

National Awami Party Government in Balochistan and North West Frontier Province and its Unconstitutional Removal:

By

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Abstract:

It is a well-recognized reality that man has been born free and likes to live freely. But, sometimes his freedom is snatched away owing to some inevitable factors, and his every act becomes dependent upon the desire on others. This consequently plunges him into the deep ravine of slavery. The specter of slavery does not restrict merely to an individual rather it slowly and gradually engulfs the whole nation onward. With this, an era of slavery starts which paralysis the nation. Mostly in this critical time some individuals of deep thoughts and conscious arise for the rescue of that oppressed nation. They apply their collective considerations and efforts to seek the ways for emancipation. They devise organized strategy and program to achieve freedom again, which mostly result in the formation of a political party. The formation of National Awami Party (NAP) is also the historical continuity of that collective efforts and struggle. Ghafar Khan, Samad Khan Achakzai, Mir Ghous Baksh Bizenjo, Moulana Hamid Bhashani and Ghulam Murtaza Syed (G. M. Syed) are few to be mentioned as the founders of NAP. The sole purpose of NAP was purging unity among oppressed nations to emancipate from the clutches of social, political and economic slavery. NAP was from the very inception was a very progressive and anti-imperialist political party and believed in true democratic values. People reposed their full confidence in the leadership of NAP. In the 1970 general elections the citizens of the Pakistan in general and the inhabitants of Balochistan and erstwhile North West Frontier Province (NWFP) in particular extended their full support in the favor of NAP candidates. It clinched good number of seats in these provinces, which ultimately succeeded in forming of a coalition government with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam

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(JUI) in Baluchistan and NWFP. It embarked upon drastic reform program in the province under its influence. But, surprisingly, this reforms-based agenda was proved a fatal blow for the NAP-JUI coalition government because of a glaring conflict with federal government. Thus, within a very brief time period Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led federal government sent NAP-JUI coalition government packing in the province of Balochistan.

Keywords: National Awami Party, Coalition Government, London Plan, NAP reforms, Tripartite Treaty

Introduction:

After years of intense and painstaking struggle by the leadership of NAP along with other democratic parties against the removing of military dictator General Ayub Khan, he was finally agreed to quit the power. He was expected to relinquish the power in favor of any civilian leader. But, instead of handed over the reign of the country to civilian leader he appointed once again another army officer General Muhammad Yahya Khan (MYK) as the head of the state. (Gichki, 2017).

In March, 1969 the short but tragic tenure of Gen. Yahya Khan started. This undemocratic decision of General Ayub Khan to appoint another military general in place of any civilian leader triggered waves of protests and demonstrations in both wings of the country. General public along with political leadership vehemently resisted this decision. Country's affairs virtually came to a standstill. To quell this political turbulent atmosphere of the country, General Yahya Khan promised to the masses to hold general elections throughout the country and after the elections, he would immediately hand over the power to the elected representatives of the people. To give a practical shape to his words Gen. Muhammad Yahya Khan, the Martial Law administrator, promulgated a regulation, which was called as Legal Framework Order (LFO). This ordinance envisaged a comprehensive framework for holding free and impartial elections throughout the country on the principal of one man one vote. This was called franchise system and it was the first experience in Pakistan political history. (Awan, 1985).

Subsequently on 7th December 1970, general elections were held in both Western and Eastern provinces of the country. The elections of 1970 though held under the auspices of military rule yet regarded the first free and impartial election in the history of Pakistan up to now. People took part voluntarily and their participation was commendatory. (Rafique, 2003). Twenty-four small and big political parties contested the elections with their separate programs and manifestos. Awami League (AL) led by its

experienced leader Shaikh Mujeeb -Ur- Rehaman and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led by its charismatic leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Z.A. Bhutto) were the two major political contestants representing Eastern and Western federating unites of the country respectively. Other political groups including NAP were regional in nature. They were representing specific regions and people of the country. (Shahid, I & Shahid, M, 2008).

