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**The Challenges to Political Stability in Pakistan (1947-2012)**

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**Abstract**

Political stability is a valve of any government. If the valve is closed, a government is blocked. Pakistan came into existence on the bases of two-nation theory. Quaid -i- Azam wanted Pakistan to be a democratic state whereas all citizens enjoyed equal rights with out any discrimination. After the death of Quaid -i- Azam and the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan, the Pakistan Muslim League and its successors had lost its prestige among the people that promoted the culture of palace intrigues, intimidation, squabbling and chair-politics. The governor-generals with the annexes of military-bureaucratic establishment dominated in decision-making process. The breaking and formulation of the governments were started that initiated the military to take over. The military governments introduced various forms of government. Moreover, to achieve economic and military assistance from USA military adopted some suicidal policies. The civilians and military regimes badly failed to address the main challenges (the role of Islam in politics, center-provinces relations, division of powers, sovereign parliament, free and fair elections, transparency and a comprehensive accountability of corrupt politicians) to political stability in Pakistan.

**Introduction**

This article highlights the main challenges to political stability in Pakistan. This article also concludes the poor governance and mishandling the issues created more complication for the successive governments.

**Challenges to Political Stability in Pakistan (1947-2012)**

Pakistan came into being as a liberal democratic state where all citizens enjoyed equal rights without any discrimination. The Indian Act of 1935 with some coercive emergency powers (A-92-93-94) was approved as an Interim Constitution of Pakistan. Quaid -i- Azam was appointed as the first Governor General and Liaquat Ali Khan as the prime Minister. Unfortunately, Pakistan in her inceptive days had suffered the challenges to political stability. On 22 August 1947, the Governor of Khyber Pukhtanakhawa dismissed the government of Khan Sahib. On 26 April 1948, the Governor of

the Sind dismissed the government of Ayub Khuro.<sup>1</sup>

In March 1951, Liaquat Ali Khan's government faced "the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case"<sup>2</sup> (an annexes of military and civilians that wanted to bring red revolution through "a Council of Generals)."<sup>3</sup> The main causes of this conspiracy were insufficient policies of the government about the Kashmir cause and the mismanagement to handle the core issues. Quaid -i- Azam's death and the assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan destabilized the transitional growth of political institutions and democratic traditions. Moreover, the successors promoted a culture of squabbling, intimation, floor-crossing, palace intrigues, intimidate and chair politics.<sup>4</sup>

On 24 October 1954, Governor General Ghulam Muhammad dissolved the Constituent Assembly. Mualvi Tameez-ud-Din filed a petition against this illegal dismissal. The Sind Court declared the dismissal was

unconstitutional.” The Federal Court (the Chief Justice Muhammad Munir) in “Mulaivi Tamzzud- Din Case”<sup>5</sup> legalized the dismissal. This political decision derailed the democracy in Pakistan, promoted a culture to chock the civilian governments by the Governor General’s annexes with military- bureaucratic establishment.

More ironically, a culture of coalition’s government was started. Ghulam Muhammad indulged the military in politics by appointing Ayub Khan as Defense Minister and Major General Iskandar Mirza as Defense Secretary. Pakistan Muslim League and its leadership had lost its prestige, indulged in chair-politics and promoted a culture of political victimization that opened an era of multi-regional political parties.<sup>6</sup> The role of Islam in politics, divisions of powers, centre-provinces relations, acute distribution of resources, electoral process and national language were main controversy for the formulation of new constitution. Poor governance of the successive governments and the weak Constituent Assembly did not adjust them. This deficiency dominated non-elected forces over the elected forces through military bureaucratic-establishment and specific classes (the feudalists and the elite’ class) captured the economy as well the state power.<sup>7</sup>

Ayub Khan (as Defense Minster), Iskandar Mirza and Governor General Ghulam Muhammad were openly advocacy of control democracy. Ayub Khan suggested a map road of “One Unit Scheme” (an amalgamation of various states and provinces of the West Pakistan). In 1955, “the One Unit Scheme” was approved.<sup>9</sup> The process of amalgamation was a highly objectionable.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, the appointment of Mushtaq Ahmad as Governor and DR. Khan Sahib as the Chief Minster (the person who had already indulged in Pukhtunistan Stunt and not salute the Pakistani flag was handover the West Pakistan) created hate among the public.

