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From Elitist Authoritarianism to Bonapartist Populism: The Bhutto Factor in Pakistan

Abstract *Right from its inception in 1947, Pakistan has been ruled by an elitist pattern inherited by British Colonial rule. After eleven years of authoritarian dictatorship under General Ayub Khan, the people of Pakistan launched a movement that was a class-conscious movement in its nature. The movement gave rise to Bhutto, and after the sad dismemberment of the Eastern wing of the country, he took over the power. Though he implemented the unmatched egalitarian reforms in various sectors but espoused "Bonapartist" actions not only against his political opponents but his own party stalwarts, journalists and trade unionists, which shadowed his revolutionary reformist agenda. Such "fascist" populism paved the way for another military dictatorship which tore up the very fabric of democratic norms and civilian supremacy. The study examines the transition from elitist authoritarianism to Bonapartist populism. The regime shift was followed by the installation of various elitist groups led to the re-emergence of the same elitist authoritarian rule cultured by Gen. Ayub and his ancestors.*

Key Words: Civil-military-bureaucratic Oligarchy, Elitist Rule, Martial Law, Bonapartism, Feudalism, Populism, Authoritative Rule, Fascism, Egalitarian

Introduction

Pakistan inherited the British Colonial standards of civil-military oligarchic rule and the country had been ruled on the very same patterns till the dismemberment of the eastern wing of the country in 1971. The system was based on the British colonial civil-military-bureaucratic elitist oligarchic system coupled with the support of feudal and other privileged classes. This elitist system ruled the country till October 1958 and then continued during the martial law regimes of Ayub and Yahya. It took nine years to frame an indigenous constitution in 1956. On 8th October 1958, the then retired military turned civilian bureaucrat president Skanadar Mirza imposed Martial Law by abrogating the newly framed constitution with the support of the then commander-in-Chief, General Ayub Khan. But just after 20 days, Skandar Mirza was deposed and General Ayub Khan himself took over the country. General Ayub toppled the newly enacted constitution and remained at the helm of affairs of the country for more than ten years till 25th March 1969, when another "fresh" military general, Yahya Khan, took over power as a result of a rigorous class-conscious movement against Ayub Khan. By conceding the most popular demand of the movement against Ayub Khan, Yahya held an election on the basis of a universal adult franchise. After a clear-cut split mandate on east and west basis, a severe crisis resulted in the dismemberment of the country on 16th December 1971. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto formed the government in the leftover of Pakistan as the leader of the majority party of the western wing of the country on 20th December 1971. Bhutto took over the country as the first-ever popularly elected leader, first as president and civilian chief martial law administrator, and after the Constitution of 1973 as the prime minister. Bhutto introduced a set of egalitarian reforms to appease his electoral support base, predominantly the downtrodden and hitherto oppressed classes. Perhaps Pakistan was the only country out of the Socialist world where such hefty reforms were implemented. But on the other hand, the highhandedness and some "fascist" and vindictive actions of the Bhutto government severely eclipsed the egalitarian reforms. The study examines the transition from authoritative elitist rule to a popularly elected rule under Bhutto, the undemocratic tendencies of the first-ever democratically elected government as a result of a process of change initiated by the movement of 1968-69 and

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consequently return of the same very authoritative rule under General Zia Ul Haq and even today country could not establish a genuine and strong democratic dispensation.

Research Question/Objective

1. How has the Civil-military bureaucratic oligarchic system ruled Pakistan from its inception till its dismemberment in 1971?
2. How has the process of change started with the class-conscious movement ended with the fall of Bhutto?
3. How far did the highhandedness and fascist tendencies of popular government under Bhutto pave the way for the complete reversal of the process of change?

Methodology

The research is analytical in nature and based on inductive and deductive methods. The study made extensive use of both primary and secondary sources with both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Significance of the Study

This study is relevant in modern-day Pakistan because authoritarian rules have been instilled in the country for a long time. Military generals ruled the country directly for half of the country's independence. In appearance, even the political leaders are democratic, but in practice, they are Bonapartists. They emphatically collect votes by championing democratic values. When they gain power, they make decisions arbitrarily, reflecting despotism. Bhutto led the common masses' class-conscious movement, ascended to power on their behalf, and despite might egalitarian reforms, he also materialized fascist tendencies once in power. This research will concentrate on the rule of the authoritative civil and military elite before and after Bhutto and Bhutto's transition from populist to "fascist ."(Oldenburg 2017)

The First Phase

After the creation of Pakistan, the founding father, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, known as Quaid-i-Azam, died within one year, and the country's leadership couldn't frame its indigenous constitution based on the ideals set during Pakistan Movement. Consequently, the legacy of the military-bureaucratic-feudal elitist oligarchy of the British colonial era strengthened its rule on the very same pattern. (Ishtiaq Ahmad 2017)

Since the country's founding in 1947, twenty-nine of the thirty-eight elected provincial assemblies have been dissolved prematurely. Out of a total of seventy-six total chief ministers, twenty-four were removed by either the federal government or the heads of the state. After 23 years of the country after its inception, the first-ever general elections could be held, and these first universal adult franchise-based elections were held by a military dictator General Yahya Khan in December 1970.

