

**ISLAMIZATION PROCESS IN PAKISTAN: IMPLEMENTATION OF
ISLAMIC LAWS AGAINST SOCIALISM SCHEME OF BHUTTO BY
PAKISTAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE (PNA) AND ZIA**

Sumaira Bibi

Ph.D Scholar, Abbottabad University of Science and Technology
sumairatahir514@yahoo.com

Abstract

The basic aim of this research is to analyze the political situation during 1977 elections and after the alliance of the Rightest Wing. Pakistan People's Party was declared successful in the election 1977. The PNA refused to accept the results and alleged massive rigging in polls, led to apolitical deadlock in the country. PNA started street agitation against malpractices in election 1977. Consequently, this agitation provided another opportunity for the military to takeover. Theoretically, the purpose of this article is to discuss crucial political issues and causes, which brought heterogeneous political groups into one alliance named PNA, and to what extent PNA has been successful in implementation of Islamic Laws under the umbrella of Zia's military regime against the socialism scheme of Bhutto or their involvement in politics that was merely supposed attain political powers. The paper critically analyzes the role of PNA in inculcating Islam in politics.

Keyword: Right Wing; Islamization; Alliance; Islamic laws; socialism

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) was formed in January 1977 to tackle Pakistan People's Party in the forthcoming elections. All opposition parties including number of religious and political groups who have bitterly opposed Bhutto's social and economic policies adjoined together. According to the schedule, elections were to be held during summers 1977, however

on January 7, 1977, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto announced early elections with the aim to give insufficient time to opposition parties and influence their arrangements and preparations for the forthcoming elections¹. The main problem for PPP was to tackle nine-party alliance (PNA) that comprised of religious and conservatives parties to curb the hegemony of PPP during the elections of 1977. The analysts interpreted this phenomenon as the rise of a major fundamentalist's Rightest Wing into the political arena in the history of Pakistan. However, this phenomenon can be viewed as protest or a rebuke to the ruling party 'Pakistan People's Party'. The protest led by PNA had largely emphasized to implement Islamic laws, but later paved the way to military coup in April 1977. Theoretically, the purpose of this article is to show different causes of the clash among political institutions and explanations of the military coups, which had been **in fact** integral to the same system.

However, PPP was declared successful in the elections, hence initially Bhutto did not take them seriously, but soon after election, PNA refused to accept the results and alleged massive rigging in the polls. PNA's ability to attract large crowds to their call for meetings shocked the administration and reluctantly they had to decide somewhat greater to break the alliance and stabilize their political supremacy after having heavy mandate in elections.² The most prominent member of the alliance was Air Marshal Asghar Khan of the Tehri-k-Istaqlal. According to PNA the election commission had facilitated the PPP members and they are not satisfied with the announced results of the election commission, hence started countrywide campaign by demanding to hold new polls. This situation led to a political deadlock in the country. Bhutto kept insisting on the legitimacy of election and offered PNA leaders to negotiate but they preferred to pressurize on government through planned disorders. It was in these crucial circumstances that army for the third time in Pakistan's short history decided to intervene in the political affairs of country.³

1.2. POLITICAL DOMINANCE OF PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

The political era during 1971-1977 came to be known as single party period. Lawrence Ziring, while commenting on this aspect of Pakistani Politics says, "The Pakistani Politics has always been dominated by a single personality who with the help of civil police and military bureaucracies has managed to cope with the basic problems of national survival"⁴. Politics has always been a child of expediency, a play of power and a stage where man's self-interests becomes his greatest interests. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto has learned during his study in Europe and America that power and politics are synonymous. As a rich Sindhi Aristocrat, he was intelligent at early age and acted as a docile whiz kid of Ayub and brilliant defender of his policies. The moment he found that the Ayub Regime is losing popular support, he became turncoat and publicly denounced the system, which he had defended.⁵ Omer Noman has described Bhutto's Personality in the following words:

"Two broad characteristics of Bhutto are common. The first sees him as an ideological schizophrenic. One dimension consists of a secular, modern socialists, the other of a conservative representative modern. The later tendency dominated hence the conservative flavor of PPP rule. The characterization dismisses this theory of personality conflict. It sees Bhutto as a 'power craftsman' and a practitioner of real politics, interested in power, and moving according to the conception of what was most advantageous in the gaining and maintaining of it. While the former view is somewhat superficial, attributing excessive importance to Bhutto's supposed split personality, the later perception can be supplemented by specifying the structural choices facing Bhutto. They determined the matrix within which Bhutto could operate⁶."