Crisis after crises and delaying of nine year the constitution 1956 was promulgated. Political parties were demanding for elections while Major General Iskandar Mirza used delaying tactics. Smuggling, corruption, nepotism, black-marketing had insecure the life and property of a common person. Even, basic commodities

were shortage. The deputy Speaker of Federal Assembly was attacked and died. On 6 October 1958, Ahmad Yar Khan declared, “Kalat as an independent state.” The military put down this revolt with iron hand.<sup>11</sup> Major General Iskandar Mirza having no future in elections and asked Ayub Khan to takeover.<sup>12</sup> From 1951-1958, six governments were dismissed due to confrontation with Governor General and military-bureaucratic establishment.

On 7 October 1958, General Ayub Khan imposed Martial Law, condemned the political leaders that ravaged the country, tried to barter the country and produced political instability.<sup>13</sup> He banned all political activities, muzzled the press and established, “Sahaib -ud- Din Commission”<sup>14</sup> to analyze the causes of failure democracy in Pakistan. The Commission reported that the politicians and the political parties were responsible of political instability. He took stern measures against the corrupt bureaucracy and politicians through Elective Bodies Disqualification Order and Public Office Disqualification Order.<sup>15</sup>

He also introduced a Basic Democracies System,<sup>16</sup> presidential type of Constitution, formulated a Convention Muslim League, made reforms in all spheres of life. Especially a ceiling was imposed over land to break the monopoly of feudalism. Moreover, what he achieved through reforms lost in war as well as on the Tashkent Negotiations Table.

On 7 November 1968, COP (Combine Opposition Parties) started agitation against autocratic regime that had totally failed in deliver public demands. Ayub Khan took stern measures to curb the agitation and put a number of politicians in jail. Dr. Mehboob -ul- Haq published a report that 20-22 families had captured the state economy as well as the power of the state and common persons remained out of power and the benefits of this economy. This report more aggressed the scenario, created a hate, disintegration and frustration among the people.<sup>17</sup> Worst situation provided chances to Indian interference especially Mukhti Bahani infiltration in East Pakistan. “Agrtala Conspiracy” was chalked out to separate the East Pakistan. Sheikh Mujiab -ur- Rehman

highlighted Six points for provincial autonomy.<sup>18</sup>

Ayub Khan was failed to tackle this situation. He handover powers to General Yaya Khan instead to the speaker of National Assembly. This was a highly violation of his own commitment of Constitution (1962). General Yaya Khan as a Martial Law Administrator cum the President introduced a Legal Frame Order (LFO) to conduct first general elections of 1970 (on the principle of one vote one-man). The Awami League launched elections campaign on the six points of Sheikh Mujib -ur- Rehman. The Awami League won 167 out of 169 seats in East Pakistan and PPP achieved 84 seats in West Wing.

In March 1971, General Yaya Khan, Sheikh Mujib -ur- Rehman and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto met in Dhaka to decide the transfer of power but failed to transfer powers to 'elected representatives.' In reaction, Sheikh Mujib -ur- Rehman called a nation wide strike. On 07 March 1971, Sheikh Mujib -ur- Rehman delivered a speech and added further four-points (immediate lifting of Martial Law, withdrawal of all military personal and a session of National Assembly on 25 March 1971). The East Pakistan started agitations for transfer of power. Moreover, accused on the military and the West Pakistan both had made them a colony to exploitation of the East Pakistan's resources. India supported at this critical Juncture and prepared a plan for separation of East Pakistan. Accused the kidnapping of Ganga Airplane (imposed air space restriction on Pakistan), supply arms the rebellion and Mukhtti Bahani started infiltration-crossing east border. Moreover, Indian forces directly attacked on Pakistan territory. The 93000 soldiers and military officers had to surrender. On 16 December 1972, The East Pakistan was separated. Pakistan deprived its 40% solid economy of the East Pakistan.<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Indira Gandhi happily expressed that the "Two Nation Theory" had sunk in Persian Gulf.

