. Zia identified himself as “a man with a sacred mission” to “purify” Pakistan. However, he betrayed his ulterior motives in an interview to BBC reporter which were televised on April 12, 1975. General Zia said:

“There is some hand, hand of providence perhaps which is helping me out, and if I am the man which perhaps God had chosen to do something for Pakistan and if he gives me the strength, by God, I will do it.”¹⁷

He also expressed similar views during an interview with a London Journal: “Impact International, owned by the world Islamic body. General Zia firmly maintained that he was engaged in completing the “mission of God” assigned to him, and that he could not be removed through “a revolution”. He claimed that he had changed the course of the country’s history. “This course is towards Islam”. He also mentioned that before the elections, he hoped to achieve 50 percent success in establishing an ‘Islamic social system”. He claimed “where there was Islamic social system communism could not enter”.¹⁸

The simplistic perspectives of a military ruler are all too obvious in such utterances which could not be lightly ignored. At periodic intervals, the military authorities warned politicians and political parties not to act against the Islamic ideology of Pakistan. They, however, suggested that all political activity should revolve around the ideology of Pakistan, viz; Islam devoid of agitation and regional parochialism.

In his (July 27, 1977) address to the nation, Gen. Zia categorically stated;

“All political parties in their programme and election manifesto should give priority to national unity and integrity of Pakistan and should not encourage regional prejudices or sectarianism They should resolve to work for establishment of an Islamic order in the country, because it was created in the name of Islam and shall survive only holding fast to Islam”.¹⁹

Obviously General Zia’s views are nearer to the well known two–nation theory. The sole emphasis on Islamization by the military regime has only created sharp confrontation between the religious fundamentalists and votaries of secular and

¹⁷ Quoted in the Times of India, April 14, 1978.

¹⁸ The Times of India, September 7, 1978.

¹⁹ The Pakistan Times, July 28, 1977.

federal polity. Interestingly all reactionary “*Islam Pasand*” parties joined hands with General Zia, with a view to humiliating in the name of Islam, all progressive and secular forces, and ultimately consolidating the position of army. The much emphasized Islamic fundamentalism of the military Junta and its advocacy of two—nation theory created deep apprehensions in the minds of secular forces and multi nation theorists of Pakistan. One of the important advocates of multi-nationalism in Pakistan Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, ex governor of Baluchistan ridiculed the propagation of the so called “two-nation theory” and the “Islamic ideology of Pakistan”. He gave exhaustive rejoinder to religious fundamentalists and advocates of two-nation theory;

“So much publicized two-nation theory was never meant to give birth to the ideology of Pakistan. It was a slogan coined to merely describe the division of India”. According to Bizenjo, the term “ideology of Pakistan” was used for the first time by General Yahya Khan and was never used or referred to even by the Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah. Bizenjo opined that the protagonists of the ideology of Pakistan were using it for no other purpose than to deprive the people of different units of the federation of Pakistan (Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and NWFP) of their economic rights and socio-cultural freedom.²⁰ Moreover, he said that “the theory of multi-nationalism was first presented by Islam. He challenged the *Ulema* to deny the fact that “Islam was a religion composed of various nations yet the Muslims formed a single Millat”. He asserted that using the name of Islam for ones own vested interests and negating the facts would not help in the emergence of a strong and united Pakistani nation”. He added that “the name of Islam would not be useful for those who had ignored the actual problems faced by the people”. “The present social structure”, Bizenjo argued, “needed basic changes in its frame-work”.²¹

Thus, instead of Islamization, Bizenjo had called for the evolution of “pure” Pakistani system to forge unity to steer the country out of the prevailing crisis and asserted that only way to solve the multi-farious problems confronting Pakistan lay in effecting revolutionary changes in the present set up. In his view, the only alternative left for the extrication of Pakistan’s problems was of developing a “national outlook”, honouring the rights of each sub-nationality inhabiting different provinces Recalling the painful tragedy of erstwhile East Pakistan Bizenjo declared that it was the People’s responsibility to uphold the integrity of Pakistan.²²

²⁰ A. K. Brohi, minister of law and parliamentary affairs, a well known jurist and liberal intellectual countering Bizenjo’s thesis of multi nationalism strongly favoured two—nation theory and regarded Islam as the linchpin of the state of Pakistan. He preferred for a strong unitary state.

²¹ Dawn, August 13 and 29, 1978.

²² Pakistan Times, August 13, 1978.

It is, of course, true that religion will continue to provide a strong impulse to Pakistan's search for national identity. But the dogma of Islam can not be equaled with the increasing pace of modernization and challenges of nation-building and integration. Pakistan has reached a point wherefrom it would be almost impossible as well as suicidal for the rulers to reverse and turn back without generating critical backlash. Most other Muslim countries facing this very dilemma have resolved it by modifying traditional dogmatic Koranic concepts in line with primacies of equality and justice. For instance, comparison between Pakistan and Saudi-Arabia (where "paraphernalia" of strict conformity is still retained) can not stand a moment's scrutiny. Pakistan has neither the Wahabi tradition nor the oil wealth to sustain it. Moreover, in Pakistan, there has, in any case, not been anything like a popular movement favouring a return to the past. Gen. Zia has managed to create an atmosphere of bigotry and revivalism much to the dismay and concern of thinking people.