Pakistan came into existence as a result of a democratic mass movement; hence six heads of the state were either civil bureaucrats or military generals. These non-elected heads of the states ruled the country for more than thirty-five years, they dissolved unconstitutionally seven out of ten national assemblies and eight out of total fifteen prime ministers were ousted from their offices. (Malik H., 2001)

Another thirteen chief ministers were unable to maintain a majority in the assembly and resigned as a result. For the majority of the country's history, by and large, the landed aristocracy and feudal lords controlled the national political landscape. Military dictators gave special treatment to feudal lords and religious clergymen in their military regimes because they were natural allies with whom they shared interests. (Malik, 2001)

In pursuit of legitimacy, military dictators teamed up with the country's landed lords and religious clergy. By and large, the political organizations are dominated by a few large landowners who vigorously maintained their property interests not just in the party but also in the cabinet and

parliament. The civil-military bureaucracy gained the upper hand in the 1950s and 1960s due to weak democratic political institutions, and the balance of power moved in their favour. The Civil-Military Oligarchy formed links with the United States and resultantly, the interdependency on global, domestic and regional fronts further weakened the already weak and poor politics as an institution. (S. P. Cohen 2006)

The First Martial Law

Ayub Khan damaged the political system by enacting the Elective Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO), which effectively removed national politicians from the picture. More than six thousand politicians were made victims of this law and restricted to take part in politics from national to a local level and from both wings of the country. False cases were filed against a number of reputed politicians who actively participated in the Pakistan Movement as a tool of political victimization. From the national to local level, elective institutions including political organizations, student unions, professional institutions and political parties, were banned by Ayub Khan. A large number of political leaders who were EBDOed remained actively involved in the Pakistan movement and played their role in the creation of Pakistan. Keeping in view the emotional appeal of Islam among the common masses Ayub regime actively "used" Islam through public media to project General Ayub as a "good Muslim". (Akbar, 1997)

Successive martial laws hampered the country's democratic process, triggered constitutional problems, undermined political institutions, and hindered the state's progress and development. When questions about the defense budget, promotions, retirements, disciplinary measures, and other matters are brought before the parliament, they promote civilian supremacy, which has never been allowed. Even under Bhutto's robust civilian rule, the defense budget could not be brought up for debate in the parliament. (Kapur 2006)

Political resentment was at its height when Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Pakistan's founder, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, showed her willingness to run for presidential elections. Almost every opposition party backed Fatima Jinnah, but Ayub Khan had won the elections by alleged unfair means. The opposition alleged that the Ayub regime did massive rigging to win the election. The political tension was suppressed for the time being as war broke out between Pakistan and India in the month September of 1965. As the war ended as a result of the Tashkent Agreement, Bhutto raised his "populist rhetoric" on the agreement and fueled rising tensions among Pakistanis, particularly in Punjab. (Bahadur 1998)

Movement of 1968-69

A momentous campaign against Ayub Khan, led by workers, students, lawyers, and trade unions and backed by left-wing professors, intellectuals and union leaders, gave Bhutto an opportunity to emerge in the country's political scene as he led the class-conscious movement in the western wing of the country i.e. present-day Pakistan. During the Tashkent Agreement negotiations, Bhutto and Ayub Khan had developed severe disagreements. He took up the Kashmir issue by initiating a public movement against Ayub Khan for "selling out to India" in Tashkent. (Jaffrelot 2016)

Bhutto favored normalizing ties with China and the Soviet Union. He was of the firm view that Pakistan's participation in military pacts like CENTO and SEATO made this impossible. Later on, after coming into power, Bhutto left these defense pacts. In the end, Bhutto chose to make his own political party along with the help of left-wing scholars and intellectuals like J. A. Raheem, Dr. Mubashar Hassan, Sheikh Muhammad Rasheed and others. When Bhutto returned from his summer trip to Europe, he decided that the moment had come to launch a new political party. Bhutto announced to form his own political party on 27th September 1967 at the residence of Nawab Rasool Bux Talpur at Hyderabad, along with J.A. Raheem, a retired bureaucrat and a member of the left-wing intelligentsia. By leading the movement, based on class struggle, against Ayub Khan during the turbulent months of 1968-69, Bhutto emerged as the most popular leader and genuine competitor for the slot of prime minister. (Jones 2003)

