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THE CENTRE- BALOCHISTAN RELATIONS (1947-70)

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Abstract: The British government appointed Shahi Jirga as an electoral college to decide the future of British Baluchistan. It finally gave its verdict in favour of Pakistan. Afterwards, top Pakistani leadership seemed ambitious to make the Kalat state as its part due to its geo-strategic and geo-economic significance. It changed its mindset and expressed the intention of unconditional accession of the Kalat state to Pakistan. Given the precarious situation in and around the Khanate, the Khan finally signed an instrument of accession. The Baloch nationalists declined to accept the validity of instrument of accession and decision of Shahi Jirga. The Advisory Council was formed in June 1949 to make sure people's participation in the governance of British Baluchistan. Another step taken in this direction was the appointment of the Reform Committee in October 1958. The central government decided to integrate four states of Kalat, Mekran, Kharan and Las Bela into Balochistan States Union. One Unit Plan was made a part of 1956 Constitution. It was a fateful attack on the federal parliamentary set-up. Prince Abdul Kareem Khan did not reconcile to the changed status of the Khanate but his insurgency was put down by the Pakistani armed forces. Iron-fisted tactics of Ayub's regime further inflamed the centrifugal forces in Baluchistan.

Keywords: Ustama Gall, Advisory Council, Wrore Pashtun, Reform Committee, Baluchistan States Union, Muslim League, Republican Party, One Unit Plan, Brahavi and Baloch, Pakistan National Party, KhodaiKhidmatgar, Sind Hari Committee, National Awami Party, Khanate of Katat, Baloch Nationalism, Mengal, Marri and Bugti Tribes, Jhalawan, Mazulm Party.

FIRST BALOCH INSURGENCY

Pakistan took control of the Khanate on 15 April, 1948 in accordance with 3rd June plan after the Khan had inked an

agreement of accession with Pakistani authorities¹. Tahir Amin, a well known political analyst and writer is of the opinion that Khan of Kalat entered in the accession arrangement with Pakistan unwillingly. He was left disappointed to get help from India and Russia. Secondly, he was threatened with the use of force against his state by the government of Pakistan.²

Prince Abdul Karim, younger brother of the Khan, never reconciled to the changed position of the Khanate after its accession to Pakistan. He, along with his companions, decided to take up arms against the state of Pakistan. He entered Afghanistan with a hope of getting assistance for liberation movement. The Baloch freedom fighters tried to get help and sympathies of the Baloch Sardars for their cause. The Russian and Afghanistan governments were also approached in this regard.³ They also spared no efforts in creating chaos and unrest like situation in Balochistan.⁴ Muhammad Hussain Anka, Malik Saeed Dehwar, Abdul Wahid Kurd, Qadir Bakhsh (Baloch Nationalists) backed the armed resistance movement. However, it was not favoured by Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Gul Khan and Abdul Aziz Kurd because they were not certain about internal and external support.⁵

Afghanistan could not be supportive of the cause of Baloch movement because it was in conflict with its own demand of "Pashtunistan" spreading from Chitral to Balochistan in the Arabian sea.⁶ Thus, due to lack of internal unity and external support it failed.⁷ Realising the failure to materialize the liberation struggle, Abdul Karim returned back on 8th July and was arrested.⁸ His trial began on 27 November, 1948 by special Jirga in Mach Jail. He was awarded ten years rigorous imprisonment and was fined Rs. 5000. His other companions were also sentenced and fined.⁹ Upon his release, Abdul Karim Khan formed a new political party (Ustamam Gall) or the people's party. It focused on the formation of Baloch province. The Wrore Pashtun led by Achakzai was also working on the same lines in Pushtun dominated areas of Balochistan.¹⁰ The Khan's dream of making it all embracing Baloch Political Party never materialized because it received cold response from Makran, Kharan and Lasbela.¹¹

FORMATION OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jinnah had a desire to change the status quo in Balochistan. To fulfil his pledge he established Governor General's Advisory Council in Balochistan so as to make sure public's participation in the governance of their province.¹² It was nominated body of the areas of British Balochistan. The announcement was a big step forward for the province. According to Axmann, it was established on 11 June, 1949.¹³ However, it did not come up to the expectations of the people because it was only a recommending body. It consisted of two members with nominal powers. It was devoid of composite representative enlarged body of all areas forming British Balochistan. All hopes were dashed to pieces regarding people's representatives' participation in the governance of the province. The real powers were with the AGG to whom the Advisory Council merely referred any matter in the form of proposal for consideration. Eventually, it met its death on 1st September, 1951. The council was formed as a body so that it may have check on the decision and administrative planning of the AGG but its original position and capacity was not as it envisioned.¹⁴

REPORT OF THE REFORM COMMITTEE

Another step taken by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan to bring constitutional and administrative change in Balochistan was the appointment of a Reform Committee on 4 October, 1950. It was composed of five members. It visited each and every corner of the British Balochistan. Its report was a remarkable step in the constitutional and political history of British Balochistan. The report of the committee proposed provincial autonomy and raising it to the status of Governor's province. It also stressed upon the introduction of adult franchise and enlarged powers to the provinces. The creation of local bodies institutions were also regarded as inevitable.¹⁵ The topmost central administration opposed the report of the committee and was not given practical shape in the post-colonial Balochistan. The arguments given in this regard were far from convincing like weak financial position and under population of the post-colonial Balochistan. Jinnah had earlier set aside the arguments by saying that centre would share the financial

difficulties of the province for the sake of progress and welfare of people.¹⁶

BALUCHISTAN STATES UNION (BSU)

The government of Pakistan decided to integrate four states of Kalat, Mekran, Kharan and Lasbela into 'Baluchistan States Union' (BSU). All four states agreed to the idea in March 1952.¹⁷ It had common executive, legislature and its administration was to be headed by the Prime Minister. The permission of the government of Pakistan was needed in the removal or nomination of the Prime Minister. However, Council of Rulers had the powers to appoint or remove him. The Council of Rulers, comprising four rulers of the states, headed by a President was to be selected among the rulers in rotation. Accordingly, the Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmad Yar Khan, was chosen as the President of the council. BSU had its own cabinet to be chosen from the Assemblies. They could not be appointed or dismissed without the prior approval of the government. The agreement provided for a legislative council of 28 elected and 12 nominated members. Aga Abdul Hamid, a civil servant, was appointed as the Prime Minister of the Union²². Awan maintained that Ahmad Yar Khan took it as a chance to emerge as the future leader of the post-colonial Baluchistan. He also urged the Marri and Bugti tribes to demand for their joining in BSU. He further writes that BSU was a 'a trap' to Iure Khan before demolishing him.¹⁹ Where as, Dehwar views that topmost central authorities did not like the institution of BSU and they had some other foolish and dubious designs like one unit at the back of their mind.²⁰ The later events also witnessed that the idea of BSU was originated with the aim of merging it with the province of Baluchistan. The government finally gave this region a special status.²¹ Special areas were to be part of the province. These areas would not have any representation in the provincial legislature. Provincial Executive, Chief Commissioner or Governor, would control these areas.

DISSOLUTION OF FIRST CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

In the meantime, the dispute between the Constituent Assembly and the then Governor General, Ghulam Muhammad was

moving towards its climax. The Constituent Assembly's two hasty enactments led to its dissolution by Governor General on 24 October, 1954. Governor General was annoyed with the Constituent Assembly when it asserted its powers. Firstly, it repealed 'PRODA' (Public and Representative Offices Disqualification Act, 1949). It was made during Liaquat's period to check the mal-administration, mismanagement, and corruption in the society. The prestige of the Constituent Assembly was greatly lowered due to this step.²² Secondly; it amended the Government of India Act, 1947 by divesting the powers of Governor General to remove the ministries. It was, indeed, a step forward in the growth of parliamentary democracy in Pakistan.²³ The Constituent Assembly kept the Governor General uniformed on this account. He reacted sharply and dissolved the Constituent Assembly. The Governor General's action could not be justified because it was about to complete its work in regard to the framing of the constitution. If the Governor General had dissolved it when it lost its credibility after the election of 1954 in East Pakistan, his action would have been defended. He did it only to protect his vested interests rather than to protect democratic principle.²⁴

After dissolving the first Constituent Assembly, civil and military bureaucracy fully asserted and made solo flight in deciding the future of the constitution making history of Pakistan. The formal agreement regarding the integration of the BSU in to Balochistan was signed between the Khan and the Government of Pakistan on 1st January, 1955. Ahmad Yar and other rulers consented to dissolve the BSU and thereby sanctioned the abolition of the states. By raising their annual allowances the government of Pakistan easily succeeded in doing away with Kalat, Karan, Lasbela and Mekran as independent princely states.²⁵

POLITICS OF ONE UNIT IN WEST PAKISTAN

The most controversial step taken by the second Constituent Assembly was the formation of One Unit Plan (1955) It was basically the brain child of central state actors, who regarded welding all areas and provinces in to one unit as pre-condition to bring 'the linguistic and cultural homogeneity'. They viewed it that

it would eliminate the feelings of provincialism and prejudice. It would also be necessary for viable political and economic system. Defence requirements could also be met.²⁶ Ayub Khan backed one unit scheme in these words:

Strategically and economically, West Pakistan was destined to stand or fall as a whole lying as it does in the basin of the Indus River and its tributaries, its future economic development must be considered as a whole to achieve the maximum result. West Pakistan, in order to develop properly and prove a bulwark of defence from north and south must be welded in to one unit and all provincial artificial boundaries removed regardless of any prejudices to the contrary, which are more the creation of politicians than real.²⁷

Balochistan, instead of achieving a full fledged provincial status, was included in West Pakistan it was actually planned by the central state elites to counter the numerical majority of East Pakistan and to foil the political alliances and cooperation between Bengal and smaller provinces.²⁸ The politics of one unit in west wing further made the smaller provinces and nationalists forces more organized and sensitive about the cultural peculiarities and identities.²⁹

No doubt, the central state actors used all kinds of political manoeuvrings to get One Unit Plan implemented. They succeeded in obtaining Provincial Assemblies' approval for their one unit scheme. Sindh Assembly did not toe the line of civil-military elites and had to pay the price. Pirzada's ministry was dislodged because of its disapproval of one unit. "The major political parties of West Pakistan, Muslim League and the Republican Party were ambiguous, non-committal and opportunistic in their attitude towards one unit."³⁰ One unit scheme which was incorporated in the Constitution of 1956 led to the death of federal principle in west Pakistan.³¹ Provincialism could only be lowered by a big change in outlook and policies of the civil-military establishment.