It might be seen that General has failed to take into account the collective identity of Pakistan. He has hitherto adopted a partisan and dogmatic approach edifying to the hard core Mullahs. The various reforms, introduced in the name of Islam, by the military Junta have created deep contradictions between different sects of citizens and there are perceptible rumblings in the social fabric which could cause grave damage to systemic stability. As noted earlier also, Zia readily went over to be in tune with orthodox *Ulema* and '*Islam Pasand*' parties, and therefrom he could be seen to have derived inspiration and supports for draconian Koranic penalties, such as amputation of hands, public flogging and hanging for different offences. Soon after the coup, General Zia imposed -fourteen harsh Islamic Penalties"²³ for offenders conforming to the view of *Ulema* that "Islamic (*Shariat*) laws should prevail in Pakistan since, it was created in the name of Islam" It was for the first time in Pakistan's history that such harsh Islamic penalties, which continue to be prevalent in Saudi Arabia, came into force.

The military rulers also devised a plan to completely overhaul the legal system of the county. After assuming the office of the President of Pakistan, General Zia under the intense pressure of *Ulema*, brought about an amendment in the constitution providing for "separate electorate" for non-Muslim minorities in the forthcoming general elections.²⁴ This move also evoked sharp reaction in

²³ Pakistan Times, July 11, 1977.

²⁴ On September 24, 1978, General Zia-ul-Haq introduced an amendment in the (1973) constitution providing for separate electorate for non-Muslim in Pakistan. Article 7 which provided for joint-electorate has been amended through a presidential order number 16 of the 1978. Following this amendment the breakup of seats in the national and provincial assemblies will be as under :

National Assembly —	200	Muslims
	8	Minorities

Pakistan. In Lahore High Court, a leader of Christian minority was reported to have challenged constitutional validity of General Zia's amendment to the constitution.²⁵ Religious and rightist parties both inside and outside the PNA welcomed the move, while the Thehrik-e-Istigial, NDP, and the PDP criticized Zia's action as a "divisive course which was against the political solidarity of the country and its national integration". The central committee of Pakistan People's Party (Nusrat Group) criticized introduction of "separate electorate" since, it was against the ideology of Pakistan and repugnant to the constitution in which the issues of electorates was a "settled issue".²⁶

	10 Women
Total	218

The share of various provinces in the 200 Muslim seats will be :

Punjab	115
Sindh	43
NWFP	26
Baluchistan	7
Federally Administered Areas	8
Federal Capital	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>200</u>

Provincial Assemblies;

Punjab	240	Muslim seats	
	6	Minorities	
	12	Women	Total 258

Sind	100	Muslim seats	
	7	Minorities	
	5	Women	Total 112

NWFP	80	Muslim seats	
	1	Minorities	
	4	Women	Total 85

Baluchistan	40	Muslim seats	
	1	Minorities	
	2	Women	Total 42

Under the amendment laws Muslims voters will vote only for Muslim seats, and members of the minority communities will vote for minority seats on the basis of 'direct vote.' While various assemblies will constitute the 'electoral college' for electing women members on the basis of 'proportional representation' through single transferable votes. *Dawn, September 25, 1978.*

²⁵ Morning News, September 26, 1978.

²⁶ Dawn, September 26, 1978.

Besides introducing separate electorate system, Gen. Zia on the same day (Sept. 24, 1978) issued Presidential orders that with immediate effect all official and semi-official correspondence will begin in the name of Allah, the Merciful and Beneficent. For this he insisted inscription of Arabic letter (“Bismillahirrehmanirrahim”) to reflect the symbolic significance of Pakistan as an Islamic state.²⁷ Whether all the aforesaid devices were in consonance with the accepted priorities of a modern political system, is quite another matter.

It is not surprising that the religious fundamentalism of present government did not spare educational institutions. In pursuance of the so called new education policy based on “Islamic ideology of Pakistan”, all English medium schools in Pakistan had been ordered to switch over to Urdu as the medium of instruction.²⁸