On 20 December 1972, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto held the office as Chief Martial law Administrator cum the President. He established "Humood -ur- Rehman

Commission" for investigation the dismemberment of The East Pakistan, introduced too many reforms land reforms and ceiling over land to curb feudalism in Pakistan. He promulgated the constitution of 1973, restructured the army institution, and laid the foundation of Pakistan's Nuclear Programme. In 1974, second OIC conference was held in Pakistan.

Bhutto also dissolved the National Assembly before the fix tenure (five years). Second general elections were conducted in 1977 and PPP won the polls. Pakistan National Alliance rejected elections results and started agitations for re-elections. Bhutto's FSF, Para-military forces and police had failed to snub these agitations. In many cities, the army had called to restore peace and order. Even partial martial law was imposed. The last session of negotiations with oppositions remained successful. Nawabzida Nussrall Khan had announced the success of these negotiations in a press conference.

On the midnight, 5 July 1977, General Zia -ul- Haq imposed Martial Law, arrested Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, dissolved the National Assembly, suspended the Constitution, banned all political activities and announced general elections will conduct within 90 days. He started an accountability process through the military courts. Flogged the PPP workers, leaders and published a series of whitepapers (the rigging and manipulation in elections results and oppressive measurers of Bhutto through FSF against the oppositions). General Zia -ul- Haq reopened the murder case of Nawab Ahamd Khan and Bhutto was sentenced.

In 1979, Russia invasion in Afghanistan, Pakistan declared a front line state (security risk for the stability of Pakistan). General Zia cashed this invasion to legitimate his takeover and to achieve more economic and military assistance by USA. General Zia-ul- Haq introduced an Islamization programme. He conducted referendum in 1984 and elected himself as president for five years. He also conducted local bodies' elections as well general elections on non-party bases.<sup>20</sup> In 1985, he appointed Muhammad Khan Junejo as a Prime Minister. The first task was given the

government and to impotent parliament to legalize the RCO as well as all illegal actions (controversial 8<sup>th</sup> amendment and military courts).<sup>21</sup>

The divergent views of the Junajo and Zia on the incident of Ohjary Camp (an inquiry against the committed officers), Afghan issue (Geneva accord), the question put-off of military uniform, Junejo's contact with political parties and movement for restoration of democracy increased too much gulf between the two figures. On May 29, 1988, General Zia dismissed the Junajo's government through 58 (2) (b). Eleven year's dictatorship dominated the feudalists, industrialists and business class over the common people. The 200 families were captured the state power as well as the economy of State.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, The Jihadi origination promoted a Kalashanikove culture, Islamic militancy, extremism, infiltration of Taliban in Pakistan and 30-lacs Afghani refugees (a burden over Pakistan's poor economy). He died in the air crash C-130.<sup>23</sup>

Ghulam Ishaq Khan (the Chairman of Senate) appointed as the acting president. He announced general elections would conduct on party bases. A confrontation between the PPP and the pro-Zia was started. Some higher authorities formulated IJI to defeat PPP in elections. PPP won the general elections of 1988, Benazir Bhutto held the office as the Prime Minister (under three pre-conditions: she would not interfere in defense matters and Pakistan's Atomic Programme, not reduce the military expenditures and Ghulam Ishaq held the office as a President.