Federal Security Force was created in October 1972, with the headquarters at Lahore, and after about eight months, FSF was given a statutory status by a legislative enactment. The army was unhappy and refused to cooperate with the government because soon after its creation, it became a powerful instrument against all political and social groups.⁷ Moreover, Mr. Bhutto as a staunch advocator of social justice and human rights, applied double standard in practicing his government policies by putting serious constraints on civil liberties in the country. The harshest example of such a denial of fundamental rights to the people was his refusal to allow the opposition press to operate freely. Consequently, many daily newspapers were banned. The English weekly *OUTLOOK* and daily *Sun* were closed because they were critical of People's Party and Bhutto's coercion Policies⁸. Craig Baxter has described Bhutto's Security Force in these words,

“The formation of the Federal Security Force as body whose primary loyalty was to the Prime Minister heralded an increasing crackdown on Political opposition figures. Many were arrested, if widespread reports are correct, some were killed or tortured. Political parties such as National Awami Party were banned, and leaders of these groups including Khan Abdul Wali Khan of the NAP was charged with treason⁹.”

Mr. Bhutto on the other hand left no alternate civilian government as he appeared a shrewd politician and ruled the country with an iron hand. Bhutto was of the view that 'Bonapartism' within the military had been the main cause of political problems in the country, so it had to be root-out. Keeping in mind the political position of military, he tried to restrict the pattern of civil-military relations¹⁰. Further, in the context of 1971 war, he utilized the unfavorable condition of military among masses and the act of military takeover was declared as "High Treason"¹¹. Bhutto's personality was completely intolerant to any opposition to him. The

Provincial government of National Awami Party (NAP) and Jamiyat Ulema Islam (JUI) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan were dismissed and their leaders were put in jail. Several of them were detained and inhumanly tortured. Twenty-four opposition leaders were murdered and many other threatened that their wives and daughters will be abducted if they did not abrogate opposing Bhutto.¹² Bhutto didn't want to rely on the simple victory of 1977 election; rather he wanted status and stature to satisfy him that he is an indispensable statesman in Pakistan. His psyche compelled him to content with the entire kingdom and all its subjects. The PNA's grievances revolved around Bhutto's personal life, his family background, and his arrogant demeanor.¹³ *Muhajir* force since then had been a dominant force in politics of Karachi, which further strengthened the PNA, because *muhajirs* were against the policies of Bhutto and wanted to eradicate him and his sympathizers from the scene of Pakistani Politics.¹⁴

1.3. AMBITIOUS OBJECTIVES; ESTABLISHING LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT BY BHUTTO

As it has been discussed earlier that Bhutto considered himself as an indispensable statesman, tried to cut the political influence of other parties and showed intolerance towards his opposition. His struggle to maintain his political hegemony was against the democratic process of Pakistan's politics as Pakistan itself was the product of political and constitutional struggle.¹⁵ During these days Bhutto was so obliged to China's role in befriending Pakistan along with the maintenance of his supremacy and curiosity to win the polls, so he adopted Mao Zedong's dress simply to make similarity with the Chinese President and sensed that we are not only standing with the re-election, but also passionate to mark Pakistan in the 'Third World Circle', while India was struggling with its two year 'State of Emergency'.

Bhutto over-estimated his popularity, and totally ignored the strength of his opponents. He even belabored his political image under the notion that even the army had been overawed by his brilliance and his sound judgment and political manipulation. But the history has proved that he was patently wrong in his assumptions. His rivals are still alive and the armed forces have mesmerized by their power and devotion with their profession because they had gone to do some heart-searching after their humiliating defeat in East Pakistan. Further, at the time when Bhutto's Government was in crises, the military was in the hands of commanders who had not been blemished by the stigma of defeat¹⁶. Robert LaPorte has summed up the inconsistencies of the Bhutto's regime in following words:

"I saw, if Bhutto regime's effectiveness was measured by the amount of political activity undertaken by the first few years, it would have to rate high. However, intensity of political activity is not the sole measure of effectiveness. Some problems have been solved, some problems remain, and some problems appear to defy solutions. Bhutto seems to have balanced precariously, at times political repression and political freedom and toleration. An early move on the part of the regime was to lift controls from the press and other media. Soon after several other leading editors, publishers and newsmen were arrested and incarcerated for exercising this freedom. Another move was the workers to demand high wages. A move balanced by police and military actions against striking industrial workers in Karachi, which resulted in hundreds of arrests and several deaths. Finally, the regime encouraged the return of parliamentary form of government. Thus, the first few years of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto were a mixture of successes and failures. The problems were severe and demanding, and remedies provided so far seem to attack not the cause but more often effects¹⁷."

1.4. ELECTION 1977

The ruling party PPP announced the date for General Election on 7 and 10 March. The ruling party was pretending for clear victory and most political analysts also thought that given the divided opposition PPP would definitely sweep. The PPP sought a fresh manifesto that consisted of socio-economic policies, services to Islam and achievements in foreign policy. On the other hand, PNA articulated public grievances against the government. According to the expectations and assumptions, PPP won the elections and PNA refused to accept the results and alleged massive rigging in the polls. The situation created political chaos and PNA started wide range protest against the Bhutto government.¹⁸

Table-1: National Assembly Elections

Party	No. of Candidates	No. of Seats Won	Percentage Vote Cast
PPP	191	155	58.1
PNA	168	36	35.4
PML (Qayyum)	37	1	
Independent	324	8	
Minor Parties	21	0	
Total	741	200	

1.5. RIGHT WING POPULISM

Right Wing Political Ideology advocates ‘populism’ and laissez-fair society in which all transactions should be free from government interference. It is concerned with the term populism because populism appeals the interests of a common man rather than elite groups of

a society¹⁹. In the early 1980s, the right wing political parties began to address the basic needs of a common man. As they considered that the slogan of *Roti, Kapra aur Makan* (bread, clothing and shelter) had not been fulfilled by the Bhutto government. Consequently, PNA had been able to attract the masses towards its platform. PNA had no political agenda to motivate the people except to raise the slogan of *Nizam-i-Mustafa* (system of the Holy Prophet) that led to formation of PNA and confront the PPP. The PNA was a conglomerate of disparate parties ranging from extreme right to left. Pakistan Muslim League Pir-Pagara, Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP), Jamiat-i-Ulema Islam (JUI), Jamiat-i-Pakistan (JUP), Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), National Democratic Party (NDP), Tehrik-i-Istaqlal-i-Pakistan (TIP), Khaksar and All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. The only common thing among these political parties was their hatred towards Bhutto regime²⁰.

1.6. MASS MOVEMENT

PNA triggered widespread movement against irregularities in the General Elections 1977, Bhutto's inability to handle political chaos led the situation for third Martial Law and the reassertion of the military dominant role in the country. Furthermore, some of the enthusiastic Bhutto's Cabinet members and supporters had been involved in such activities which created doubts about the credibility of the election results. Mass Movement which was started at a limited scale agitation turned into mass movement because bureaucratic and businessmen extended financial support to this movement resulted in political dead lock in country. PNA succeeded to draw support from all political quarters who had developed grievances against the PPP Government over the last 5-1/2 years. To catch this support, PNA raised the slogan of *Nizam-i-Mustafa* (the Islamic System of Government)²¹. However, the Slogan meant different meaning for different ethnic, professional and religious groups; for instance, the orthodox segment meant the implementation of *Quran* and *Sunnah*. For lawyers, Journalists and other

groups, it was the restoration of civil and political rights. The business community considered this movement as an end to the socialistic policies of the government. Hence PNA articulated the grievances from different spheres and sections of the society. Mosques, Schools and other religious institutions were used to inculcate the slogan²². The casualties during first two months had reached to 290. Thousands of people wounded and arrested during street agitation. The 1977 Mass Movement was quite different from 1968 movement because it was more widespread and engulfed small towns²³. At the Initial stages of the movement, besieged government of Bhutto has held meeting with the top brass of military on regular bases. These meetings were of course need of the hour to negotiate PNA's problem with military and demonstrate that Bhutto's government is enjoying military support. The Army was called out to control the "Jaloas and Gehroa" situation in three major cities. The Army was given wide powers as Bhutto government admitted the frustrated situation in Karachi, Lahore and Hyderabad, which made it imperative to hand over these cities to Army²⁴. Soon after the imposition of Martial Law in three cities, PNA had immediately appealed the Services Chiefs not to lend any support to Bhutto who has monopolized the election. After short time, Army refused to attack the innocent civilians. In this context, (Retd.) Air Marshal Asghar Khan wrote a letter to Chief of Staff and the Army officers stating that