In conformity with the persistent demand of the PNA for introduction of *Nizam-e-Mustafa*’ General Zia introduced several Islamic Laws. On Feb. 8, 1979, Zia-ul-Haq through a Presidential order No. 3 (1979) set up *Shariat Benches* so as to confer on the High Courts the power to decide injunctions of Islam and to provide that a law declared by a High Court to be so repugnant, shall cease to have effect on the day on which the decision of the High Court becomes effective.²⁹ On the eve of the birthday of prophet Hazrat Mohammed (10 Feb. 1979) General Zia announced the establishment of “Nizam-e-Islam” in Pakistan. For the establishment of Islamic system two aspects were specifically mentioned: legal and economic. On the legal front, Gen. Zia promulgated stiff Islamic penalties with immediate effect for all four” offences which are subject to “hadd” - intoxication, theft, *Zina* (adultery) and *Qazf* (False imputation of Zina). On the economic front the government promised to abolish interest on capital in all fiscal transactions. But it introduced Islamic taxation system in the form of *Zakat* (Tax on wealth) and *Ushr* (Tax on agricultural produce). It was specified that *Zakat* will be collected from July 1, 1979 and *Ushr* from October 1979.³⁰ According to government sources these new laws were aimed at “islamizing the local economy of Pakistan.” The collection of *Zakat* and *Ushr* shall be expanded on the removal of hunger and beggary from the country. However, this Islamic taxation system will not be applied on non–Muslim minorities.³¹

²⁷ Refer to POT, September 27, 1978.

²⁸ Indian Express, November 12, 1978.

²⁹ Pakistan Times, Feb. 9, 1979.

³⁰ Refer to POT, Feb. 13, 1979.

³¹ Ibid.

Introduction of these harsh Islamic penalties and traditional taxation system had become a debatable issue in Pakistan, especially in the context of the priorities of the modern age. The stiff *Shariat* penalties have not yet deterred crime and corruption in any spectacular way. There are no reliable restraints on pro-regime elements. Owing to complex provisions involved, one would not normally invite the wrath of such a system and may not report to authorities cases of violation of the law. The police force has begun Islamizing itself and has announced that it will not entertain any report or a complaint from any member of the public unless made under an oath certified by a clergy-man (Pir) from a mosque.

Ironically introduction of these *Shareat* laws brought about a serious controversy between Shia's and Sunnis. The former, who claim to account for one third of the country's population—around 25 million, have alleged that by such laws, General Zia has imposed "Sunni hegemony" on the people of Pakistan. The main grievance of Shias relates to *Zakat* which is to be enforced in July 1979. According to Shia leaders the *Zakat* is payable on nine items which include dates, camels and buffaloes, as well as gold and silver; no *Zakat* is payable, they insist, on ornaments of gold and silver, nor on prices of art and decoration made of gold and silver, nor on paper currency nor on savings, certificates and prizes bonds. According to Shias the punishment of wrist amputation ordered in the case of theft is a Sunni punishment. The Shia view requires the hand to cut at the joints of the fingers.³²

Proclamation concerning the so called Islamic taxes *Zakat* and *Ushr* also poses complex problems. It was reported that people started withdrawing their savings from banks. The price of gold immediately shot up to Rs. 865 per *tola* (11.664 gram) and cost of land in any middle class suburb jumped to an unprecedented Rs. 500 per square yard. Apart from the 2.5% deduction from savings, the people also started that fearing deductions might be made the basis for income-tax assessment.³³

In a country with diverse sects, tribe and distinct regional entities compounded by ruthless quest for Islamization national integration and economic development are a definite casualty. Such a situation creates and is likely to add to, insurmountable problems for the military regime. However it would be entirely idealistic to expect the people of Pakistan to reassess the sequence of events that has culminated in their present dilemma, and, therefore to derive and nurture hope, unity and determination to establish a system which would, in

³² The Times of News, March 2, 1979.

³³ Ibid, March 9, 1979.

some way to begin with, offer an alternative to martial interference at intervals. Much of what ultimately transpire in this sphere would be a manifestation of the crises ridden political culture of Pakistan. The role the PNA plays, the manner in which the PPP rehabilitates itself, and, above all, the mechanism to discipline and control the army to preclude its ambitions and adventure, would be decisive indices of Pakistan's future polity.

V- BHUTT'S TRIAL AND EXECUTION

Bhutto's execution by the military Junta has seemingly added one more chapter of agony to the travail of Pakistan. Right from staging the coup and postponing the promised October 18, 1977 general elections General Zia had to play his cards effectively with a view to save his own neck in the unlikely event of Bhutto either living and imprisoned for life, or, worse still, set free and back to politics. In the situation following, Zia's coup against his benefactor, Zia's option was so very evident from the very beginning. How seemingly legally to remove Bhutto must have been the only worry of Zia once he decided not to stage a bloody coup. If Zia were so confident of his own popularity and assured of Bhutto's fall in public esteem, the case implicating Bhutto in a murder charge would not have been so religiously pursued. Therefore, it is obvious that Zia was frightened of Bhutto and dreaded the day when and if Bhutto returned to power. Zia himself would have to face charges of high treason. Thus, General Zia was trapped in a most paradoxical situation. According to 1973 constitution any act of subversion of the constitution by the army was punishable by death. Zia looked on the Bhutto issue as one of his own neck versus that of Bhutto. Therefore, in connivance with the PNA parties, General Zia in a cynical manner exploited the established institutions of Pakistan and launched a *jehad* against Bhutto and "Bhuttoism." After conducting an open trial, perhaps, the longest trial in Pakistan's judicial history, General Zia went ahead with the Supreme Court's verdict and finished Bhutto by a brutal hanging on April 4, 1979 at 2.30 A.M in the district jail of Rawalpindi.