The regionalists in Balochistan were against the One Unit Plan. They wanted independent status or at least complete political and economic autonomy for their province. The ethnic actors were sceptical and developed a lot of apprehensions against central state

actors' policies. They considered their policies as an invasion on their regional cultures. Baloch nationalists even laid stress on homogeneity rather than language differences between Baloch and Brahavi. They believed Baloch and Brahavi belong to the same origin,³² and are the branches of the earlier Baloch.³³ Tariq Rehman opines that the Khans of Kalat, who were Brahavi rulers, promoted the idea of common origin between Brahavi and Baloch to get help to consolidate their rule.³⁴

The Khanate parliament declared on 14 December, 1947 that Baloch would be its national and official language. In practice, however most of the work of Kalat was carried out in Urdu, while correspondence with outsiders was in English. Notwithstanding administrative necessities, it was significant that Balochi nationalism was expressed through Balochi during 227 days of the independence of the Kalat State.³⁵

Whereas the Pakistan State elites believed in one nation, one language and one culture.³⁶ They wanted to make Urdu the only national language country. They emphasized a strong centre and used Islam to gain legitimacy. Ethnic identities and cultural diversities were considered as dangerous ideas to the concept of one nation. Ethnic elites were dubbed as "anti-state and anti-Islam". The state elites showed zero tolerance towards regional languages. They believed in unity through conformity.³⁷

A significant development occurred on 30 November, 1956 when like minded political parties in West-Pakistan formed the political organization by the name of Pakistan-National Party (PNP). The like-minded political groups were Azad Pakistan Party headed by Mian Iftikharuddin, G.M Syed's Awami Party, Wror Pashtun of Abdus Samad Achakzai, Khodai Khidmatgar of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Ustamam Gall (Peoples Party) from Balochistan and Sindh Hari Committee of Hyder Bakhsh Khan Jatoi. All these political forces looked upon the unification plan as usurpation of regional, constitutional, economic and political rights of the small provinces.

The regionalists and separatists forces vehemently opposed the welding of the West-Pakistan in to one unit and demanded its demolition with greater provincial autonomy to the smaller provinces. Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani joined it in

1957. It was renamed National Awami Party (NAP). Abdul Ghaffar Khan was elected its first President.³⁸ The party manifesto included the following main points. It vowed to defend the territorial integrity of the state. It laid stress upon the independent and non-aligned foreign policy. It demanded the creation of provinces on linguistic lines. Adult franchise should be introduced. It demanded the ending of usurpation and exploitation of the people belonging to different regions.³⁹ The NAP started to act as opposition front. It also provided a platform to the leftist groups to express their viewpoint on the country politics.⁴⁰

After return from abroad, The Khan found his state of Kalat being a part of one unit, West-Pakistan. He took anti one unit stand and joined hands with NAP in its opposition and abolishing one unit. He again tried to restore his state and creation of an independent homeland for the Baloch. He sought the help of the former Sardars in this regard. He vigorously demonstrated against unification plan.⁴¹

The Khan chaired the historic meeting of Baloch Sardars held at the Palace Hotel in Karachi in 1957. It was attended by Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri, Nawab Ghous Bakhsh Raisani, Mir Jamal Khan Jamali and Nawab Akbar Bugti. The historic demand of the meeting was the dismantling of one-unit and creation of Balochistan province on the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and historical basis.⁴² When Khan's real determination of the creation of the Khanate of Kalat was exposed to the participants of the meeting most of them opposed it and walked out in protest.⁴³ Having lost trust of the Sardars, Khan's political future was in jeopardy.

Meanwhile, Pakistan was confronting severe political crises. It was mostly created due to weak federal parliamentary system. The political parties were not well-organized and well-established. They lacked political tradition and norms. The political culture of West-Pakistan was dominated by powerful land and tribal elites. The Muslim League had very short history of organized political struggle. The early death of Jinnah created vacuum. Moreover, the political and constitutional problems were further compounded by federal character of Pakistani society. The West-Wing had dominance in military and bureaucracy. It was also politically

dominant. It created a sense of deprivation and alienation among the people of East-Pakistan. In the western wing, small provinces were raising head against Punjabi dominance in the polity. The one unit scheme further promoted apprehensions and reservation of the small provinces, Inter-wings and intra-west-wing conflicts caused a great delay in the constitution making process.

The ambitious civil-military bureaucracy manipulated the circumstances taking advantage of the institution imbalance. It took its benefits and asserted its role in polity. After the dismissal of Nazimuddin' ministry in 1953 and dissolution of the first Constituent Assembly in 1954, the civil-military bureaucracy increased its role in politics and emerged as a key factor in determining the state's policies. President SikandarMirza proclaimed Martial Law in the early hours of October 8, 1958. The constitution was abrogated and central and provincial assemblies were dismissed. Political parties were banned and general elections were postponed for an indefinite period. Ayub Khan was appointed as a Supreme-Commander of the Armed Forces of Pakistan.

As earlier discussed, the feeling of neglect and deprivation were compounded in Balochistan over the issue of one unit. The NAP and the Khan opposed and demanded its dismantling. The ruling elites were anxiously waiting to take the Khan's designs as a pretext to arrest him on the charges of high treason. He was allegedly blamed for conspiracy to merge Kalat with Iran.⁴⁴ He was also accused of reeling Afghanistan's support for proposed Balochistan rebellion.⁴⁵ The Khan, while addressing the workers of the Baloch Academy at Quetta on 26th August, asked for the breaking up of one unit and creation of new province on linguistic basis.⁴⁶

On the Khan's refusal to meet the President and the Prime Minister to explain his alleged involvement in anti-state activities, the government of Pakistan finally decided to arrest him at the end of September, 1958.⁴⁷ Martin Axmann opined that the allegations against the Khan were levelled to pave the way for imposing Martial Law in the country. Awan and Iqbal Ahmed differ with the Axmann's views. They did not see any link between the two-events. The Khan was detained in Kalat allegedly on the blame for

starting full-scale Baloch insurgency with the help of 80,000 tribesmen. Pakistani armed forces entered on October, 6 in Kalat finding no such reported numbers of insurgents. As a result of the clashes, a number of tribesmen were killed.⁴⁹ The khan was deprived of all distinctions and privileges by the order of President, Sikandar Mirza. Agha Daud Jan was appointed as his successor.⁵⁰

Highly centralized governmental structure gave rise to centrifugal tendencies. It was a reaction of the small provinces against a highly centralized idea of one unit in West-Pakistan. The impact of the politics of one unit was far reaching in Balochistan. The people of Balochistan realized that they were denied an equal share in the state affairs. It created discontent and dismay which was finally reflected vigorously in demand for regional autonomy. The regionalists gained strength in Balochistan. Flexible centre was necessary for ethnically and geographically fragmented society. Decentralization with democratization was the proper response to block fissiparous tendencies. Regionalism in Balochistan was also the outcome of economic discontent. Had the general election been held in time, centrifugal tendencies could have been curtailed in Balochistan. Federalism is a balancing mechanism between the centrifugal and centripetal forces. The spirit of federalism suffered a setback due to One Unit Plan and highly centralized structure in which provincial status was that of subordination rather than coordination.

BALUCH ARMED INSURRECTION OF 1958

Most Baloch considered army's attack on Khanate in 1958 as unprovoked and aggressive. There was also strong resentment among tribesmen against authorities' demand of turning in their weapons at local police station.⁵¹ The arrest of the Khan also caused a wave of anger to sweep throughout Balochistan. Sardar Nauroz Khan Zarakzai, an old man of ninety, decided to challenge the authority of the state of Pakistan. He led the major Baloch armed insurrection in support of the Khan. Nauroz Khan was perceived as a notorious fire brand during British times.⁵² The chief demand of Nauroz Khan was release of the Khan and breaking up of one unit. He also urged upon the protection of Baloch customs and

traditions.⁵³ He, along with his gathered guerrilla force of 1000 men, went to the Mulla Pass. The army launched bombing on the guerrilla hideouts in mountains. Baloch nationalists opine that an agreement was reached as result of discussion between Pakistani authorities and Nauroz Khan. According to it, tribesman gave up their armed resistance movement in response to general amnesty and safe conduct. Abolishment of one unit was also promised. Sardar Doda Khan Zehri took an oath on the Koran, the Muslims' holy book, assuring the insurgents that authorities had met all their demands.⁵⁴

According to nationalists' accounts, the authorities dishonoured the pledge by arresting Nauroz Khan and his sons. However, the military government officials declined to accept the authenticity of such agreement.⁵⁵ Nauroz Khan and seven of his followers, including Batay Khan and his sons, were given capital punishment by a special military court held at Mach Jail. Nauroz Khan's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment due to this old age.⁵⁶

The early two military actions were taken in post-colonial Balochistan against the Khan. First, to compel him to accede to Pakistan and second, on the pretext of his 'anti-state activities' The next conflict erupted after the military operation and the military court' punishment to the leader of second armed rebellion, Nauroz Khan and his followers. Besides repeated military actions in post-colonial Balochistan and persisted incarceration of Baloch leaders. The other factors which caused alienation and disillusionment among the people of Balochistan were the formation of one unit in 1955 and Ayub Khan's Martial Law in 1958.

The centralizers' attitude had always been that they knew the best what is good for an area and its people and what they do, had to be accepted without any questioning. The Baloch were not prepared to accept their perception, with the result that military operation were launched and their top leadership remained imprisoned for long periods.

Top most military-civilian elites' policies towards Balochistan created feelings of mistrust and deprivation among the people of Balochistan. Since Khan's arrest, the wave of violence and counter violence erupted and continued even to the present time.

The Khan's political hopes of restoration of his former Khanate dashed to pieces after army's attack on the state in 1958. He served in the subsequent years as Governor of Balochistan from post 3rd insurgency.

NEXT SET OF DISTURBANCES IN MENGAL AND MARRI - BUGTI AREAS

The adopted policies of Ayub's regime, in political, cultural and economic spheres were totally unitary in characteristics. He sustained One Unit Plan and introduced "Controlled democracy" based on "Basic democracy".⁵⁷ The civil military elites during Ayub's period believed in using force to suppress the opposition. The government intensified the military operation in Balochistan to crush the insurgency sparked off after the life imprisonment of Nauroz Khan and his companions' execution. In July, 1960 Army's action caused a wave of indignation among the political activists. Ayub Khan paid visit to Quetta in August 1962. Baloch leaders organized a political meeting on his arrival. They condemned military operation as solution of the Balochistan problem.⁵⁸

The dictator was angry with their warning and threatened them with "extinction" if they persisted with their resistance.⁵⁹ The regionalists in Balochistan strongly opposed the state elites' policies. The Bugties, the Marris and the Mengal tribes continued their resistance under the leadership of respective tribal chiefs like KhairBakhshMarri, Akbar Bugti and Atta Ullah Mengal.⁶⁰

It must be noted that the Baloch were greatly under represented in state power structure during Ayub's period.⁶¹ The next wave of uprising was launched by the Mengals and it spread to the Marri-Bugti areas. It carried on till the declaration of amnesty in 1967. The Mengals were annoyed with government's demand of surrendering of weapons. Tribesmen were greatly perturbed over the government's decision to replace the traditional Sardar's with that of the government's nominees.⁶²

The guerrilla warfare continued in Jhalawan and Marri areas during Ayub's regime. Skirmishes between the hostiles and the government forces took place during 1956-66. The government in order to control the rebellious activities decided to replace hostile

Sardars like Attaullah Mengal, Nawab Akbar Bugti and Sardar Khair Bakhsh Marri with that of government supporters. The government's initiative in this regard was totally failed. All of the government's nominees were killed by their tribesmen.⁶³

Ali Muhammad Mengal started armed resistance after the arrest of Atta Ullah Mengal and made the following demands: First, to release Atta Ullah Mengal, second, to stop the campaign to collect weapons, third, closure of police stations. The clashes broke out between tribesmen and security forces that lasted till the end of 1966. The government arrested Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Mari on charges of supporting armed uprising.⁶⁴ They were time and again detained and set free on different charges.⁶⁵ They were blamed for backing and extending assistance to the Baloch resistance against the government of Pakistan. Sher Muhammad Marri stood distinguished in raising the flag of guerrilla rebellion.⁶⁷ He was also famous as General Sherof. He had joined politics in 1945 and established "Mazlum Party" in the tribal areas of the Sulaiman Mountains.⁶⁸ He also founded the Parari movement. Both commands were under his control. He himself led the northern command of the Marri-Bugti area.⁶⁹ The southern command of Jhalawan district was under the supervision of Ali Muhammad Mengal.⁷⁰ It was believed that Sher Muhammad had organized 22 base campus in Marri-Bugti and Mengal areas by July 1963.⁷¹