Results of the Elections of 1970:

According to the official results of the elections, Awami League came up as the biggest political force by securing 160 seats out of 162 in the federal legislative in the Eastern Wing, whereas, PPP dominated the Western Wing by clinching 81 seats of the National Assembly.

(Rafique 2003).

Table 1A and B shows the performance of various parties both in National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies respectively in East and West Pakistan (Awan, 1985.)

Table 1: Securing of seats in East and West Pakistan in 1970 general elections by different political parties in National Assembly (A) and Provincial Assemblies (B)

A = National Assembly							
Party	E. Pak	W. Pak	Balochistan	NWFP	Sindh	Punjab	Total
IND	1	15	0	7	3	0	16
PDP	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
PML(C)	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
JI	0	4	0	1	2	1	4
NAP	0	6	3	3	0	0	6
JUP	0	7	0	0	3	4	7
JUI	0	7	1	6	0	0	7
CML	0	7	0	0	0	7	7
PML(Q)	0	9	0	7	1	1	9
PPP	0	81	0	1	18	62	81
AL	160	0	0	0	0	0	160
Total	162	138	4	25	27	82	300
B = Provincial Assemblies							
IND	7	53	5	6	14	28	60
Others	1	4	2	0	1	1	5
JI	1	3	0	1	1	1	4
PDP	2	4	0	0	0	4	6
PML(C)	0	8	0	2	0	6	8
JUI	0	8	2	4	0	2	8
JUP	0	11	0	0	7	4	11
CML	0	20	0	1	4	15	20
NAP	1	21	8	13	0	0	22
PML(Q)	0	24	3	10	15	6	24
PPP	0	144	0	3	28	113	144
AL	288	0	0	0	0	0	288
Total	300	300	20	40	60	81	600

AL = Awami League, PPP = Pakistan People's Party, PML(Q) = Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam), NAP = National Awami Party, CML = Council Muslim League, JUP = Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, JUI = Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, PML(C) = Pakistan Muslim League (Convention), PDP = Pakistan Democratic Party, JI = Jamiat-e-Islami, IND = Independent

It merits to point that elections of 1970 provided an appropriate opportunity to NAP to manifest its popularity and strength among the people of the country. But, unfortunately it did not yield sound results in other parts of the country including NWFP which was regarded its political hub. It won only three National Assembly seats and fifteen provincial assembly seats in NWFP. However, these seats enabled NAP to form a coalition government with Jamiat Ulema-Islam (JUI) afterwards. (Mehmood, 1990).

NAP clinched tremendous victory in the province of Baluchistan. People reposed their full confidence in the leadership of NAP along with JUI, NAP secured almost majority seats in the house of Balochistan assembly. (Kardar, 1988).

Formation of NAP–JUI led Coalition Government in Balochistan and NWFP:

The results of 1970 general elections brought forth a rear political arrangement with different center of power. Not a single political party emerged to have a simple majority to rule the country without the support of any other political party.

- I. Awami League dominated the Eastern Pakistan.
- III. PPP emerged the single biggest political force in Punjab and Sindh.
- III. The NAP- JUI ensured their political strength and popularity in Balochistan and NWFP.

Thus, this political dependency of political parties particularly of Awami League and PPP for support to form govt enhanced the political importance of NAP. (Ahmed, 1980).

The power to the people representation could not see the day light. To large extend, it was the legitimate right of the Awami League to form government at the center owing to its numerical strength in the light democratic norms. NAP in Balochistan and NWFP had the right to form government. But the military establishment in connivance with PPP leadership was not prepared to allow Awami League to exercise this democratic right. Thus, a tussle of power was unleashed between PPP and Awami League. this tussle eventually ended in the debacle of Eastern Pakistan. This tragedy happened on 16th December 1971. (Kardar, 1988).

After the splitting of Eastern wing of Pakistan, Z. A. Bhutto remained a single unopposed leader on the political arena of Pakistan. He nourished a desire to establish one party rule and dominance in the country.