With Bhutto executed, it is not so very sure if the dead man would not gather an aura of martyrdom and, history abounds in instances where myths are likely to multiply. Whether in the event of elections in future, Zia would succeed in convincing the electorate of his own, and the army's, innocence, and would the people take him for his word that Bhutto's execution was not owing to complicity of the army and the judiciary, are issues only time will sort out. Nevertheless, one thing is obvious: the army has as given a very rough deal to politicians, especially to a former politician of Bhutto's stature at home and abroad, and this fact is likely to haunt politicians of variety.

Bhutto's removal by execution is not a political solution: considering it as political victory is to deny the political reality of Pakistan. And this seems to be exactly what Zia has done. It is beyond the operational competence of Zia to put forth to the people why and how Bhutto and the PPP are retrograde to national survival and development. If elections are held, the army cannot count itself among legislators or ministers. And if elections are held the army will have to go back to the barracks. What happens to Zia in that case? Also, one may not forget that Bhutto's many faults and autocracy notwithstanding will the people accept the army as an alternative to politicians or would the people not yet wait patiently for the opportune time to strike back at the army or army - backed politicians and bring about the political alternative to Bhutto.

As one recalls the judicial exercise - Bhutto, was made to suffer, one finds that it bristled with paradoxes, contradictions and ironies. Initially to show his political neutrality General Zia released Bhutto from "protective custody" along with other important PNA leaders on July 28, 1977. But the military authorities kept strict watch on Bhutto's activities. As Bhutto showed his willingness to contest the fixed October 18, 1977 general elections, the military government intensified its vilification campaign against Bhutto and the PPP.

Fearing Bhutto's come back to power and realizing their own contradictions and weaknesses, PNA leaders urged General Zia to usher and ensure a process of "accountability" before holding general elections. The whole idea behind accountability process was to expose Bhutto's misuse of power during his five and a half year rule. It might be recalled that top PNA leaders exerted considerable pressure to prevent Bhutto from participating in the proposed general election. Soon after the imposition of martial law, Pir Pagara of Muslim League was first to demand Bhutto's trial in an open court.³⁴ Afterwards NDP leader Begum Nasim Wali Khan suggested that before conducting "free and fair" elections, a "national government" should be set up in the country for at least five years, to extricate it from the morass of Bhuttoism.³⁵ The Tehrike-Istiglal leader, Air Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Khan demanded Bhutto's trial, even at the cost of postponement of the promised October 18 general elections. He was in favour of Bhutto's trial in an ordinary court.³⁶ The PNA leaders also demanded a

³⁴ The Statesman, July 9, 1977.

³⁵ POT, August 23, 1977.

³⁶ Asghar Khan demanded that court case spending against Bhutto and other Pakistan People's party leaders be brought before the vote is taken. He said that although he was not recommending postponement of the elections, 18 October, 1977 was not sacrosanct and the heavens would not fall if there was a delay of few days or weeks." *The Tribune, September, 2, 1977.*

probe into Pakistan's failure in two wars with India (1965 and 1971) and publication of Hamobdur Rahman Commission report before polls.

In keeping with PNA's persistent demand to make Bhutto accountable for his actions, General Zia assured PNA leaders to deal with the "evils of Bhuttoism" before- holding October, 18, 1977 General election. With a view to prevent Bhutto from taking part in the elections, the military government brought about a series of criminal charges against Bhutto, including murder charges, misuse of governmental funds, and resources. Bhutto's role in 1971 Pakistan's war with India resulting in the breakup of Pakistan was given wide publicity. Since all other charges were not deemed adequate to implicate Bhutto, the military authorities immediately arrested him on 3 September, 1977 (five days after his release from protective custody) in connection with a government agency's probe of his alleged role in 1974 political assassination.³⁷ It was reported that Bhutto's erstwhile party colleague Ahmed Raza Kasuri, registered a complaint in Lahore High Court against Bhutto and other ten persons for conspiring against him and killing his Father Nawab Ahmed Khan in November 1974.³⁸

On September 13, 1977, Bhutto was freed on bail amounting Rs. 50,000 with two securities of the same amount by the Lahore High Court. As Bhutto made no secret of his intentions to take part in polls, the military authorities again detained him on September, 17, 1977, just two days before the opening of the election campaign.