The army headed by Major General Tikka Khan took on the "Pararis". They put up stiff resistance as discussed earlier; the government authority was greatly undermined by the killing of all the new Sardars replacing the traditional ones. The Baloch became more united and die-hard due to the military operation.⁷² Amazingly, even the British avoided to replace the Sardars in such a manner as Pakistan government did under Ayub.⁷³ Sher Muhammad expressed the objectives of this rebellious struggle with the *News International*. According to him, the key goal of the armed struggle was to break up the one unit.⁷⁴ The rebels had close political affiliation with the NAP, which was struggling for provincial autonomy.⁷⁵

The government failed to control the situation and it deteriorated with the passage of time. The government felt the failure and futility of its strategies towards the Balochistan crisis. There was a shift in government's attitude towards the problem after the appointment of General Muhammad Musa Khan as a Governor. Amnesty was announced and the Baloch leaders were released as a gesture of goodwill. The authorities also reinstated the deposed tribal chiefs. They were further assured that their political demands would also be met. The area returned to normalcy after calling the rebellion off in 1967.⁷⁶ After brief interval, the situation again became tense due to lack of trust between the central state actors and ethnic lords. Muhammad Akbar Khan Bugti, Gul Khan Naseer, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai were re-arrested.⁷⁷ Trouble again sparked off in Easter Balochistan and Pat-Feeder area.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, the political condition of the country worsened. There was wide spread agitation against the government.

Ayub Khan's experiment of "Controlled Democracy" based on Basic Democracy ended on a note of disillusionment and failure. Highly authoritarian and centralized political system promised little to the Baloch grievances. They were excluded from a share in the political authority within Western-Pakistan. It contributed to the rise of the movement for regional autonomy and Baloch nationalism.

Ayub Khan's rule stopped the growth of democracy in Pakistan. There was no space for the growth of genuine political system. The whole system was circling around Ayub Khan's authoritative personality and his created political party. It crumbled to dust after his departure from Presidency. Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman, passionate supporter of provincial autonomy, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, advocate of populist program, moved in to the political vacuum.⁷⁹ Baloch nationalists stopped their hostilities against the regime because their major demands were fulfilled. However, they sustained their "Command Headquarter" and guerrilla formation.⁸⁰

The Constitution of 1962 was more centralized and the central grip over the units increased manifold. Ayub Khan considered a strong centre inevitable for achieving unity and economic progress of the country. He ruled like an autocrat and concentrated all powers in his own office. The regionalists were

totally opposed to his views. Regionalism reached its peak during Ayub Khan's rule because of the extensive powers of the President, centralized so-called federal structure and the subdued position of the indirectly elected National Assembly.

The situation had gone beyond his control and he realized his grip was slipping over the country's affairs. Ayub Khan resigned his office on 25th March, 1969 and handed over the reins of the government to General Yahya Khan, Commander in chief of the army. Yahya Khan imposed Martial Law and abrogated the Constitution of 1962. The political parties were banned. Yahya Khan introduced two major changes in the future political structure. One unit was dissolved and the former provinces were restored. Second, Balochistan was made a full-fledged Governor's province. Yahya's regime also released Baloch nationalists.⁸⁰ It was the undemocratic rule of the Ayub's regime which deprived Balochistan of an effective voice in the nation and state-building task.

The movement of maximum provincial autonomy gained currency in the Eastern-wing. The situation also worsened in the Western-wing. The ethnic elites in Balochistan resented the one unit. Instead of following the strategies of pacification, the ruling elites tried to suppress the Baloch regionalists. Troops were deployed in the province to put down the insurgencies. A number of Baloch regional leaders were arrested. The strategy of suppression further inflamed the centrifugal forces in the provinces. The Ayub government underestimated the forces working for restoration of democracy and provincial autonomy. Eventually, the regionalists and supporters of democracy started movement against the authoritarian regime, which brought about the downfall of his rule in March 1969.¹¹

Endnotes

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONCEPTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract: The concept of human rights got precision in shape of the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (UNDHR) in 1948. Before this Declaration, several divergent perceptions were being debated in the western world. Every culture, religion and region had its own interpretation of human rights. Today, most stakeholders agree with the broad concept of the UNDHR. This paper explains that the United Nations brought divergent schools of thought around the Declaration of Human Rights as far as its philosophy and utility are concerned.

Keywords: Human Rights, United Nations, State, Society, Freedom

The concept of human rights as an epistle is outcome of modernity. As the Second World War left behind an unprecedented loss of life and property, the need for an institution was felt to ensure peace and protect human rights. In the post World War II era, a concern for human rights gained importance particularly in democratic polities. The present concept of human rights has evolved over time. Exploitations, human sufferings in the events of bloody wars, social and economic inequality, all have contributed to the evolution of human rights as a concept. The role of different cultures and religions remained significant in defining this concept.

In the ancient and medieval periods, many instances point out struggles of oppressed against usurpers in various cultures and regions. The case of 'Spartacus' shows the struggle of slaves against their masters. Similarly, gender equality remained a dream in the male-oriented society. Political, social, cultural and economic systems were designed in such a manner as to place females in an inferior position. Women remained socially, economically and psychologically dependent on men so that they had adjusted themselves to those systems and hardly strived for the equal status with men, even long after the Age of Enlightenment.

Various scholars and thinkers have interpreted the concept of human rights under the influence of culture, faith and political mechanisms to which s/he belonged. Our contemporary understanding of human rights is a product of the twentieth century, but it has been nurtured and nourished in the preceding centuries. Harold J. Laski (1893-1950) defines rights as, "those conditions of social life without which no man can seek, in general, to be at his best."¹ However, Jack Donnelly explains the same as:

"Right" in English, like equivalent words in several other languages, has two central moral and political senses: rectitude and entitlement In the sense of rectitude, we speak of "the right thing to do," of something being right (or wrong). In the narrower sense of entitlement, we typically speak of someone having a right...Rectitude and entitlement both link "right" and "obligation", but in systematically different ways. Claims of rectitude (righteousness) — "That's wrong," "That's not right," "You really ought to do that" — focus on a standard of conduct and draw attention to the duty-bearer's obligation under the standard. Rights claims, by contrast, focus on the right-holder and draw the duty-bearer's attention to the right-holder's special title to enjoy her (sic.) right."²

According to Eileen Barker, "Rights are the external conditions necessary for the greatest possible development of the capacities of the personality."³ T. H. Green (1836-1932) presents the concept in this manner, "Right as power of acting for his power on ends... secured to an individual by the community on the supposition that it contributes to the good of the community."⁴ J. W. Holland tells about rights, "A right is one man's capacity of influencing the acts of others by means of the opinion and the force of society."⁵ MazharUlHaq is of the view, "We may define right as a claim or power of an individual or group of individuals for freedom or opportunity for action considered as fundamental for their well-being and allowed or recognized by the society or the state."⁶ The term 'human rights' has a separate connotation and slightly different

from the term right. Donnelly interprets it in a simple manner, "human rights were literally the rights that one has simply because one is a human-being." ⁷ On the other hand S. K. Kapoor explains human rights in these words:

Broadly speaking, human rights may be regarded as those fundamental and inalienable rights which are essential for life as human being. ... Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to fully develop and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents and our conscience and to satisfy our physical, spiritual and other needs. They are based on mankind's increasing demand for life in which the inherent dignity and worth of each human being will receive respect and protection. ⁸

Donnelly gives further detail about human rights:

Human rights are equal rights: one either is or is not a human being, and therefore, has the same human rights as everyone else (or none at all). They are also inalienable rights: one cannot stop being human, no matter how badly one behaves nor how barbarously one is treated. And they are *universal rights*, in the sense that today, we consider all members of the species homo sapiens "human beings," and thus holders of human rights. ⁹

Similarly, Husayn Salimi comes with a brief definition, "human rights are the manifestation of a concept and a new status which modern man has found for himself." ¹⁰ Meena Anand writes in *Struggle for Human Rights*, "Rights are the necessary conditions for the personal, social, economic, political, mental and moral development of man, but are necessary for the development of society and social values as well." ¹¹

On the basis of certain commonalities in the above mentioned definitions, one can determine why these rights are

important for individuals as well as society. Rights give freedom to a person and that freedom is protected by society and the state. In a state, the law defines the rights of individuals. Rights are not given by the state, actually they are accepted and recognized by the state. The concept of rights changes over time because of newly emerging, collective needs of individuals in a society. Enjoyment, exercise, enforcement, respect and recognition are the five important aspects of the practice of rights. On the bases of perception, utility, origin, nature and practice scholars propose different theories. I will discuss some of them.

NATURAL RIGHTS THEORY

John Locke's theory of Natural Rights significantly influenced a number of philosophers of political thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For him, in the 'State of Nature', man surrenders his sovereignty to state to ensure his Natural Rights. Political thinkers such as Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau (1712-1778) subsequently supported his idea that certain rights self-evidently belonged to human beings. Meena Anand suggests that "John Locke strongly supported the theory of Natural Rights. Among these he counts right to life, liberty and property as the most important."¹² According to this theory, every human being has some basic, natural, inherent, inalienable, sacred and absolute human rights by birth. Moreover, these rights cannot be restricted or taken away by any person or institution. Locke believes that people had been enjoying these rights even before the society or state came into being. Therefore, neither the society, nor the state had given these rights to the people, thus they could not be usurped under any circumstances. Locke's theory inspired many political events like the 'Bills of Rights in England in the seventeenth century and the American and French Revolution in the eighteenth century.

With the dawn of the 19th century, when some new theories were presented the 'Natural Rights theory' could not hold ground. Exponents of 'Theory of Utility' severely criticized the Natural Rights theory. Bentham and Mill, the top exponents of the Theory of Utility, say that the rights are not outside the society but inherent in it. If a person gets rights, it happens because society accepts and gives them to a person, and in the absence of society, the person will

not be able to get his rights. Therefore, priority should be given to the society which provides these rights to a person. Bentham particularly, attacked the 'Natural Rights theory' and described it in these words, "the natural rights are 'nonsense upon stilts' and that natural law is a mere fiction."¹³

INDIVIDUALISTIC THEORY OF RIGHTS

The supporters of 'Individualistic theory' give priority to an individual over society or state. For them, an individual is a basic unit of society, therefore, his interests and importance must not be compromised. They do not agree that the individual's rights can be reduced or withdrawn in the interests of society. In their opinion, happy, contented and satisfied individuals are useful and beneficial for the society and state. So, an individual is the 'end' and society or state is the 'mean'. Thus society or state are just tools to provide rights to individual.¹⁴ While explaining this theory, Haq suggests that:

Rights are those conditions of social life which enable a man to be his best self ... State recognizes or fails to recognize the common good, the rights would remain necessary. The validity of the state is derived from this recognition. The state is known by the rights it maintains. The state exists to safeguard and guarantee the rights. It is in the sense that rights are prior to the state.¹⁵

The Individualistic theory is criticized by the supporters of the 'Social Welfare theory' and the 'Marxist theory' as well. Anand opines "Rights have a social character and are given only to the man living in the society and working in the overall interests of the society. Rights cannot have anti-social nature because no rights can be permitted to the individual at the cost of social well being".¹⁶ The critics say that a person cannot be given unlimited rights because this freedom can be dangerous for the person as well as for society. For instance an individual cannot be allowed to use harmful narcotics because it can undermine his health and usefulness. So, it does not seem appropriate to give a free hand to a person in the

name of rights to damage his health or end his life. It is the responsibility of the state to keep a check on such activities and habits of a person which could be harmful for him. Moreover, if such practices are spread, it can harm overall health and productivity of the society also.