Military Establishment had already put its weight behind him to establish one-man one-party rule in the country. (Arora, 1995).

But political situation did not let him transfer his dream of capturing an absolute power into reality. Despite of having tremendous strength in Punjab and Sindh as well at center. He had insignificant number of seats both in Baluchistan and Sindh. In these two volatile provinces, except of NAP and JUI no party had significant strength and power. It was, indeed, the main compulsion of Bhutto to secure the support of NAP along with JUI to form government. This political coercion and political expediency forced Z. A. Bhutto made a political alliance with JUI and NAP in Baluchistan and NWFP. This alliance of Bhutto with NAP and JUI was not out of his political vision and tolerance, rather it was his sheer coercion to consolidate its position in the country. Similarly, the forming of a unanimous constitution was another political compulsion of Bhutto. These political expediencies brought Bhutto to the knee and extended his cooperation to NAP and JUI to form coalition govt., both in NWFP and Baluchistan under an agreement. (Hussain, 2001).

Tripartite Agreement between Bhutto and NAP-JUI Leadership:

Eventually, on 6th March 1972, after a long and extensive discussions, both groups reached on a consensus agreement at Rawalpindi.

Following are the salient points of the agreement between Bhutto and NAP-JUI leadership.

- I. A brief session of federal legislative would be held.
- II. An interim constitution would be approved by the federal legislative.
- III. Confidence vote would be passed in the federal legislative.
- IV. Coalition government of NAP and JUI would be installed in the provinces of Balochistan and NWFP.
- V. All provincial assemblies' sessions would be summoned.
- VI. The NAP-JUI coalition government's nominees would be appointed as the provincial governors in NWFP and Balochistan.

(Bakhsh, 1999).

In this agreement for future discourse, PPP team was represented by Party Chairman Z. A. Bhutto, veteran advocate Abdul Hafiz Pirzada, Moulana Kausar Niazi and Hayat Khan Sharpao, NAP team comprised of Arbab Sikandar Khan, Nawab Khair Baksh Marri and Ghulam Baksh Bizenjo and head of NAP Khan Abdul Wali Khan, whereas, JUI side was being represented by Mufti Mahmood, the president of JUI, and Moulana Ghous Hazari. (Kati, 2009).

Formation of NAP-JUI Coalition Govt., in Baluchistan and NWFP:

According to the 6th point of the tripartite agreement between PPP and NAP-JUI leadership, NAP-JUI were mandated to appoint their nominated Chief Ministers for Baluchistan and NWFP respectively and form provincial governments in the provinces of their influence. Consequently, veteran Nationalist leader Sardar Attaullah Jan Mengal was appointed as the Chief Executive in the house of Baluchistan Assembly, while Mufti Mahmood was made as the Chief Executive of NWFP. With this the coalition government of NAP-JUI came into effect in the provinces of NWFP and Balochistan. (Kati, 2013).

Similarly, in the light of the point 6th of the tripartite treaty, Federal government was constitutionally duty bound to appoint the NAP-JUI recommended individuals to the slot of governorship in the provinces of Baluchistan and NWFP. NAP-JUI recommended veteran leader of NAP Nawab Ghous Baksh Bizenjo to the slot of governorship for the province of Baluchistan. His oath was consequently administered by Z. A. Bhutto as governor of Baluchistan on 29th April 1972. (Hussain, 2001).

Sardar Arbab Sikandar Khalil took the oath of governorship of NWFP on 28th April 1972.

NAP-JUI Coalition Government's Reforms in Baluchistan:

Being a Nationalist Party, NAP was very enthusiastic to bring forth very drastic changes in Baluchistan. Shortly after assuming the charge of provincial government in Baluchistan, the NAP-JUI coalition government embarked upon a substantial reforms program in the province of Baluchistan. These reforms were aimed at bringing socioeconomic changes in the lives of the people of Baluchistan.