Interestingly the US daily New York Times (21-9-1977) called for a postponement of October polls until the completion of the trial of the former Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto.³⁹ The Supreme Court (on 24 September, 1977) refused to dismiss the murder charges against Bhutto in connection with a habeas corpus petition filed in the Supreme Court, on behalf of Begum Nusrat Bhutto, against detention of her husband and ten of his associates. Begum Bhutto criticized the decision of the Supreme Court as prejudicial and accused that her husband's arrest was aimed at preventing him from contesting general election. In view of PNA president's demand for Bhutto's trial, General Zia postponed the scheduled October 18 1977 General Election on 1 October, 1977 and imposed ban on all political activities

³⁷ Bhutto was picked by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) which had been looking into the murder of Nawab Ahmed Khan killed in an ambush at Lahore in 1974. The then Director General of Federal Security Forces (FSF) Masud Mahmood, formally accused Bhutto of ordering him to prepare the ambush. Mahmood also disclosed that the trap was not aimed at killing Nawab Ahmed Khan, but his son Ahmed Raza Kasuri.

³⁸ Morning News, August 22, 1977.

³⁹ Times of India, September 22, 1977.

throughout the country. The military government also imposed severe restriction on press and other communication media. Gen. Zia disclosed that Bhutto and his associates would be tried in “open civilian courts”.⁴⁰

A full bench of Lahore High Court on 9 October, 1977, cancelled the bail granted to Bhutto earlier and ordered for his confinement in a judicial custody. A five – man bench of the Lahore High Court started regular trial and formally charged Bhutto the former Prime Minister, Mian Mohammed Abbas, a former Director Operation, FSF and three junior officers of the Federal Security Force, for a murder conspiracy.

On October 18, 1977, Bhutto urged the Supreme Court to reject the military coup that too pled his government. He alleged that the July 5, 1977 take over was a “master plan” of outside forces to deal with the leaders of India and Pakistan. Was it a coincidence, he asked, that the former Prime Ministers of both countries (India and Pakistan) were being proceeded against “in like manner” because both of them refused to succumb to the pressures of a foreign power⁴¹. In an address to the Supreme Court on October 22, 1977, Bhutto warned that continued – martial law could lead to the break – up of Pakistan. He accused martial law authorities of suspending the constitution solely to destroy him. He said:

“Why punish the entire nation for the sake of one individual”. Bhutto described the situation of Pakistan as worse than that of 1971 during the war with India and the secession of Bangladesh. He told the Supreme Court that the only solution to the prevailing “total constitutional crisis” lay in the holding of general election immediately”.⁴²

Dismissing the habeas corpus petition of Begum Nusrat Bhutto the Supreme Court of Pakistan up held the detention of Bhutto and his ten associates on November 10 under Martial Law, order No. 12. All the nine judges including the chief justice S. Anwarul – Haq returned a “unanimous verdict” on the petition. The 108 – page judgment described the promulgation of martial law (on July 5, 1977) as an “extra-constitutional step stemming from a necessity and added that the promulgation of martial law had a legal validity. It noted that the CMLA was entitled to perform all legislative functions of the 1973 constitution except for a few provisions. The Court said it had no power to issue directive to the CMLA about holding of elections, but it mentioned the intention of the CMLA to hold

⁴⁰ Ibid, October 2, 1977.

⁴¹ The Hindustan Times, October 19, 1977.

⁴² The Times of India, October 23, 1977.

elections as soon as the process of accountability was over. The Court said it hoped that the period between now and the holding of elections would be as short as possible. It described that period as a period of constitutional deviation necessitated by grave circumstances".⁴³

That gave a serious blow to Bhutto and the PPP. Henceforth General Zia intensified his campaign of "accountability process" more vigorously. The accountability process was heavily loaded with Islamic overtones with a view to "cleansing" perverted politics of Pakistan General Zia explained that it was for first time in the history of Pakistan that those personalities who remained at the helm of affairs were being made to account their acts of omission and commission. In this context the trial of Z. A. Bhutto and his coterie had become a matter of necessity so that the people of Pakistan should be able to choose their representatives without doubt and repose their confidence in them.⁴⁴

The military regime imposed strict ban on Press and political activity maintaining that "free political activity was not desirable until the completion of accountability process". The government issued Presidential orders for the disqualification of the membership of the national and provincial assemblies for seven years, for those politicians who were found corrupt and undesirable. For the trial of undesirable political elements, eleven special disqualification tribunals were setup. Obviously, the military regime was trying to expose the members of the PPP. Under Martial Law, order No. 31, political activity in the country had been banned until March 31, 1978⁴⁵. However, it was extended indefinitely.

The pro-government media gave wide publicity to the "evils of Bhuttoism". The government controlled press chiefly focused on the views of Bhutto's potential rivals like, Khan Abdual Wali Khan and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and others who were the victims of Bhutto's despotism. From the strategically stand point General Zia released all these leaders who were kept in jails during Bhutto regime. The speeches of Khan Abdul Wali Khan were widely quoted in the major newspapers. All these released leaders hailed the anti-Bhutto steps of General Zia-ul-Haq.

⁴³ The Pakistan Times, November 11, 1977. In a rejoinder to the statement of the state lawyer A, K. Brohi, in the Supreme Court Bhutto said : "It was greatest mistake of his life to make a Jamaat-e-Islami man the Army Chief over the head of Seven officers." He accused that during the post March 1977 General election agitation in the country, General Zia made contacts with a foreign power. He did not identify that foreign power, but hinted that it was the United States of America, the country which he had earlier charged, was responsible for his downfall. Time of India, November 14, 1977.