SOCIAL WELFARE THEORY OF RIGHTS

Bentham, Mill and Laski are prominent advocates of the concept of 'Social Welfare'. They argue that a society is the "end" and individuals are the "mean". If, in the interests of society, rights are given to individuals, they can also be withdrawn. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" is the nucleus of the theory of Social Welfare. Every individual has the prime duty to contribute to the society; otherwise, he cannot claim rights from the society.¹⁷

So, if rights are given to the individuals, it is only to extract the best and maximum from them for the benefit of society. Anything good for a society is also good for an individual, and "individual rights are limited by social welfare. Rights are not given to anti-social individuals and rights are always restricted in the interest of the society. Individuals are given rights so that they may contribute to common good".¹⁸

In practice, dictators in the Third World countries, usurp or restrict the rights of individuals in the name of national or state's interests, to establish or prolong their rule. This theory of Social Welfare of rights gives such rulers a cushion to use it in their personal interests. It is not to suggest that we see such phenomenon in the Third World countries. Western countries such as the USA and the UK also reduce fundamental rights to curb terrorism and other threats to the states.

LEGAL THEORY OF RIGHTS

Thinkers such as Ranke, Burgess and Maine support the Legal theory of rights. They give importance to traditions and customs of a society. They argue "that laws are a product of long historical evolutions of a society and are based on traditions, customs and demands... [so] with the change in time and

circumstances rights also change. Rights are the crystallization of customs and traditions... They maintain that as the character of laws was historical so also was the character of rights".¹⁹

In most of the cases, traditions are so strong that people follow them more than their religion and political systems. Traditions have evolutionary process and over time these keep on changing and similarly claims to rights may also change.²⁰ According to Legal Theory of Rights, only with the power of the state the rights of the people can be recognized, respected and ensured. It is the state which creates judiciary and establishes a system to guard rights of the people and check violators. So, the state gives rights to individuals. Karel Vasak, an expert of human rights in the contemporary world, writes in *Human Rights: As a Legal Reality*:

Human rights become a reality in law or how human rights, which have been merely proclaimed, even in solemn form, become established as guaranteed human rights ..., it is important to seek to establish guidelines for a legal system of human rights whereby the individual may really be ensured of his human rights and be able to enjoy them in his daily life.²¹

MARXIST THEORY OF RIGHTS

According to the Marxist theory, an individual can not enjoy complete freedom in the name of rights. He must discharge his responsibilities in exchange for rights. The Marxists emphasize that "Rights are a product of class struggle in particular historical circumstances. These are the achievements of bourgeois revolution and were used by the emerging capitalist class against the feudal privileges and against the absolutist monarchies. The theory holds that the rights have a social character and in order to be real, the conditions of their realization must be provided by society. Each person should contribute to society according to his ability and each should get from the society according to his needs".²²

So, people are treated equally and given opportunities to bridge the gap which exists between haves and have-nots. However, political system is supreme over individuals. So, man is just a mean, and the political system is the end. The followers of the capitalist school of thought criticize the governments in communist countries where according to them, various violations of human rights take place. They are of the view that man should be held supreme as he is the creator of all institutions, including the state and political systems. Though the Marxist theory gives more importance to the social and economic rights, like right to work, social security, education and adequate remuneration yet it ignores the personal and political rights of the people. In this system for example, restrictions are placed on individual on the right of expression, protest, forming a political party, and possessing property. So, people in communist states have limited rights as compared with those in capitalistic democracies.

THEORY OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTS

After rapid industrialization, communications advancement and globalization in the 20th century, the demand for better living standards has enhanced manifold. In the contemporary age, concepts, fashions, sports and approaches have been internationalized. No state can remain aloof from other states for a long period. With a scientific development, some countries possess strategic weapons of mass destruction; therefore, most of the states are concerned with the growing threat of conflicts throughout the world. So as S. L. Bhalla proposes "the increasing interdependence of the modern world economically, strategically, culturally, politically and technologically, has made concern for human rights a major international fact."²³

Contemporary scholarship's understanding of human rights is largely derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1948. The UNDHR defined human rights which placed all people at equal level, without any discrimination, on a higher pedestal, where they could have dignity and worth. The UNDHR treats all people of all nations equally and fairly without any prejudice of race, gender, colour, religion, sect, region, nationality, social background,

language or status. Earlier, the concept of human rights was vague and had different connotations and perceptions. However, the UNDHR was carved out some common and acceptable aspects from different regions, cultures, religions and political ideologies and gave one framework of human rights. A particular political ideology or religion may disagree with its few clauses, but most of the clauses are agreed upon. An overwhelming majority of the members of the UN voted for the UNDHR and later on, ratified it. Subsequently, it became an agreed declaration. It has provided a uniform standard of human rights to all nations and regions, no matter what kind of background, culture and religion they possess. The UNDHR has become a yardstick to measure standards of governance of countries in the contemporary world.

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DYNAMICS OF CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE ERA OF BENAZIR BHUTTO'S FIRST PREMIERSHIP 1988-1990

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***Abstract:** This study focuses the post Zia political developments in context of the role of non-political forces which caused political government's subsequent collapse. The study provides new insights into the civil-military relations during the period and traces the root cause of civil-military imbalance. I argue that prolonged military rule, the introduction of the eighth amendment in the constitution of Pakistan 1973, which was introduced to facilitate, perpetuate and legitimize the role of non-political forces in Pakistan's politics and patronage of the political opposition by the military establishment, have contributed to conflicting civil-military relations during the period. My study also highlights political maneuvering of non-political forces in post-Zia Pakistan, particularly in the period under research. These had enormous bearing on the later political developments. It attempts to expose the political manipulation of non-political forces which severely affected the delivery mechanism of the political institutions in political, economic, and legal domains. By investigating the dynamics of civil-military relations, this research will probe and reveal the political realities of Pakistan, where the political forces found themselves vulnerable before the conspiracies of non-political elements.*

Keywords: Benazir Bhutto, Military, Eighth Amendment, Pakistan People's Party (PPP)

This paper highlights the main contours of civil military relations in Pakistan during 1988-1990. While focusing this aspect it highlights the dominance of non-political forces which subsequently increased the frustration of the civil (political) government and placed it on a collision course as the latter tried to assert its dominance after realizing the paralyzing effects of the deal¹. This

ensued a tussle with subsequently caused downfall of the civilian government in 1990.

CIVIL MILITARY IMBALANCE

This period characterized by civil-military confrontation as both the civilian government and the military establishment failed to develop a smooth working relationship and requisite confidence which was necessary to remove civil-military tensions. These tensions can not be properly contextualized without taking in to account the civil-military imbalance which was the direct fallout or consequence of Eighth amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan², which was introduced by Zia-ul-Haq in 1973 constitution of Pakistan, tilted the balance of power in favour of president in such a manner that virtually reduced the prime minister role as a titular head of the government.³ This also implied that it was president who called the shots. This civil military imbalance explicitly manifested itself towards the last days of Junajo's government. The later through tried to assert him in certain areas yet his government proved helpless before military dominated Zia regime in which Zia occupied both powerful offices of the president as well as the chief of the army staff.⁴ The inception of democratic civilian government after November 16, 1988 elections did not alter the situation dramatically as the place of president was occupied by a representative of the bureaucracy GulamIshaq Khan, who was supposed to play the role of a liaison between military and bureaucracy. He was also assigned with the task of looking after the interests of non-political forces while working with the new civilian dispensation. Though the Eighth amendment had made the position of the non-political forces quite secure yet the coming into power of political forces through elections and the popular support enjoyed by these forces had provided them enough confidence to look for a more assertive role for themselves. Moreover the very nature of parliamentary politics further demanded a more assertive role of theses forces even for the sake of their own survival.

Thus the system in which a civilian government and the military were going to interact or evolve a working relationship had inbuilt tendencies to engender civil-military tensions. The subsequent events later revealed that these inherent contradictions

created by the Eighth Amendment soon put the both the civilian government and military on a collision course despite the efforts made by the civilian government to avoid the confrontation with the establishment.

BENAZIR'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TOWARDS MILITARY

Benazir right from the very outset followed a very cautious approach towards military which found explicit manifestation in the following instances. First manifestation of the cautious approach followed by Benazir was to the signing of deal with military. She candidly admitted that "we must proceed extremely carefully if civilian politician are to make a success of democracy" she further conceded that "we can not pretend to be living in a perfect world. We have to cope with the fact that Zia has politicized a large part of the army."⁵ This attitude towards the army further found its manifestations in her response to a question that "whether her government would try to cut the defense budget?" She said "not unless we want army to takeover again."⁶

Therefore it should not be surprising to find out that she avoided any direct confrontation with the establishment. According to Iqbal Akhund (Benazir Bhutto's National Security and Foreign Affairs' Advisor) "she deliberately adopted a low key approach towards different sensitive issues like the restoration of constitution of 1973 in its original form after repealing the different amendments by the previous military government and cut down in defense budget after stabilizing relationship with India."⁷

MILITARY'S WARINESS TOWARDS PPP

On one hand the civilian government was following a cautious policy towards military mainly on account of the fact that it was supremely aware of latter's well entrenched position in Pakistan's state system. On the other hand military distrusted the role of PPP as it considered the former a threat to its vested interests due to the PPP's mass mobilizing potential. Stephen P. Cohen has very succinctly epitomized whole this scenario in these words "Its (military) people doubted her professional competence, were

intensely suspicious of her since she was not part of the Establishment.”⁸ General Arif mentioned that, “In 1988, Ms Benazir Bhutto became not only the first female prime minister of Pakistan, but also the youngest and inexperienced. She proved herself to be disaster for the country.” He further contributed in the same place, the views of the President regarding Benazir Bhutto, “President GhulamIshaq Khan told me in those days, *MohtarmabahutJhoothboltihain*’ (The [Prime Minister] is a big liar).”⁹ This wariness of military towards PPP also finds reflection in ISI’s (then) Lt. General Hamid Gul’s views with Benazir’s National Security Advisor IqbalAkhund. While explicating his theory of national policy Hamid Gul contained that:

“Pakistan had again a political government running the country....but a democratic government by its very nature tended to compromise and political compromise might some time run counter to the national interests.”¹⁰

Hamid Gul also favored some checks on the civilian government so as to safeguard the national interests. He proposed that:

“There must be some means of defining and promoting the national interests. Some means of rising above political partisanship and compromise on issues of high policy such as Afghanistan, Kashmir or relations with India.”¹¹

This thinking was not particular to General Hamid Gul rather this distrust towards civilian government was also shared by C-in-C General MirzaAslam Beg, who even proposed National Security Committee.¹² IqbalAkhund also mentions General AslamBeg’s desire for “strategic consensus” on foreign policy particularly in form of developing ties with Iran and so as to correct the balance of power equation. After contesting the basic premises of such thesis, IqbalAkhund infers that the:

“Strategic consensus seemed to me to have a mere immediate purpose. Which was to keep a handle on Benazir’s foreign policy in particular with regard to Afghanistan and India.”¹³

CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT’S EFFORTS TO ASSERT THE CIVILIAN SUPREMACY

Herald’s journalist Arif Hussain terms this approach of PPP’s government as “the grand compromise”¹⁴ Later PPP had to pay a heavy price for this compromise in terms of its political popularity. Moreover it tightened the hands of the civilian government. This lack of maneuvering space further affected the delivery mechanism of the democratic government.