The hegemonic role of troika (the president and military bureaucratic- establishment), limited power of parliament (8th amendment and PPP's no representation in Senate), bitter centre-province relations (no- confidence motion and capturing Punjab policy), poor economy (economic and military sanctions sanctions), poverty and unemployment were main challenges to stability of the government of Benazir Bhutto. Benazir Bhutto had failed to address these challenges to political stability. On 6 August 1990, Ghulam Ishaq Khan used 58 (2) (b) and dismissed the government on the charges of corruption and mismanagement.

Ghulam Mustafa Jatio (an opposition leader of the house) was appointed as a caretaker Prime Minister. He announced the General elections date and started accountability of the government's corruption and mismanagement.

In general elections of 1990, IJI was won; Mian Nawaz Sharif held the office as the Prime Minister. The government of Mian Nawaz Sharif also failed to empower the parliament (removal the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment),<sup>24</sup> strength the political institutions, management of economy, established better civil-military relations, accountability of the corrupt politicians, political autonomy to provinces, better relation with opposition, the president. On 7 April 1993, Ghulam Ishaq Khan used 58 (2) (b) (on the behalf of Pakistan's military-bureaucratic establishment) to dismiss the government on the charges of corruption, mismanagement of economy, misused of power and poor law and order situations and extra-judicial killings.<sup>25</sup>

On 7 April 1993, Mir Bulkh Sher Mazari held the office as a caretaker Prime Minister. Mian Nawaz Sharif filed a petition against the illegal dissolution. Justice Nasim Hasan Shah in a verdict restored the government of Main Nawaz Sharif. This restoration decorated a highly stage of confrontation between Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Main Nawaz Sharif. The Chief of Army Staff as an arbitrator removed the storm (both had to resign).

Moian Qureshi (an imported) was appointed as a caretaker Prime Minister. He issued a list of 7000 bank defaulters (written loan - off) he also conducted a free and fair election in 1993. Pakistan People's Party won the elections. Benazir Bhutto held the office as the Prime Minister of Pakistan.<sup>26</sup> latter; Farooq Ahmad Legari was appointed as a President. However, she again failed to handle the troika( the president, the military-bureaucratic establishment, the judiciary and the oppositions. She failed to implement the legislative agenda and the removal of the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment. Corruption and poor governance remained constant challenges to political stability.

On 5 November 1996, Farooq Ahmad Leghari used 58 (2) (b) with the collaboration of

opposition and troika (Pakistan's military-bureaucratic establishment). Like a semi-coup, the government of Benazir Bhutto was dismissed on the charges of corruption, mismanagement and misuses of power. This was the fourth dismissal of the elected government through 58 (2) (b) a constant threats to prime Minister.

On 5 November 1996, Malik Mehraj Khaild took oath as a caretaker Prime Minister. Malik Mehraj Khaild announced the schedule for General elections. On 6 January 1997, Farooq Ahmad Legari through a notification (three week before the general elections) established a Council for Defense and National Security to shelter military played a constant role in decision-making process and supported the president in next scenario. Mian Nawaz Sharif won the election of 1997 by 2/3 majority and held the office as prime minister. He empowered the parliament through replacing 8th amendment (the article 58 (2) (b) with thirteen amendment. The judiciary and the president were not in favour of thirteen amendment. The issue to increase the strength and appointment of judges created confrontation between the government of Mian Nawaz Sharif and the Judiciary. The fear of contentment of court (mishaps of assaults on the judiciary) escalated a gulf among the president, the Chief Justice and prime Minister. This storm was ended on the resign of Farooq Ahmad Legari and Justice Sajid Ali Shah.