⁴⁴ The Pakistan Times, October 26, 1977.

⁴⁵ Morning News, March 1, 1978.

In his various speeches Khan Abdul Wali Khan equated “Bhuttoism” with “Fascism”. He vociferously reiterated that Bhutto and Pakistan can not coexist. He asserted that “unless the traces of Bhuttoism were removed from the body-politic of the country, no positive achievement could be made in any direction”⁴⁶. The Pakistan Economist (March 11, 1978) described the meaning of Bhuttoism thus :

“In our view Bhuttoism stands for license to break all laws as well as long entrenched social norms in one could do it with impunity. Mr. Bhutto set the style for it by living in regal splendour but appearing on special occasions capped like Mao-tsetung or Chou-en-Lai with the scythe and spade in his hands ranting-*ad nanuseam* about his government being one of the poor, by the poor and for the poor. But it was the poor and the middle classes whose lot grew worse as time passed and who found themselves on the way to having all doors of remedies closed to them. The resultant could only be ‘maddening frustration’.....For Bhuttoism consisted essentially in appropriating the ingredients of existentialism”.

It is not so sure if it was even a relatively objective assessment of Bhutto’s objectives and policies. Besides the ban on political activities and wide publicity to the evils of Bhuttoism, the martial law government closed the educational institutions throughout Pakistan.

In such an environment, closed and made awesome due to army show of strength and ruthless intentions, the Lahore High Court, on March 18, 1978 gave its verdict of death penalty to the former primeminister Z. A. Bhutto for ordering a political murder in 1974. The five–men bench of Lahore High Court “unanimously convicted Bhutto and his four associates giving them a death sentence. Besides death sentence all were given sentences of seven years jail for conspiracy. Bhutto was ordered by the Court to pay Rs. 25,000 as compensation to the family of the member of the man killed. Bhutto was immediately sent to the death cell in Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore.

After the announcement of Lahore High Court judgment, Bhutto became apprehensive of the intentions of General Zia. With little hope of his survival Bhutto filed an appeal in the Supreme Court. It was reported that Bhutto wanted withdrawal of the chief justice Mr. S. Anwarul-Haq since he did not expect an impartial verdict from him. But Bhutto failed to move the army authorities. In May 1978 Bhutto was transferred to the Rawalpindi Central Jail.

⁴⁶ Dawn, December 15, 1978.

In May 1978, a nine-member full bench of the Supreme Court started the hearing of Bhutto's appeal. Bhutto was absent on the first day of the hearing. His lawyer Yahya Bakhtiar denounced the case against his client as politically motivated and part of an international conspiracy aimed at politically and physically eliminating him. Meanwhile, the nine-member bench of the Supreme Court was reduced to - member bench following the retirement of Mr. Justice Qaiser Khan and the sickness of Mr. Justice Wahiceduddin Ahmad. After nine months of tortuous judicial exercise, the Supreme Court of Pakistan on February 6, 1979, confirmed the Lahore High Court verdict awarding death sentence for Bhutto and other four co-accused.

The confirmation of death sentence became a debatable issue it was a split-verdict: four judges (from Punjab) favoured the Lahore High Court verdict, the other three judges in their dissenting note favoured Bhutto's acquittal.⁴⁷ Bhutto's counsel filed a petition for the review of judgment. But all in vain, on March 24, 1979, Z. A. Bhutto lost the final battle against his death sentence when the Seven – men Supreme Court bench “unanimously” rejected the review petition. But the Supreme Court included a paragraph in their ruling recommending executive clemency. In suggesting clemency, the Supreme Court mentioned that it supported Bhutto's counsel Yahya Bakhtiar's claim that “the sentence should be commuted to life imprisonment because, Bhutto did not wield the murder weapon and was not at the scene of the crime.”⁴⁸

General Zia expected that Bhutto will request him to grant him clemency commuting the death sentence into life imprisonment But Bhutto was very firm in his resolve. He vowed not to appeal for clemency, since he felt that an appeal would be an admission of guilt. Ultimately, on April 4, 1979, General Zia carried out a showdown, disregarding international appeals for granting Bhutto clemency.”⁴⁹

VI- REACTIONS OVER BHUTTO'S EXECUTION

Bhutto's hanging can not be viewed in isolation of specific political context. Though military authorities justified the execution on legal ground; political factors played a determinant role. Excepting the PPP, the entire political leadership of the country was in favour of Bhutto's execution. Right from the announcement of Lahore High Court judgment, the PNA parties were insisting

⁴⁷ The Times of India, Feb. 7, 1979.

⁴⁸ The Times of India, March 24, 1979.

⁴⁹ The Times of India, April 5, 1979.