Realizing this predicament the government became frustrated and in order to get over this sense of frustration it tried to assert civilian supremacy by taking some crucial decisions, which included:

- i. In February 1989 Benazir appointed a committee to review the role and relationship of intelligence agencies in the democratic establishment.¹⁵
- ii. Its efforts to establish its control over the operation of ISI.¹⁶ For this purpose Benazir’s government replaced the Director General ISI Major General Hamid Gul by her own nominee Lt. General (Rtd) Shams-ur-Rehman Kallu, who was supposed to have a soft corner for PPP. Benazir government took this decision without the consent of the President and the Chief of the Army Staff. He was appointed as the corp. commander of Multan. Though apparently it appeared as a routine promotion but the real motive was to “get him out of the way in to some post where he would not have his fingers in the political pie.”¹⁷ The Prime Minister was so cautious that she hesitated to take this decision for six months, despite the advice of close advisor. She even threw a farewell dinner so as to convey that her government had no “hard feelings towards him”¹⁸

- iii. She invited Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to fourth SAARC summit which was to be held in Islamabad. Most of the people termed it a "new phase in the relations between the two countries"¹⁹ In-fact it was the first visit of any Indian PM after Jawaharlal Nehru, who visited Pakistan in 1960.²⁰
- iv. Government also tried to assert itself vis-à-vis military through its certain measures so as to bring the later in to civilian control. The Sarohi affair (which will be explained in the next section of this paper) may also be described or cited its specific example as the PM tried to challenge presidential authority regarding the appointments and tenure of services chiefs, which he enjoyed through 8th amendment. Similarly, Benazir's effort to promote Alam Jan Mehsud as Deputy Chief of Army Staff may further be described as the part of continuation of the same strategy.

VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF CIVIL-MILITARY CONFRONTATION

The military's bid of containment of civilian government and the later's efforts to find for maneuvering space in the political system led to a behind the scene confrontation, which made itself manifest in various occurrences. For instance the transfer of General Hamid Gul to Corps Commander Multan never went well among the military circles. The PM had acted against the advice of COAS. There were two apparent reasons for his removal.

- i. His role in formation of IJI so as to prevent a PPP clean sweep in General Elections of November 1988.

His role in Afghanistan where he pursued an independent agenda. The perusal of this policy also clashed with US agenda in Afghanistan and which turned out to be "an irritant" in Pak-US relations. This factor encouraged Benazir to take this step. It goes without saying that the military did not take long to express its displeasure over this development. While reacting promptly, the GHQ shifted almost the

political tasks from the ISI to the Military Intelligence (M.I).²¹ According to Maleeha Lodhi the Military termed it "interference in to its affairs" as well as "violation of agreements". Saeed Shafqat considers appointment of Retired Lt. General Shams-ur-Rehman Kallu to the post of Director General ISI, instead of serving officer, as "lack of understanding to military organization" of Benazir's government.²²

Another factor which further widened the rift between the civilian government and non-political forces was Sarohi Affair, which pitted two powerful elements of Troika against the civilian government. This issue which arose on the interpretation of the article 243 (c) of the constitution, turned out to be major arena of President-Prime Minister tussle in which the military establishment put its weight in the presidential camp thus leaving the civilian government high and dry. As the story goes Federal Law Minister Iftikhar Gillani revealed on August 6, that the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Admiral Iftikhar Ahmad Sarohi was going to be retired on August 14. The very next day the President House denied it categorically. The President insisted that Admiral Sarohi would not be removed from his office up to November 1991 as per article 243 (c) of the amended constitution of 1973. Benazir government stuck to its stance as it had its own point of view. It asserted that it was the discretion of the Prime Minister to appoint and remove the JCSC. It maintained that article 243 (c) was related to the appointment of the Armed Force not to the JCSC. The Attorney General Yahya Bukhtiar also took the side of Benazir's government. Later the government also tried to downplay this impression that there was only confrontation with the President and this issue would be resolved according to the proposal of Ministry of Defense. But the government failed to get the nod of the defense secretary, Syed Ijlal Haider Zaidi.²³

This issue, basically, revolved around the question of authority. The civilian government tried to use this so as to get authority over the appointments of army chiefs. Saeed Shafqat while dilating upon the fallouts of this affair maintains that:

“The issue was constitutional: who had the authority, the President or the Prime Minister, to appoint the Chief of the Services and the Chairman Joint Chief of the Staff Committee (JCSC)? Admiral Sirohi was to retire as chairman in November 1991 upon completion of his three years term. The President took the position that the constitution, as amended under General Zia in 1985, give him the right under article 243 (c) to appoint in his discretion, the Chairman, Joint Chief of the Staff Committee and the three services chiefs. The Prime Minister asserted her authority by referring to the executive order of Prime Minister Z.A Bhutto in the 1970’s, fixing the three years tenure of services chiefs but not of the JCSC. Relying on the executive order and the army act, Benazir Bhutto claimed that she had the power to retire the Chairman of the JCSC because the term of that office was not fixed. The argument acquired the overtones of a constitutional crisis, but in view of the eighth amendment, these powers were held by the President and the Prime Minister had to retreat from her position... The Sirohi affair tarnished Benazir Bhutto’s image as a leader as it indicated that she asserted her authority without sufficient understanding of the working and organization of the military.”²⁴

Another manifestation of the civil-military confrontation was Benazir’s government attempt to influence the promotion criteria of the Army Selection Board regarding the extension of Alam Jan Mehsued, who was serving as corps commander of Lahore and his appointment as Deputy Chief of Army Staff. The military top brass while resisting this move appointed Lt. General Ashraf Janjua to the post.²⁵

Prior to this incident the relations of the military and the civilian government had already become strained on the certain affairs of Sindh which according to Brian Cloughley (expert in political and military affairs and Australian defence attaché in

Islamabad 1988-1994) had "developed into civil war" and political government of Benazir Bhutto looked completely helpless "because of political complications".²⁶ It included military's demand to get powers under article 247 (Related to the administration of Tribal Areas) so as to negotiate with law and order situation in Sind and PaccaQilla incident in Hyderabad, whereas the civilian government was insisting that this operation should be carried out under article 145, according to which "a provincial government, with the consent of the federal government, could call upon the armed forces for assistance in meeting a threat to law and order"²⁷

On the other hand the military was insisting that it should be given authority as it demanded absolute free hand for law enforcement agencies. For instance this article stipulates that "if military is called for help in any part of the country under this article in that eventuality the High Courts would cease to have jurisdiction in that region for as long as the military is exercising authority."²⁸ Iqbal Akhund describes it as a sort of martial law.²⁹ This stance of the military and the government refused to yield to this demand became an apple of discord between the civilian government and the military.

Another issue which further demonstrated increasing gulf between the civilian government and the military was operation PaccaQilla in Hyderabad. The operation resulted in to killing of more than sixty people.³⁰ The manner in which military reacted over this clearly provided the glimpse in to the further course of civil military relations. The civilian government decided to launch operation paccaqilla in May 1990 in the wake of deteriorating law and order situation. According to the government PaccaQilla had become a bastion of militants belonging to MQM. There were reports that a large cache of weapons of various kinds was contained by the militants there. When police launched a crackdown and called militants to surrender, the militants responded by sending a procession of women and children carrying the Quran on their heads. The police firing on the mob led to certain casualties which led to the further deterioration of the situation. This provided further pretext to military to intervene. Interestingly military acted independently without any consent and approval of the civilian

government. The military in the following manner trespassed to its limits.

- i. The military intervention was not in the aid of the civil power and at the request of civilian authorities as stipulated in the constitution but on its own accord in opposition to the provincial governments. This was later admitted by COAS General Mirza Aslam Beg. "I have sent troops in to Sindh without a request from the government."³¹
- ii. At the time of operation, COAS had just returned from his official visit to Bangladesh. The Prime Minister was visiting Karachi; General Beg did not bother to stop Karachi and directly went to Hyderabad.
- iii. In this operation the military entirely followed its own agenda and its intervention caused embarrassment for police as well as Sindh's provincial government. For instance this intervention emboldened the processionists and they "received the troops with joy and acclaim and the police withdrew amidst jeers and insults"³² The General Aslam Beg was given a "hero's welcome with slogans to impose Martial Law and to remove Benazir Bhutto."³³ The wall chacking in the vicinity of that area carried a symbolic message for military intervention "*Jab mitjaiegehalq-i-Khuda to insafkarogae*" (You will dispense justice only when the people would be wiped out). The crowd also raised the slogans "*Al-madad Al-madad, Pak Fauj Al-madad*" (Pak army help us) and "*Martial law lagao, Hamainbachao*" (Impose martial law and save us).³⁴
- iv. Iqbal Akhund cites the point of view of the non-Sindhi Chief Secretary of Sind regarding Pacca Qilla operation, which placed the onus on MQM and "questioned the justification and propriety of the role played by the army."³⁵ He was of the view that the "troops (were) not needed at the Pacca Qilla (and) the police had the situation in hand by the time they arrived; they ought instead to have gone where they were most urgently needed, the suburbs of Latifabad where an armed MQM crowd had gathered and was threatening the local residents."³⁶

This operation of PaccaQilla not only brought in to focus the chequered state of civil-military relations, the trust deficit but also highlighted military's pronounced tilt towards Muhajirs.³⁷ It created an impression that the army was not trusted by the Sindhis. Benazir also conveyed Sindhi's perception of the matter to General Beg.³⁸ General Beg replied that "we are not perfect, we can also make mistakes but the army is a national institution."³⁹

THE MILITARY'S RESPONSE

The military took these moves by the civilian government as a direct threat to its institutional interests. This was evident from the very nature and direction of its response on these issues. For instance, according to Maleeha Lodhi, GHQ while reacting sharply over the appointment of Major General (Retd) Shams-ur-Rahman Kallu to the top position in ISI shifted all the important political tasks assigned to ISI to the Military Intelligence (M.I).⁴⁰ Similarly from Sarohi affair it took the impression that "Benazir Bhutto was under some hawkish elements"⁴¹ The military official like Major General Imtiaz Ahmad perceived that "after the dismissal of Admiral Sarohi, she would be able to dismiss any chief."⁴²

Similarly, the PaccaQilla tragedy, the confrontation between the government and the military virtually reached at the point of no return. It began to perceive that "by creating one conflict after another the PPP government was not ready to accept any check on its authority."⁴³ The Alam Jan Mehsud affair proved to be the last straw, as the military viewed it as "direct interference"⁴⁴ in the military affairs. Military took it as an attempt of "dividing the army".⁴⁵ Cloughley describes the situation as,

"PPP had gone too far, in the eyes of the President and his Chief of the Army Staff...the PPP government had been elected by the people and had a mandate that had not expired. What had expired was the patience of the President and of the Chief of the Army Staff, neither of whom was prepared to have their powers reduced or even questioned."⁴⁶

Its aversion to this move is testified by the fact that in the corps commanders meeting in July 1990, the military establishment decided to dismiss the government and sent this message to the President.