"Bhutto has vitiated the constitution and he is guilty of a grave crime against the people. It is not your duty to support his illegal regime nor can you be called upon to kill your own people so that he can continue a little longer in office. Let it not be said that Pakistan Armed forces are degenerated police force, fit only for killing unarmed civilian. As the men of honor, it is your responsibility to do your duty and the call of duty in these circumstances is not the blind obedience of unlawful commands. There comes a little in the lives of nations when each man has to task himself whether he is doing right thing. For

you that time has come. Answer this call honestly and save Pakistan. God be with you²⁵.”

In the process of election campaign, he had used Inter-Service intelligence. But the opposition was also quick to denounce the results described it as a travesty and indeed stolen by the PPP. In response, PNA demanded the cancellation of results and holding of new elections²⁶.

1.7. PROTEST OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO GAIN POLITICAL INTERESTS OR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC LAWS

Geneses of Pakistan Movement revolves around two themes,

- (i) *Ulemas* who were against the creation of Pakistan and opposed largely the theory of Territorial Nationalism, they were in support of creating an Islamic State rather than an independent state for the Muslims. Basically, the leader of Jamat-e-Islami, Maulana Maududi considered that Secularism, Nationalism and Democracy are contrary to the Islamic system of a state²⁷.
- (ii) Modern liberal Politicians had advocated at large scale the creation of a separate Islamic state in a purely political context.

In such scenario, the modernists and Religious scholars both had used Islam to shape their arguments and advance their respective political objectives²⁸. The conflict of Election 1977 and PNA movement was the culmination that had started in the early years of Pakistan's history. But the parameters during these days were not religious rather question was about fair election and rigging that provoked the military to intervene. The religious parties could even raise the slogan of *Nizam-e-Mustafa* before the election or during Bhutto's 5-1/2-year previous regime. Bhutto had made compatibilities between Islam and Socialism. The socio-economic

egalitarianism of socialism was deeply embedded in the spirit of Islam and Islam may have contributed in the development of socialism as Islam came into existence more than 1200 years before socialism²⁹.

1.8. COPING WITH CHAOS BY MILITARY INVENTION, COUP MAKERS' GRIEVANCES

Theoretical literature has provided two approaches which explain the phenomenon of frequent occurrence of military coups. According to Societal Approach, low level of institutionalization of political structure and high level of political participation, political instability, low level of mobilization and loss of legitimacy of Government are the main factors to provoke military coup. The other approach explains about the clash of institutions and soldiers' perspectives which is based on the grievances of coup makers³⁰.

The fall of Bhutto's Government in 1977 is one of the most misrepresented and misunderstood event in the history. For PPP *Jiyalas* it was a military aggression and greatest distortion and injustices of human history. Even many Bhutto's opponents see Zia's military coup as an act of materialistic aggression. However contemporary sources have elaborated the political chaos and uncertainty under which Bhutto had brought the state on the verge of civil war through his intransigence and Zia was compelled to step in before the situation deteriorated beyond control. After the death of more than 350 anti-PPP protestors, mass rigging in the election 1977, several years of Bhutto's tyranny and suppression of other political parties there were no alternative of any civilian government to govern in place of Bhutto. To fill this vacuum, Zia staged military coup. MQM grew into the lap of military rule there is no doubt that if PPP would have been there in power it would have used all possible measure to destroy this newly born party. All religious parties did not fight ever for the implementation of Islamic jurisdiction

and Sunnah they rather fought through PNA or other alliances since the creation of Pakistan for the preservation of their political interests which was far beyond from religious or Islamic interests.³¹

Many professionals, economists have testified that after many years of poor performance of Bhutto the country gained rapid progress under president Zia, Shahid Javed Burki has made the comparison between Mr. Bhutto and Zia in the following words,