General Zia not to bow down before the international pressure. They criticized the world appeals as “interference in Pakistan’s internal affairs”. They also repeatedly warned the military authorities, if Bhutto was not penalized, the country will face a tragic civil – war. However, soon after Bhutto’s execution the PNA withdraw from Zia’s Cabinet. Now they are a bit hesitant to share the blame because of its grave repercussions in the forth coming general elections.

It might be recalled that the rightist ‘*Islam Pasand*’ parties hailed the Lahore High Court verdict maintaining that “the imprint of the punishment awarded to Bhutto should be so firmly ingrained that it may put a deterrent fear of God in the minds of the people.”⁵⁰

It is evident that for the sake of his own survival General Zia adopted a stiff and partisan attitude. Throughout the Court’s legal battle he used the media in denigrating Bhutto’s leadership. The government published a series of “White Papers” to expose Bhutto’s unlawful actions.⁵¹ To show his political neutrality General Zia hailed the Lahore High Court verdict and, later the Supreme Court’s confirmation, as unimpeachable evidence of the “sacrosanct principle of independence of judiciary”. In reality, he directly interfered with judicial procedure regarding Bhutto’s case. From the very beginning General Zia was tempering with the judiciary. Soon after Bhutto’s detention, he prescribed a new oath of office for the judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts on gain of loss of office in which the pledge to “preserve, protect and defend” the constitution was omitted. That very day (September 22, 1977) the then Chief Justice of Pakistan Supreme Court Mr. Justice Yaqub Ali was removed by Martial Law order amending the constitution. General Zia appointed one of his close men Mr. Justice Shaikh Anwarul Haq as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.⁵²

Later, when appeals for clemency started pouring in, General Zia described them as merely “formal and best example of political trade Unionism.”⁵³ He did not even bother to read them. General Zia repeatedly said that he was right in

⁵⁰ Morning News, March 20, 1978.

⁵¹ Bhutto in his death cell wrote a rejoinder to government’s white papers in the name of “Pakistan Papers” — He countered the information of these White papers as “White lies.” These “Pakistan Papers” written by Bhutto were published by Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi in (1979) a book form entitled. “*If I am Assassinated.*” Pran Chopra has written a broad introduction giving a resume of what Bhutto has brilliantly written. Besides that Pran Chopra has given a lucid analysis of the prevailing political situation of Pakistan under Martial Law.

⁵² Refer to POT, September 24, 1977.

⁵³ “Asia World”, March 16-31, 1979.

Bhutto's trial, since "no one was above law". He argued that Bhutto was not sentenced as the Prime Minister of Pakistan but as an ordinary culprit.

Right from his detention, Bhutto was aware of Zia's adamant posture. In the last days of his life, living in a death cell, Bhutto realized that "a revolutionary justice would have been better" than this inhuman treatment. It is still a mystery why the Supreme Court previously gave a split 4/3 judgment and why it unanimously rejected Bhutto's review petition? Obviously all this was the result of intervention of martial law authorities. Some critics argued that 4/3 judgment smacked of regionalism. All the four judges who favoured Bhutto's execution were from Punjab and three judges who favoured Bhutto's acquittal were from other provinces. Thus, the prolonged legal battle was an exercise of a mere eye-wash.

Bhutto's execution became popular as "judicial murder". According to critics the case was not based on substantive evidence. The entire trial was conducted on the basis of verbal accusations and statements made by then Director-General of the Federal Security Force, Masaud Mahmud. The Supreme Court might have been helpless in the matter if the evidence against Bhutto were indeed fool proof.

However, there was no such evidence on record moreover; Bhutto's execution was not in conformity with the tenets of Islam. According to Islamic (*Shariat*) laws, punishment in a murder case is awarded on the principle: "Life for life only for the actual killer" By the Court itself it is established that Bhutto was not the actual killer nor was he present at the spot.

A distinguished French lawyer deputed to attend the Bhutto trial on behalf of the European Human Rights Commission, for instance, said "that the case would not stand in French Court for even a few minutes". The former US Attorney General, Ramsay Clark expressed much the same view. He stated: a possible five four split decision (in case there were a nine-member bench) in favour of acquittal and release of the former Prime Minister was converted into a four-three split decision in favour of conviction."⁵⁴ The military ruler suppressed the demand of recalling the two judges of the original nine-member bench.

This perhaps had to happen in a regimented regime. Pakistan's judiciary can not be regarded as independent if one were to take stock of news filtering in from beyond the frontier.

⁵⁴ The Times of India, Feb. 7, 1979.

VII- CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

It is a fact now that the General has removed his potential rival from Pakistan's political scene and also from the earth. Zia's designs notwithstanding, Bhutto is likely to haunt the politics of Pakistan for years to come. Bhutto's physical removal seems to have created more issues and problems instead of solving them, now and hereafter. Also, systemic stability and national integration are definitely under strain, as is evident from the general feeling prevalent, and also it is widely expressed, that Bhutto was made to suffer by Punjabi elite. How long General Zia would succeed in humoring loyalist PNA supporters on the pretext of "Islamization" are questions which can not be ignored. Political parties other than the PNA are likely to create added troubles for Zia since they did not compromise on Zia's meddling with constitutional apparatus. How long the PNA (of six parties) holds itself together now is also a pertinent question. It is to be recalled that parties both of the PNA and outside it, were unanimous in Zia's anti-Bhutto move and now that Bhutto has been removed- their staying together is not guaranteed.