CONCLUSION

Sudden death of General Zia-ul-Haq provided the space for the entry of political forces in the political system. This incident heralded new changes in Pakistan's political structure as well as ensued to a new phase of civil-military tussle. The non-political forces had become so well entrenched in Pakistan's power structure that they had developed their stakes/vested interests in the political system. These stakes put them on the path of confrontation with the political forces. After the general elections of November 1988 the establishment took almost a month to transfer power to the PPP at the centre and used this period for hard bargaining for its interests. This made it manifest in form of a deal which not only limited maneuvering space for political forces within the system but also ensured the protection of the vested interests of the non-political forces. It also ensured the dominance of military over the important policies. The establishment left the PPP with two choices i.e either to accept these conditions; pursue the policy of co-existence with pro-active military or to stay out of power and resort towards the policy of direct confrontation through street power. PPP leadership preferred the first option. But the perusal of this first option could not prevent the subsequent confrontation between the establishment and the civilian forces. This confrontation subsequently led to the dismissal of Benazir Bhutto's government. Though the civilian government may not be absolved of its own responsibility in this regards yet the dismissal of Benazir governments at once mere brought to fore the inherent tensions in the civil-military relations in Pakistan. This study also underscores the fact that political forces were never provided sufficient maneuvering space in the political system therefore they always vied for such space in political system. Therefore they are left with no other alternative but to go for deals and politics of compromises and this politics of compromises not only affected the governance and delivery mechanism of the system but also allowed the non-political forces to project the political

forces as inefficient. This moved them desperate to assert their civilian supremacy so as to improve the delivery mechanism of the system more efficient. This put them on the collision course which eventually led to the downfall of the civilian government. This may be described as the generalized cruse of civil-military relations during this eventful period of Pakistan's political history which constituted the area of research study.

Endnotes

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- ²<http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/amendments/8amendment.html>
- ³Hasan Askari Rizvi, 'Civil-Military Relations in Contemporary Pakistan', *Survival*, vol. 40, No. 2, Summer 1988, PP. 96-113, see also Omar Noman, *Pakistan: Political and Economic History Since 1947* (London, Kegan Paul Int. Ltd, 1990), p. 221-22 and Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia* (Lahore, Sang-i-Meel Publication, 2002) p. 109
- ⁴Omar Noman, *Pakistan: Political and Economic History Since 1947*, p. 118
- ⁵Iqbal Akhund, *Trial and Error: The Advent and Eclipse of Benazir Bhutto* (Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2000) p. 129
- ⁶Ibid
- ⁷Ibid, p. 21
- ⁸Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Lahore, Vanguard Books, 2005) p. 146 see also for similar Views Mushahid Hussain, *Pakistan: Problems of Governance* (Lahore, Vanguard Books, 1993) p. 139-143 and Andrew Vilder, *The Pakistani Voter: Electoral Politics and Voting Behaviour in the Punjab* (Karach, Oxford University Press, 1999)
- ⁹General K. M. Arif, *Khaki Shadows: Pakistan 1947-1997* (Karachi, OUP, 2006), p.364
- ¹⁰Iqbal Akhund, *Trial and Error*, p. 137-39
- ¹¹Ibid
- ¹²Ibid, p. 122-23 & 137-35
- ¹³Ibid
- ¹⁴Arif Hussain, 'The Grand Compromise' *Herald*, May 1989, p. 32-34
- ¹⁵This committee established under the headship of former Air Chief Marshal Zulfiqar Ali Khan with the sole objective to reform the Intelligence Agencies. The recommendations of this committee were not made public but it consider by the military establishment direct intervention in its professional domain.
- ¹⁶Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: From Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto to Benazir Bhutto* (Colorado USA, Westview Press, 1997) P. 228

- ¹⁷ Iqbal Akhund, *Trial and Error*, p. 139 See also, Naseem Zahra, 'Shuffling the Deck' *Herald*, June 1989, p. 27 and Abbas Nasir, 'The New Deal' *Herald*, April 1990, p. 30 and Azhar Sohail, *SazishoonKaDor*, p. 100-102
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- ¹⁹ Zahid Hussain, 'Moot Points' *Herald*, January 1989, p. 49
- ²⁰ Ibid
- ²¹ Maleeha Lodhi, *Pakistan's Encounter with Democracy* (Lahore, Vanguard Publishers, 1994) p. 140
- ²² Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan*, p. 228
- ²³ Azhar Sohail, *SazishoonKaDor* (Lahore, Feroz Sons Pvt. Ltd, 1990), Urdu, p. 120-22
- ²⁴ Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan*, p. 229
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- ²⁶ Brian Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army: War and Insurrections* (Karachi, OUP, 2000) p. 283
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- ²⁸ Ibid
- ²⁹ Ibid
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- ³¹ Iqbal Akhund, *Trial and Error*, p. 141-45
- ³² Ibid
- ³³ Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan*, p. 229-30
- ³⁴ Zaffar Abbas, 'Massacre in Sind' *Herald*, p. 35-37
- ³⁵ Iqbal Akhund, *Trial and Error*, p. 141-45
- ³⁶ Ibid
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- ⁴¹ Abbas Nasir, 'The New Deal' *Herald*, April 1990, p. 31
- ⁴² Azhar Sohail, *SazishoonKaDor*, p. 123
- ⁴³ Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan*, p. 230-31
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PRESS COVERAGE OF STUDENT ISSUES

Dr. Taimur-Ul-Hassan

Abstract: The paper examines the role of press in Pakistan in giving voice to students. Liberal theorists have argued that an independent press can play a vital role in the democratization of a country and evolution of its civil society, of which student organizations is a part. From the political perspective, the press is supposed to act as a public sphere for a free exchange of ideas in order to promote democracy and pluralism. In Pakistan, this role seems to have been compromised. Agenda setting research in mass media in recent years has examined the relationship between media priorities and audience priorities in news topics. The most popular subjects are how the media agenda is set and whether the media follow the agenda. Pakistan press's performance in respect of raising the issues of students needs to be critically evaluated using these parameters. The 1984 ban on student unions in General ZiaulHaq's regime provides an opportunity to weigh the press's performance in this regard. The paper analyzes the press coverage of the ban on student unions to find how the press performed at that critical hour.

Key Words: Student unions, violence, campus, democracy, press, awareness, civil society

Introduction

Press can play a vital role in strengthening democracy and giving voice to all sections of society, including students. Liberal theorists from Milton through Locke to John Stuart Mill have argued that a free and independent press can play a vital role in the democratization of a country.¹ From the national development perspective, mass media researchers like Wilbur Schramm and Daniel Lerner have argued in favor of media's role in national development.² and from the political communication perspective, the media is supposed to provide a public sphere for a free exchange of ideas in order to promote democracy.³

Since 15th century, media has gradually led to the democratization of society.⁴ Development of modern democracy is largely because of the press's role in informing, educating and building the public opinion in favor of the attributes of a democratic culture. The mass circulation newspapers in the mid 1800s became the single source of daily dialogue about political, cultural and social studies.⁵ This enhanced the power of the press in society, as it became a site for battles for the control of society.⁶ It can be understood in this context that for the press of country has to function in such a way as to strengthen democracy which requires providing freedom to it. And this freedom is only available in a democratic society. "Press freedom provides the oxygen in a climate of a healthy democracy."⁷

This role of the press is vital in Pakistan. The Pakistan Movement was based on the Quaid -i-Azam's political and constitutional efforts and was supported by the Muslim press. In the middle 40s, Dawn, Morning News, Nawa-i-Waqt and other newspapers played a notable role the Pakistan Movement.⁸ It was therefore not wrong to hope that the post-independence press in Pakistan would help strengthen democracy and raise the cause of all sections, including students, in the country. It was expected that rather than adopting an agenda following role under pressure from the country's authoritarian setups, it would promote an agenda based on its values of civil society. The press and democracy are intertwined and as such it is possible to have a free press and good responsive and democratic government at the same time.⁹ But it is also a truism that the press has to wage struggle to earn its freedom. Historically, at the world level, the winning of press freedom is attributed partly to a heroic struggle against the state.¹⁰ It is irrefutable that where press faces various pressures, its role in promoting democracy and providing a platform to all sections of society is compromised.

In media theories, the agenda setting theory proposes that the public agenda-or what kinds of things people discuss, think, and worry about. 1. Public opinion is powerfully shaped and directed by what the news media choose to publicize (Larson, 1994). This means that if the news media decides to give the most of time and space to an issue, it will become the most important item on the

audience's agenda. Agenda setting research examines the relationship between the media priorities and audience priorities in the relative importance of news topics. In recent years the most popular subjects in agenda-settings research are (1) how the media agenda is set and whether the media follow the agenda (2) how the media choose to portray the issues they cover.¹¹ Pakistan press's performance in respect of raising the issues of students needs to be critically evaluated. The 1984 ban on student unions in General ZiaulHaq's regime provides an opportunity to weigh the press's performance in this regard. But it would be fit to have a historical view of the students' movement in Pakistan.

STUDENT MOVEMENT

Students worked side by side with the political leadership during the Pakistan movement. Students of Alighrah and then Muslim Student Federation played a vital role in advancing the cause of freedom. So it can be said students' power can be made constructive if they are given a proper guideline or if they work under an honest leadership. In democracy, student unions provide a platform for preparing future political leaderships. Their role, therefore, is of immense value in respect of promotion of democracy. Student unions form a part of civil society, which means protecting their right to form bodies to articulate their interests and demands is crucial for promoting civil society.

Going back into history, in Indian sub-continent, all Indian Student Federation and all India Muslim Student Federation came into being in 1936 and 1937, respectively. Thus student organized for the first time at the national level in sub-continent in the 1930s. But the currents of student activity could be found earlier. During the partition of Bengal, Maulvi Tameezud Din Khan, who later became speaker of Pakistan's first constituent assembly, was a student of high school. He participated in the movement against the partition of Bengal.¹²

In fact Bengal became the center of students' political awareness and they participated in the movement started by the political parties. Students in East Bengal participated in the

movement to boycott British goods launched by All India Congress.¹³

On the other hand, the first student protest in Punjab took place in 1905 when students of King Edward Medical College resorted to a strike to protest against the discriminatory attitude of the British administration of the college.¹⁴ In 1914, when the ulema declared that jihad had become mandatory for the Muslim of the India protect the Khilafat-i-Osmania, some students of Punjab were among those who left India and reached Kabul to meet Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi.¹⁵

In 1919 students of Punjab rose against Rowlatt Act, which empowered the government to detain people and gag newspaper to counter the current of freedom pervading in India.¹⁶ When the police opened fire in Lahore on April 11 to break rallies, students also received shots.¹⁷ In 1926 Bahgat Singh formed 'Nuajawan Bharat Sabha' in Lahore, which was joined by school and college students.¹⁸

All India Student Federation increased its influences by taking part in the struggle for restoration of problem of students, forming public opinion against operation in colonized states and mobilizing female students. In 1940, it set up a women student council committee, which held an all India convention of women students.¹⁹

On the other hand, Muslim Student Federation played a vital role in carrying Muslim League's message to Muslim as well as exposing the policies of Congress.²⁰ Muslim Women Student Federation was set up by Shaista Ikramullah in 1942. After independence, a student movement started in East Pakistan and Sindh. In November 1947, in Karachi, an educational conference was held to streamline the country's educational system along Islamic line. When the issue of national language cropped up, the Bengalis refused to accept Urdu as national language. Combined with other event the language contriving became a major factor in ushering currents of East Pakistan's separation. Students of Dhaka set up an action committee under youth league.²¹

In 1951 many students were killed when the police opened fire on them. Ultimately, this led to the foundation of Bangladesh. In

West Pakistan Karachi became the hotbed of student activities. Most active students were those who were from the migrant community who had to face many social and economic problems. In early 1953 these communities protested for their demands, but the authorities instead of negotiating with them dealt with them harshly. Consequently, a clash occurred between the police and the students in which seven students were killed. The incident disappointed the student community, as it found that politicians regarded students as a threat to their political interests. In Pakistan, students during the Cold War were divided into two camps - the capitalist and the socialist, or the rightist and the leftist. The ruling parties of Pakistan at that time sided with the Western bloc and believers of the leftist ideology became their opponents.