Following are the main points of the intended reforms of the coalition government of NAP-JUI.

- I. Proposals were made to incorporate land reforms in the province along with the settlement and rehabilitation of nomad with the provision of land to them.
- II. Land revenue on zamindary land [land own] of less than 12 acres and the tax on grazing land were immediately abolished.
- III. Land tax on the zamindary land of zamran was written off.
- IV. All the prisoners in the province were granted two months' remission per year of the imprisonment and the period they spend in prisons prior to the announcement was also credited in their favor.
- V. Censorship on the press was lifted forthwith.
- VI Urdu was declared the Official Language of the province.

(Ali, 2001).

Owing to these reforms adopted by the NAP-JUI coalition govt, a window of prosperity and progress was opened in Baluchistan. People of the poverty-stricken province of Baluchistan forgot the sense of deprivation. Six thousand government jobs were announced to them which to large extent curtailed the long issue of employment. These positive steps and reforms adopted by NAP government made it popular in the eyes of the people of Baluchistan. (Mehmood, 1990).

Mistrust between the Leadership of NAP and Bhutto:

NAP was from the very inception a chief exponent of the idea of stronger provinces and weak federation for the political discourse of Pakistan. Soon after coming in power through the tripartite agreement with PPP, it started the demand of provincial autonomy for Baluchistan in particular and for other provinces in general from the Central Government. NAP urged the Central Government only to keep defense, foreign policy, communication and currency with it, and the residual subjects shall be delegated to the federating units. This demand of provincial autonomy was, indeed, the first step which sowed the seed of mistrust and antagonism between NAP and Z. A. Bhutto led Federal Government. (Hussain, 2010).

Furthermore, NAP, being a Nationalist Party, wanted the provincial government's complete authority upon the national resources of the province. It demanded the Central Government to pay all reality on national resources of the province of Baluchistan, which it had been using relentlessly for long period of time. This blatant demand of NAP touched the very sensitive nerve of the PPP led Central Government. (Omar, 1988).

To give a practical step to its commitment, the NAP government took a bold step by nationalizing all the coal and marble mines of the province of Baluchistan and its revenues were directed towards the prosperity of the people of Baluchistan. Along with this the NAP government banned the centuries old Sardary system which had made the lives of the people of Baluchistan miserable. These Sardars were considered the reliable aides of Bhutto in Baluchistan. Thus, these steps of NAP Government brought it in glaring conflict with the Central Government. Due to these factors a tug of war unleashed between the NAP-JUI coalition government and PPP led Central Government. PPP openly blamed the NAP government of transgressing the limits of the tripartite agreement reached between them by demanding provincial autonomy. On the other hand, NAP government accused the central govt., of illegitimate interference in the provincial affairs and fueling the tribal disputes in the province of Baluchistan. (Hussain, 2001).

It is an open secret that tripartite agreement, which ensured the constitution of NAP-JUI coalition government in the provinces of Baluchistan and NWFP, was the political compulsion of Z. A. Bhutto. He did not accept the power of NAP by heart owing to his inherited antagonism for political opponent. Therefore, he did not let NAP-JUI coalition government work freely. (Mehmood, 1990).

After consolidating his grape upon the country, Z. A. Bhutto started to tumble all the terms of the tripartite agreement with NAP and its coalition partner JUI. He leveled baseless allegations against NAP government to make his adventure legitimate to topple the NAP government from the province of Baluchistan. (Ghafoor, 1977).

Allegations against NAP Govt., and Its Ultimate Toppling:

Following are the allegations which were bought forth by Bhutto government in connivance with secret agencies. These allegations were used as pretext to dislodge the NAP-JUI coalition govt., from the provinces of Baluchistan and NWFP. (Hussain, 2010).

- I. The London plan of 1972.
- II. The recovery of Russian made ammunition from Iraqi Embassy

I. London Plan of 1972

It is basically a concocted story fabricated by Z.A. Bhutto led federal government to provide a pretext to malign the NAP leadership and ultimately to pave the way for removing its government from the provinces of Balochistan and NWFP.