In view of Zia's renewed (March 23, 1979) declaration to hold general election on November 17, 1979, the political situation is likely to be transformed to take new and, very likely, imponderable, postures. With the PNA hold fast together and with other parties outside the PNA, strive to preserve and strengthen unity and offer a viable political alternative. At the moment, the picture is not very happy. The so-called leftist parties are not effective. They have not renounced the label of Islam. The so called "Islamic Marxists" are hardly equipped to bring about revolutionary changes in Pakistan.

It is significant that in his March 23, 1979 speech, when he announced the date for the holding of general elections, General Zia made remarks to amend the constitution to strike a balance between the powers of the Prime Minister and President. It might be Zia's presumption that the next Prime Minister will be a less influential figure as he does not expect any single party to win the elections. In all probability, Zia would try to continue as the president of Pakistan. The army will not agree to go to the barracks conveniently, unless it is forced to do so. Alternatively General Zia might decide to follow the model of Bangladesh adopted by General Zia-ur-Rahman. Thereafter he might choose to follow the Ayubian model of "party less democracy." That is surmised in the context of his repeated announcement to reduce the number of political parties and his blanket curbs on the political process. General Zia has also indicated to hold the polls to the local bodies on nonparty basis. Or else, by the time the general elections are held, if politicians become inconveniently voluble and assert their preference to retain parliamentary system, General Zia might agree to conduct elections to

Parliament under a modified constitutional dispensation which has, of necessity to ensure his position and powers.

Whatever be the course of events, eventual forum of government and constitutional shape, the other significant question is related to the integrity and stability of Pakistan. The most pressing issue right now is when Zia would hold the much promised and repeatedly deferred elections. As soon earlier, if the judiciary and the army are going to supervise elections, time alone would show whether the former would succeed in rising above the likely role of the latter which, in keeping with Zia's intentions and actions hitherto, might be influenced by the sole objective of either retaining power directly or ensuring sublet and indirect control of the army over the politicians. The judiciary hitherto has been captive: Would it, and could it assert itself?

Pakistan is facing a crisis of identity, what and who would hold the competing and almost warring regions together? Is the alternative likely to be return to electoral politics with the army waiting in the wings so to say? Or would regional priorities assert themselves and lead to undoing efforts of national integration. In that contingency, would the army come back?

It might be recalled that Bhutto succeeded to some extent, in assuaging the feelings of regionalism in Punjab and Sindh. However, of late sub-nationalities, Sindhi, Baluchi and Pustoon, are up against the Punjabi hegemony. Baluchistan and the NWFP were, even earlier, under attack by the ruling elite. Now Sindh had also been made the target. After Bhutto's execution, it would be a political folly to take Sindh for granted. Reports say that there is a lot of ferment and perhaps even the slightest miscalculation by the army now, or by any future rulers, would spark the tinderbox. National statesmanship alone would ensure viability and integrity of Pakistan.

With the upsurge of Islamic orthodoxy, popular legitimacy would have to be ensured for the single reason that even good, committed Muslims may not support revival of outmoded fundamentalism. It is utterly incongruous for General Zia to enforce a system if only to placate certain dogmatic elements but that is likely neither to be accepted by the large majority of people nor be conducive to nation-building.

If Bhutto's execution fails to provide a strong and reliable alternative, sanctioned by national consensus, the apprehensions regarding Pakistan's further dismemberment may well come true. That, by any calculation, would be a catastrophe not necessarily confined to that country but perhaps igniting process of destabilization in South Asia as well.

The army itself faces, right now, severe challenge to its credibility. Now that it has set in motion train of suspicion, vendetta, judicial murder, marital high handedness, rupture of the constitutional process and, above all- Islamic fundamentalism, it would be a vain hope to expect normalcy to be revived instantly, either by the army or any political regime (if it comes about). Let it not be forgotten that Bhutto's execution also meant that Zia's 'coup' was after all, not as bloodless as made out to be initially. Apart from the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan, no regime was toppled by bloody steps. Also, events and maddening tempo of political surprises and shocks in neighbouring Iran and Afghanistan can not be ignored. How Pakistan reacts to these situations is likely to be of vital importance to identification of Zia's options.

The rise and fall of Bhutto, thus, upholds a panorama of a politician who rose to dizzy heights both at home and abroad, whose flamboyance for words and symbols was phenomenal, who moved the common man, who earned eulogies and bitter hostility and whose cardinal miscalculation proved to be, also his last. Meanwhile the clock in Pakistan seems to have been put back to medieval orthodoxy.

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