In the tenure of Field Marshal Ayub Khan the student movement radicalized. Even when the first martial law silenced the political parties and opposition students continued with their protest against the military rule. Ayub Khan in order to control such protests used state power. In 1960 an educational policy was announced, wherein the period of bachelor's degree was expended to three years. This policy also gave authority to the class teacher or the external to give twenty-five marks out of hundred in the annual examination to the students on the basis of their performance. The key purpose of this policy was to control students. Universities were authorized to cancel the degrees of politically activated students. Reaction from students was intense. In reaction, the government expelled nine Karachi-based student leaders. These student leaders received a warm welcome in Hyderabad by their fellow students and from there this movement spread all over Pakistan. The government launched a crackdown, and in the history of the country it was the first time when the police entered the premises of educational institutions without taking any permission from the head of those institutions. They used force and raided the hostels to arrest the student leaders. The government did not rely on that and came down hard on the student unions by putting a ban on them.

It is an established fact that in a democracy, the process of union elections trains students along democratic traditions and extracurricular activities give them a chance to polish their talent. Therefore, with the ban on student unions student activities and life

at campuses became dormant. In order to weaken students' strength the government decided to build university campuses away from the city while having the intention to disconnect the support of masses of the city which students had. Students were forced to engage in activities within the university premises. The government also employed secret agencies to spy on students. Students and teachers were deployed to report upon those students who were involved in 'politics'. On the basis of evidences of anti-state it became impossible for students to get a job in the government or private sector after completing their education. Although Field Marshal Ayub Khan did his best to depoliticize students, the fact is that the resignation of the Field Marshal was the outcome of such endless efforts of student leaders.

Later on, a drastic change occurred in students' role, as successive governments used them as their tools to meet their desired goals. Jamaat-i-Islami patronized Islami Jamiat-i-Tulaba (IJT), Pakistan People's Party formed the People's Students Federation (PSF) and the Muslim League formed Muslim Students Federation (MSF). Religious and nationalist parties like Awami National Party formed their own student wings. Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) – later Muttahida Qaumi Movement – formed its students wing named as Mohajir Student Federation. Difference in ideology led to clashes. Eager to de-politicize society, a la Field Marshal Ayub Khan, in 1984, the regime of General Ziaul Haq banned student unions using the alibi of their being violent. During General Ziaul's regime, student unions were turned into armed bodies and campuses were converted into killing fields under a well thought out plan. Like every dictator, Ziaul Haq was afraid of the student power as they had played a vital role in toppling Ayub Khan. So he did not want them to join a democracy struggle. The General, however, promoted a section of students. There were clashes among students during his tenure which cost many precious lives. Ziaul Haq also adopted a policy of divide and rule and did not rely on a single union. Resultantly, the student unions fought with one another instead of fighting against the dictatorship.

The issue of the ban on the student unions in 1984 is crucial in that it suppressed their voice and development as a

platform for future leaderships, substantiated by the fact that Pakistan's many present leaders have come from student unions. From the point of view of civil society and democracy, it is untenable to impose a ban on them.

The researcher, therefore, saw the files of the two leading Urdu dailies, Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt from the day the ban was imposed and followed it for a month to find how these newspapers took up the issue.

MEDIA AND STUDENT UNIONS

In the case of the ban on student unions, for 'supportive coverage, the researcher looked for themes like 'students unions are essential for democracy', 'student unions need to be promoted, 'student unions are part of civil society', 'banning unions is harmful for political process' and 'student unions are not solely responsible for violence'; for 'non-supportive', the researcher has looked for 'student unions have ruined campus environment', 'ban on student unions to end violence', 'student unions have harmed academic climate' and other charges leveled by ZiaulHaq's regime in press statements, articles and editorials.

The researcher saw the files of Nawa-i-Waqt and Jang, Lahore, for their coverage of the ban on student unions for one month each to find how they had taken up the issue, and to know whether they adopted the government's logic of students unions being a source of disruption in universities or took up the issue from the perspective of student bodies being an essential ingredient of civil society and democracy. After following the stories, reports and comments on the ban on student unions in these newspapers for 30 days consecutively, the researcher explored the files of Nawa-i-Waqt and Jang for the next two months and found that the issue had steeply gone down in priority of the newspapers.

In all from February 9, 1984 to February 28, 1984, 47 stories were found in these newspapers, out of which 38 were non supportive of student unions and only 9 supportive. Out of 38 non supportive, 10 were statements issued against student unions, describing them violent and defending General ZiaulHaq's imposition of ban on the student unions and reasons he cited for

taking that decision. Stories many related to the operation against student leaders and workers and the protest by the students, focusing on the trouble they created for the people. Thereby, the students being violent theme was projected. Statements formed 38 percent of the non supportive matter published in the newspapers.

The ban on student unions was splashed in daily Nawa-i-Waqt on February 9, 1984, in six columns. The news was released by the APP, telling that Punjab's governor and Zone A Martial Law Administrator Ghulam Jilani Khan through a martial law order number 1371 had banned all student unions in the Punjab. The rest of the news told about the freezing of union funds and accounts and sealing of offices. The newspaper did not take any position against the ban arguing against it on the basis of its being imprudent as it aimed at de-politicizing the youth. So it was non supportive. Youth associations form part of civil society, of which student bodies constitute an important part as they contribute towards evolving future leadership, so essential for democracy.

The February 10 issue carried usual reactions mostly by the student leaders. The researcher regards them supportive. In one of the statements, Islami Jamiat i Tulba (IJT) leader Amirul Azeem, addressing a joint press conference with other student representatives, told a questioner that after 'toppling democratic institutions' the government was now trying to impose its 'handmaiden bodies' on campuses. He insisted that student unions were only concerned about the problems of students. Anjuman-Tulbai-Islam's Muhammad Anwar Mustafa in his statement said that by taking this action, the government had 'usurped the fundamental rights of students' and had blocked the way to harnessing of their potential. Muslim Student Federation's Saad Rafiq said in a statement that student should be allowed to conduct productive, useful activities. Movement for Restoration of Democracy's Malik Qasim too said that student unions are essential for 'promoting the democratic process' in the country.

Nawa-i-Waqt yet failed to take a solid stance on this issue, preferring to indulge in routine coverage of the issue as it unfolded. The February 11 issue carried yet another streamer saying that student unions had been banned in Sindh too. Though military

governments do not bother about public opinions or positions adopted by the press through its editorials or general orientation of its coverage towards dealing with the issue within the framework of its impact on society and polity as a whole, Nawa-i-Waqt failed to raise a strong voice. It was non supportive.

Emboldened by the press's general silence, the military government went ahead with clamping another ban this time on the student unions in Sindh. The news released by APP told of Sindh's Governor and Zone C Martial Law Administrator's order number 227 which imposed a ban on student unions as well as a freeze on their accounts and sealing of their offices. In the meantime, Nawa-i-Waqt carried the routine statements of condemnation on February 11, this time with less coverage as the reaction text was carried in two columns. If anything, APP was used to tell the readers about expulsion of students under Martial Law Order 1371 from four colleges, three in Lahore, one in Shiekhupura. A double column story in the same issue told about students' boycott of classes. And APP chipped in with a news item about a 'clash between two groups' in Engineering University from whom illegal arms were recovered.

So, a pattern was formed in Nawa-i-Waqt featuring routine statements to and for, students reaction followed by actions against students allegedly involved in 'illegal activities' rather than questioning the validity of the student union move in the first place and arguing on the basis of its effect on democracy and overall context of civil society, as well as definitions of illegal activities. It was non supportive.

The February 12 issue of the said newspaper carried single columns telling about expulsions of students and demonstration. A Faisalabad datelined story told about expulsion of nine students for one year. A Lahore news story told about expulsion of 19 students from different colleges. A news item from Sheikhupura related to a student demonstration, and the headline told about the injury caused to a woman by student stone pelting, indicating the 'violence' enacted by the protesting students.

The issued receded into the inside pages as the February 13 issue of carried stories about students protest on city pages in double

column under Lahore deadline. In a story headlined, 'Students' protest continued for third day against the ban on unions', it was reported after the incidents of the protest against the ban that overall the situation in the colleges remained normal and many students refused to join the protesting students.

And the same day the newspaper carried a statement by a vice president of Punjab Professors Association (Nationalized Colleges) in which he lauded the step of the ban taken by the president. The story was in double columns, which given that it was merely a rhetorical statement did not merit that much space, at most it merited a single column, but since it was meant to nullify the reaction by the students and support the president's much-awaited step to stop the evolution of student leaderships and associations, it had to be fix somewhere in double column. It was non supportive.

The next day February 14 issue of Nawa-i-Waqt carried similar stories relating to student protests and also the reduction in the intensity, with the administration taking control of the situation. A double column story pertained to students' protests, with emphasis on the 'inconveniences' they caused to city life, especially traffic, and the incidents of students stone pelting which cause injuries to the police, and resulted in the arrest of 20 students. A single column story told about the sending to jail of 8 students of Government Sheikhpura, tinged with the report that the situation had been brought under control.

So, till February 14, no comment or survey or airing of other views suggesting the importance of having student bodies as a prerequisite of civil society and by its extension democracy could be seen on this newspaper, which did and continue to have a reasonably big and discerning educated readership, who could have an impact on the striving for promoting and harnessing Pakistan's yet not fully recognized civil society.

The same lackluster and issueless coverage of the ban on student union continued and on February 15, a double column with a three column headline told readers that the martial law administrator and chancellor University of the Punjab had expelled seven student leaders belonging to the banned student union and imposed a ban on the entry in the university of three other students.

And as if to make sure that along with these steps, government statements must also appear, a double column story, with a three column headline, and of course released by APP, told readers about an interview in which the federal education minister was quoted as 'recounting the incidents of violence' during the days when the student unions were functioning. The minister also talked about setting up student societies in each department. This interview deserved comments as it at least touched the point of providing students platforms to conduct their activities; no such comment was made by the newspaper.

The coverage continued to be mostly confined to inside pages. The same day issue carried two more stories on the city pages. One published in double column related to the students' 'violent protest' and the other a clash between the protesting students and the police in front of Punjab secretariat: all non-supportive.

On February 16, Nawa-i-Waqt carried a special interview of Maulana Kausar Niazai, the chief of defunct Progressive People's Party and former information minister. The interview conducted in Aawan-i-Waqt by Rafiq Dogar primarily contained Maulana Kausar Niazai's tirade against his former party, the PPP. In this interview the maulana however stated that the ban on student unions was an unwise step by the government. This was a rare dissenting view that was carried by Nawa-i-Waqt, but that too was only a part of an interview whose focus was on the PPP's failures rather than taking up the prevailing issue of ban on student unions.