Rt. Justice Rafique Ahmad Tarar was appointed as a President. Mian Nawaz Sharif wanted the Chief of Army Staff worked on the advice of prime Minister especially defensive matters and foreign relations. General Jhangir Karmat was wanted to perform the responsibilities in his own capacity. He resigned as Chief of Army Staff. Mian Nawaz Sharif appointed General Pervez Mushraf as a Chief of Army Staff. However, on the question of relations with India (Lahore Declaration, not to war) and the Kargil intrusion escalated the tension between them.<sup>27</sup> On 12 October 1999; Mian Nawaz Sharif dismissed General Pervez Mushraf and appointed Zia -ud- Din Butt as the Chief of the Army Staff. The military disobeyed the illegal appointment. In reaction, the military officers arrested Mian Nawaz Sharif, Mian Shabaz

Sharif and the cabinet members. The period (1988-1999) was considered a constant period of instability. Confrontation, political victimization, hegemonic role of troika,<sup>28</sup> horse-trading, political turmoil, poor economy, inflation and institutional corruption were main challenges to political stability.<sup>29</sup>

General Mushraf as Chief Executive, dissolved the assemblies, suspended the Constitution and ordered judges to take oath under PCO. The Supreme Court in "Zafar Ali Shah Case" legalized the coup and permitted the government for amendments in Constitution to implement social, political and economic agenda. General Pervez Mushraf also presented a seven point's agenda to bring political stability.<sup>30</sup> He established National Reconstruction Bureau, increased the strength of the parliament, reform in electoral process, graduation for the assemblies' members, and reserved seats for women and minorities to empower the people at gross root level. Moreover, a modern enlightened programme was promoted to bring religious harmony.<sup>31</sup>

Money in politics and misused of power in Pakistan is considered a legitimate action that is a serious challenge to political stability. In the general elections of 10 October 2002, ISI and NAB were used in formulation of PML (Q) as well as the government of Mir Zafar Ullaha Khan Jamili.<sup>32</sup> Mir Zafar Ullaha Khan Jamili had failed in monitoring the policies of General Musharf and had to resign. Ch. Shujhat Hussian held the office as acting Prime Minister. Shoukat Aziz (having no constituency, no vote bank and only nomination of PML(Q) appointed as a third dummy prime minister to assistance the policies of General Mushraf. Missing persons, the suspension of the Chief Justice, the lawyers' movement, operations in Sawat and Balochistan (murder of Sardar Ali Akbar Bugti), Lal Misjid operation, institutional corruption, assassination of Benazir Bhutto created political instability and security risks for the stability of Pakistan.<sup>33</sup> The seven points' agenda turned Pakistan into a banana state.<sup>34</sup>

In the general elections of 2008, PPP obtained majority seats. Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani held the office as a prime minister. On 18 August 2008, four provincial assemblies passed a

resolution that General Mushraf had to seek a vote of confidence otherwise; ready for impeachment and resigned.<sup>35</sup> Main Muhammad Sammro held the office as an acting president of Pakistan. After contesting presidential election, Asif Ali Zardari held the office of president. NRO cases (contempt of court), civil-military relations, centre-Punjab relations especially the worst conditions in Balochistan, mismanagement of economy, energy crises, hike prices, institutional corruption, sectarianism, terrorism, militancy, law and order situation are main challenges to political stability. Moreover the government should took more initiatives against 160 million population that having illiteracy (37.8 %), unemployment, poverty (the 73.6 population is still living below two-dollars per day), 41 populations is without sanitation, 6.5 children are out of school, 35.9 to 31 million have no access to safe water. 85000 people had suffered with HIV/aids and 26.5 female are in labour class.

### **Conclusion**

Lack of resources, lack of foreign investment and huge military expenditures are constant challenges to political stability. Military bureaucratic-establishment, rigging in elections, coalition governments, feudalism, bitter center-provincial relations, political victimization, (a selective accountability), institutional corruption, lack of comprehensive policies, military's interference in politics, regional political parties (personalistic-character), economy as well as state power for specific classes' are other challenges to political stability that had weakened the democratic system, democratic values and political institutions. To address the issue of political stability in Pakistan is needed such initiatives to improve the status of the political institutions, regular free and fair elections, democratic temperament of political parties, sincere leadership, transparency and comprehensive accountability system. Moreover, the issue of Political stability should address through reconciliation, compassions and sharing of the all stakeholders.

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