*Pakistan's relations with most donor agencies had suffered during the Bhutto period, in part because of the unhappiness of some of these agencies with the quality of management and in part because of the aggressive neutral foreign policy persuade by Prime Minister Bhutto. The World Bank's programs have been cut down in size and the United states agency for International development was maintaining o token presence in the country.*³²

1.9. ZIA ISLAMIZATION SCHEME

Zia's Islamization Scheme was in fact a political scheme to stay in government and to survive for long period. On the other hand, long outstanding demand of Ulema and religious parties seemed to be fulfilled under military rule. In order to consider the agitation of PNA Zia praised the spirit of Islam in following words:

*"It proves that Pakistan which was created in the name of Islam, will continue to survive if only it sticks with Islam. That is why I consider the Islamic system as an essential prerequisite for the country."*³³

During eleven years of Zia's rule a common man could not be surprised at the amount spiritual and moral zest that he has invested into the movement of Islamization of Pakistani society. He

was honest and serious but the steps he took never taken by any religious scholars or statesman towards the fulfillment of Islamization program because these could not become the law of the states without the approval of National Assembly. Further Zia's sudden death in an air clash and the subsequent government of PPP (Dec,2, 1998-August 6, 1990) weakened the Islamization programs started by the Zia. Because Benazir Bhutto, daughter of Bhutto had grievances against Zia and she personally held responsible Zia for the unhappy ending of his father's regime. Besides internal critics the international community, Western observers and commentators considered Islam a cosmetic regionalism of President Zia's personal ambitions to stay in power.³⁴

1.10. CONCLUSION

The conclusion deals with the basic issue of use of Islam in Politics. This issue has always played role in Pakistan's politics. Islam is indeed a binding force which binds different ethnic and cultural groups living in Pakistan and there is no harm to gain political power for the implementation of Islamic laws also there is nothing wrong if any religious party comes into political power as Islam also needs political power. But sometimes Islam has been used as a tool to address and to suppress the ethnic dissatisfaction. Further in Pakistan Islam has been divided into different school of thoughts. Even these sects cannot resolve any issue unanimously in the context of Islam. Besides this dilemma, the masses are also divided on this issue, for modernists community it is no more an issue whether constitution is Islamic or Un-Islamic, but religious and conservative communities are strictly following Islam in their daily life.

In short Pakistan continues to be a state in which political dissensions remains rampant and Pakistan's Army has little patience for such a state of affairs. However, in case of 1977 military

hesitated for a long time although some of the opposition leaders were continuously inviting the military to take over but military supported the Bhutto regime even at the peak of political crises. There were some external factors involved as we know the deteriorating relationship of USA with Pakistan was further source of encouragement for the coup makers as they were facing both internal and external pressure.

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³Op-cit, Mehrunnisa Ali, P-80-83

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⁵Ibid,2.

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⁷ Ibid,177.

⁸ Ibid,69.

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¹⁰Hassan Askari Rizvi, "*Military and Politics in Pakistan*" (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1986), P-251.

¹¹ Article 245 of the Constitution enforced on August 14, 1973.

¹²See the reports "*Torture Claims in India and Pakistan*", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 13, 1977.

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¹⁴ Ibid,

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²¹ Khalid Bin Sayeed, *"Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change"*, (New York: Praeger, 1980), P-157.

²² Muhammad Asghar Khan, *"Generals in Politics: Pakistan, 1958-82"*, P-122

²³ According to the official record the casualties were 250. The PNA sources claimed that 296 persons were killed.

²⁴*The Times*, 22 April, 1977.

²⁵ Available at <http://bhaur.blogspot.com/2010/02/asghar-khans-letter-to-officers-of.html>, Accessed on 20, July 2016

²⁶ Ibid, 1.

²⁷ Maulana Maududi, who opposed the idea of Pakistan and after its establishment emerged as the chief spokesman of an Islamic State. but some other religious scholars e.g. Maulana Shabir Ahmad Usmani supported the struggle and creation of Pakistan.

²⁸ Syed Mujawwar Hussain Shah, *"Bhutto, Zia and Islam"* Available at www.Bhutto.org,P-8. Accessed 20, July 2016.

²⁹ Op-Cit, *"Awakening the People"*, P-95.

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³³ *Pakistan Times*, 6 July, 1977.

³⁴ Op-cit, Shaukat Ali, P-210.