A single column story on the same page told of 8 more student arrests. No visible question was raised as to the spree of arrests and expulsions by the said newspaper, preferring to keep silence before the tyranny of a martial government; rather it chose to go by the rule of book set by the authoritarian government.

If anything, Nawa-i-Waqt carried a three column headlined story on the same day February 16 (source: press release), showing Punjab's Education Minister ChGhafoor Ahmad talking of a decision to take a review of the possibility to set up parents-teachers forums in schools. As usual the perception of students being 'violent' and 'unworthy of trust' on the score of forming

representative bodies was augmented by the publication of yet another story on the same page reporting violence by students.

On February 17, Nawa-i-Waqt carried a statement by Jamaat-i-Islami amir Mian Tufail Muhammad who called for an end to the ban, saying that students should be allowed to participate in healthy, productive activities. He also said that the administration had unnecessarily provoked students by taking that step. In another statement on February 18, the amir of JI stated that the ban was the result of the bureaucracy's act of misguiding the government. It was supportive.

The February 20 issue carried a statement by Federal Minister for Labor Ghulam Dastagir in which the minister said that no ban would be imposed on trade unions, as trade unions helped in keeping industrial peace. The minister told the labor leaders present on the occasion of Tarbella WAPDA Employees Union that 'no ban was imposed on student unions' and only their 'mode of conduct' had been changed. A double column story was carried by Nawa-i-Waqt on the inside page, in which the IJT leader stated that both students and teachers were in favor of carrying out classes. The same page carried a very short single column about protests by Peshawar students.

By February 20, the issue of the ban on student unions, especially in the context of civil society, as student associations and bodies are part of civil society, and in the border context of promotion of democracy in Pakistan, not only receded into inside pages, but also assumed the form of statements, even moving away from the preliminary reporting of student protests and expulsions; not even the follow up of the arrested or expelled students was done. Nawa-i-Waqt was found wanting on the count of taking a line divergent from the establishment, or the authoritarian setup of General Ziaul Haq.

On February 22, the newspaper carried a statement by President General Muhammad Ziaul Haq, in which the dictator said that the ban on student union was not meant to delay elections.

Coming to daily Jang, the newspaper, like daily Nawa-i-Waqt, splashed the story about the ban on the student unions in the Punjab on its front page. The story told about the martial law order

1371 issued by Punjab's Governor Lt General GhulamJilani Khan, banning all student unions and similar bodies, freezing their accounts, banning their literature, sealing their offices. A single column story beneath the main story carried the headline that 'new rules' had been framed for student activities, and in the text it was reported that student societies and clubs would be set up in colleges and universities. Reaction by student representatives was carried in a single column as part of the main story. A single column on the seventh column of the upper half of the front page gave the news that that the student unions in Sindh would also be banned. All supportive of the government by implication; no critical comment was made; nor was any reporting initiative taken to elicit comments and reaction from civil society representatives and student leaders.

The newspaper did not take any stance on this issue different from Nawa-i-Waqt. The news about the ban on the student union in Sindh was carried in the newspaper, which also said that the student unions falling under the purview of this order would not be allowed to indicate themselves as defunct unions. An APP-released story told about the expulsion of many students from colleges in Lahore and Sheikhpura. The same page story related to the clash between students in Engineering University, Lahore.

So, the daily Jang adopted the similar trajectory as adopted by Nawa-i-Waqt, in that it treated the issue of the ban on student representative bodies, which are essential for promoting civil society and democracy, as an action- reaction event, treating it in the manner of routine stories, without getting into the crux of the matter and presenting it to the readers to inform their opinion by setting it within the discourse of democracy and civil society. Put in other words, the daily Jang like Nawa-i-Waqt did not show any orientation towards breaking the status quo rather both newspapers, by and large, seemed to have followed the agenda set by the martial law regime of undermining Pakistan's civil society.

The rest of the coverage revolved around student protests, arrests and rhetorical statements. Daily Jang carried a single column story about the arrest of IJT nazimMirajuddin from Peshawar. Surely, the coverage like Nawa-i-Waqt took no time to recede to inside pages. Except the statements by the government, like Raja

ZafarulHaq's , indicting that the students were 'unable to create academic environment' in universities and colleges, which was carried in outer pages. Or those depicting students as a violent all bent upon to enacts acts of violence were deemed worthy of outer page treatment like the APP-released story telling that students blocked traffic in Karachi and stoned shops and passersby. Incidentally, the story was but an official handout.

A rare support to students was reflected in the said newspaper in the form of statement issued by the Lahore District Bar Association, in which the lawyers under their president in an emergency meeting asked the government to lift the ban on the student unions.

The lawyers also announced to set up a free legal aid cell to extend legal help to students, against whom a crackdown seemed to have been launched by the martial law.

Considering that lawyers' bodies also form civil society, this support can be interpreted as a member of civil society lending support to another member of civil society, which was taken as a news item by daily Jang in two columns of course on city pages. It reflects also on the inability of civil society to assert its causes and interests that its institutions and members failed to come out strongly to support the suppression of members of civil society; of course if they did by way of at least issuance of press statements, the two newspapers, daily Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt, did not reflect those statements and reactions.

As could be expected, given the pattern discernable in daily Nawai-Waqt, daily Jang too tented to treat the issue as a secondary issue. The Lahore city pages continued to carry in single or at most double column news regarding students' reaction expressed in the form of protests. A single column told that a group of students attacked the office of the principal of Government College Lahore.

Yet another story carried a threat by the students to disrupt the cricket Test match between Pakistan and England .The story was provided by the monitoring desk of the newspaper, as it was broadcast by BBC, which for its part had vested interest in reporting the threat in view of the English team being from BBC's home

country and also with the aim to project the chaotic situation in Pakistan.

A radio report was taken by the newspaper, which reported the NWFP governor as saying that the decision to ban the student unions was taken after much thought, and that vested interests were trying to close universities and colleges. The statement carried by Jang on national page in two columns tended to undermine student reactions and impart a sinister twist to them. Like Nawa-i-Waqt, daily Jang carried a statement by Federal Labor Minister Ghulam Dastagir Khan saying that the government had no intention to ban trade unions and the student unions were not banned rather only rules were changed to 'better the environment in universities and colleges'.

Interestingly, both newspapers, Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt, almost carried identical headlines, dispelling the fear that the government could also ban trade unions, in addition to imparting a spin on the move to ban the student unions. So, it could be surmised that both newspapers adopted an identical pattern of putting to the backburner the issue and thereby serving to uphold the interest of the authoritarian regime of ZiaulHaq.

A Lahore single column told about two students who had been jailed and fined by a summary military court. This also cried for a comment to at least expose the cruelty of subjecting youth to martial law tyranny at the cost of their future. This was a single column story released by APP. The pattern of publishing the stories about the military swoop against students continued, intercepted only by a rare remarks of criticism, that to coming from the political parties. Civil society was conspicuous by its absence. A PPI story provided news about imprisonment of students as well as arrests from Kasur. The same page however carried a statement by the JI amir deploring the ban on the student unions, relating it to the government's ill design.

Similarly, a double column story by APP told about the conviction of 8 students by a military court and explosion of many others. Ironically, attached with this story is the story by PPI indicating that President General ZiaulHaq's name had been proposed for the ward of regional peace prize. Either that was a case

of bad judgment in relation to page layout and treatment of the stories, or plain sarcasm that a sub editor poured on the military regime as well as its foreign abettors by placing the news along the details of military repression of the youth by means of summary military courts.

It was followed by yet another story of course by APP telling that more students had been expelled from colleges and universities. Dr Muhammad Afzal was carried by daily Jang like Nawa-i-Waqt, saying that subject 'committees and student council' were being introduced to replace student unions. The story's source was PTV tapped by the monitoring desk. The palliative of student committees or council was tactfully offered by the canny military regime, and which was conveniently lapped up by the press, especially Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt, without contesting the validity or rationality of such a scheme.

If anything, even in editorials, not a clear anti-ban stand was taken by Jang. In its editorial on February 11, 1984, following the ban on student unions in Punjab, it advised students to find a moderate way to bring their viewpoint to the government. Interpreted: they must not take recourse to the streets and find a negotiated way to settle this issue. On the other hand, Jang's senior editor, Ershad Ahmad Haqqani wrote a column in parts, in which he tacitly justified the ban and suggested in his column on February 29, 1984 that the IJT would now adopt new dimensions.

Students expulsion spree continued, with Jang, like Nawa-i-Waqt obediently reporting the expulsions, without taking a stand against these summary punishments against the youth and the members of their representative bodies, which indeed are part of civil society. Working under repressive laws, actions and threats, and bound to their own survival interests, it was however naïve to have expected them to raise their voice in support of civil society. It also stands to reason in an overweening authoritarianism, the press becomes as aloof to the imperative of promoting civil society as the regime itself, perhaps also due to lack of orientation or awareness about the existence of a third sector between the state and the individual life.

But then the ban seemed more grounded in the military government's political compulsion than any high idea of purging universities and colleges of students' violent activities or if the words of the government minister were to be believed, overhauling the system of student associations by introducing student councils and subject committees. A double column in the daily Jang precisely pointed to this aspect of the decision to ban the student unions. BBC and Voice of Germany were cited as commenting that the ban could have stemmed from the junta's design to finish the 'residual power of the opposition'.

The point is if it could be one aspect, why did the daily Jang and daily Nawa-i-Waqt deem it worthy to make a comment on, or hold surveys or interviews or use reporters to seek comments from the opposition, in addition to approaching the civil society, in whatever form, like lawyers or proponents of human rights to project their viewpoint.

While the daily Jang and daily Nawa-i-Waqt kept a tacit mum and followed the set of rules of the game, de facto toeing the agenda set by the junta, students continued to face the wrath. Daily Jang took a story on further expulsions of students from Multan and Karachi, and registration of cases against them under martial law regulations. A similar story told about students' protests in Sindh, boycott of classes, etc. All these stories found place in inside pages.

A statement by Majlis-i-Shura chairman Khawja Safdar carried an admission that the ban on the student unions could yield either 'good results or bad results'. When the researcher saw files of other newspapers, he found a similar pattern of not treating the ban on student unions as an issue involving civil society and democracy.

The coverage in both newspapers of the ban on student unions indicates that they adopted the role of publishing statements supporting the official point of view and arguments advanced by the regime to justify the ban on student unions. They did not adopt a policy of setting agenda for the people to know about the effects of the ban on democracy, leadership and civil society. The daily news were largely pro-ban and the gate-keeping role of both newspapers was non supportive of students. In the one month coverage from the day the ban was clamped, both Jang and Nawa-i-Waqt published 38

non supportive stories, out of which 10 were statements, making a 38 percent of the total non supportive matter. A pattern of agenda following is evident here.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that the press in Pakistan has not been to support student issues in the country, in this study the issue being the ban on student unions imposed by General ZiaulHaq. The direction of the coverage related to the ban on student unions exhibit an anti- student union attitude, as the newspapers that were analyzed – namely Jang and Nawa- i- Waqt – largely published content, both in the form of news and statements, supporting the reasons held forth by the General for taking action against the student unions. It must be said that student unions in Pakistan may have plunged into violence, but it does not provide justification for banning them, for student unions are regarded as a necessary component of a democratic order. So they must be promoted, and the press can play a vital role by highlighting its cause and by not framing it in the context of violence and threat to peace.

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