According to this story, federal government alleged that some important opposition leaders particularly of NAP went to London on the pretext of medical treatment to have mutual consultation for the disintegration of Pakistan into several regional and autonomous states. (Awan, 1985).

The federal Information Minister Moulana Kausar Niazi claimed that Wali Khan, the president of NAP, had numerous meetings first with other opposition leaders and then with Sheikh Mujib Ur Rehman during his stay in London. The aim and objective of the meetings were to break up Pakistan into several autonomous states. This alleged conspiracy was strongly manipulated by Pakistani media and coded as London Plan. (Muhammad, 1988).

II. Recovery Of Ammunition from Iraqi Embassy

Since the start of 1972 Baluchistan was engulfed in a state of uncertainty. NAP asserting all its effort to self-rule in the provinces under its influence. The relations between NAP and federal government further deteriorated when NAP government expelled all settlers' government

employees from the province of Baluchistan and recruited NAP workers on their place. Due to this federal government was in search of an appropriate opportunity to depose the NAP led coalition government from the province of Baluchistan. (Nizami, 2006).

Hence on 10th February 1973 federal government hatched a conspiracy in order to topple the NAP government. This conspiracy is referred to the ambiguous recovery of huge cache of ammunition from the possession of Iraqi Embassy based in the capital city of Islamabad. (Zaffarullah, 2013).

Pakistani media reported from the Government of Pakistan that security official accompanied by Foreign Affairs Director General(DG) entered the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad and unearthed large amount of Russian labeled weapons. This consignment was comprised of more than three hundred sub-machine guns and thousand hand grenades along with thousands of rounds of ammunition. The state owned media flared up the story that this weapon was sent to the workers of NAP to initiate insurgency in Baluchistan.

These incidents were deemed enough for Z. A. Bhutto led federal government to remove NAP government from Baluchistan. On 17th March 1973 Z. A. Bhutto suspended the governor of NWFP Arbab Sikandar Khalil and Mir Ghous Baksh Bizenjo, the governor of Baluchistan, and appointed in their stead Aslam Khattak and Akbar Bugti the governors of NWFP and Baluchistan respectively. Consequently, he toppled the Attaullah Mengal led NAP government in Baluchistan and imposed presidential rule in the province. Mufti Mehmmud, the Chief Minister of NWFP, resigned in protest against the removal of an elected government of NAP in Baluchistan. (Ghoorgharshti, 2007).

Conclusion:

Pakistan came into being after a long and extensive political struggle. It was expected that democratic values would be flourished and political affairs of the country would be run through the people's chosen representatives. But, contrary to the fact, Pakistan was deliberately deprived of a unanimous constitution for nine years. After the sad demise of Quaid-i-Azam, non-elected people prevailed upon the political affairs of the country. With the imposition of nefarious scheme of One Unit, the political environment of the country was further deteriorated, and the rule of the citizens was weakened. In this circumstance of political uncertainty, some renowned politicians started combined political struggle from a common platform to pull the country out of this political turmoil. Hence, they laid the foundation of NAP in order to revive democratic system in Pakistan as well as to protect the political social and economic rights of all communities living in

Pakistan. Since the very beginning, NAP was very democratic and progressive political party. It provided a consolidated and strong platform to all oppressed communities to their legitimate rights. Its program and manifesto were fully advocating civilian authority in the political affairs of Pakistan. On account of the high objectives of NAP, it became very popular in the eyes of general public. In the elections of 1970, people reposed full confidence and it surfaced big political force in Baluchistan and erstwhile NWFP. It formed a coalition government and adopted an agenda of drastic reforms, which ultimately turn a new page of prosperity and progress. But, unfortunately, these reforms were in startling contrast with the federal government. Federal government indeed did not like the popularity of NAP among the people. Therefore, on basis of false and fabricated allegation, federal government toppled the democratic government of NAP.

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