Ayub Khan was constitutionally bound to hand over charge to the speaker National Assembly in case of his resignation, but he handed over charge to another military general Yahya Khan, perhaps to

avoid handing over charge to a speaker from the Eastern wing of the country. [\(Bari 2020\)](#)

The thirteen years long Martial Law under General Ayub and General Yahya Khan severely suppressed the human rights and political activities in the country. The resentment paved the way for a strong movement against the dictatorial regime which was an extension of the elitist authoritarian and suppressive rule of the British Imperialist era in the Indian Subcontinent. [\(Jalal, Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective 2008\)](#) The tradition of authoritarian rule ended with the sad dismemberment of the Eastern wing of the country in 1971.

The Populist Era

In the aftermath of the 1968 political upheaval, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto rose to power as a result of a primarily class-conscious campaign. Bhutto has opposed the interests of the elite, feudal class, industrialists, and civil and military establishment despite being a feudal himself. Along with the failings of Bhutto and the PPP, the classes affected by his reforms played an important role in his removal from office. Either Bhutto and his PPP were capable and sincere to bring about a substantial and fundamental change in the production relations of the elitist and conservative system of status-quo or not but the class conscious movement of 1968-69 seriously threatened the system. This very elitist system has ruled the country since its creation in 1947. During the eventful and class-consciousness years of 1968-69, Bhutto and PPP emerged as the most popular and leading force of a socialist change in the country. [\(Burki, Pakistan under Bhutto, 1971-1977 1988 \)](#)

The masses flocked thronged the streets in favour of the newly established party, quickly elevating it to the position of most popular political force in the Western wing of the country. [\(Ayoob 2014\)](#)

Nonetheless, the PPP's marriage to the downtrodden classes did not result in the birth of a socialist state, as the first PPP government was only able to implement a well chanted reformist agenda, such as agrarian reforms and the nationalization of large commercial and industrial enterprises, which were placed under the control of bureaucrats with no experience or interest to run them in an appropriate manner. Unluckily for the common man, Pakistan's feudal lords and capitalists were able to avoid the fate that the Chinese and Soviet elites faced after a Socialist revolution in 1917 in the Soviet Union and 1949 in China. Although Bhutto couldn't succeed in leading a socialist revolution like Chairman Mao and Lenin but both conflicting classes perceived him as a mighty leader who took a stand for the interests of the hitherto oppressed classes. As a result, he was regarded as both the 'devil' and a 'messiah' by opposing classes: devil by oppressors and messiah by downtrodden classes. [\(L. Khan, Pakistan's other story: the 1968-9 revolution 2009\)](#)

When Bhutto assumed command of Pakistan's affairs on 20th December 1971, defeat and despair surrounded him: India had occupied about 6,000 square miles of land, and more than 90000 prisoners, both army men and civilians, were held in Indian prisons, and the economy had been adversely disrupted. Bhutto gave the nation hope. For the first time, a technology transfer program for military hardware production was carried out. Bhutto made the decision to beef up the country's defenses. He was well aware of the challenges of obtaining speedy self-sufficiency, so he chose to begin a huge defense production program with the help of China and France. This defense manufacturing infrastructure, like the federal security force and nuclear policy, was built with the purpose of cutting off military institution relations with foreign military suppliers, particularly the United States. [\(S. P. Cohen 2006\)](#)

Bhutto was born politically into Pakistan's establishment and knew much better than any other politician. It was not possible for the country's powerful ruling elite to reclaim its lost power and to rebuild their chanted public following. No other charismatic and popular leader in the western half of the country could accomplish this "Herculean" job but Bhutto. Before Bhutto arrived in Pakistan from the USA, where he was to plead the case of Pakistan against Indian aggression in the Eastern wing of the country, at midday on 20th December 1971, his coming in power had already been discussed and realized in Washington and Florida. The armed forces wanted to portray Bhutto as the "villain" for East Pakistan's disintegration. When Qayum Khan failed to win the 1970 elections, a powerful element of the ruling elitist establishment forged a relationship with Bhutto. [\(Majumdar, Pakistan: Jinnah to the Present Day 1998\)](#)

When Bhutto returned to Pakistan, he told his party Comrades about his negotiations with President Nixon and was convinced that he was not anti-America and his influence in China paved the way for America to develop its diplomatic relations with China under the Nixon administration. Nixon's China strategy was praised and he attempted to dispel his image as a warmonger by stating that he desired a peaceful Subcontinent, something the military dictatorship had failed to achieve. (Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan: 1967-1977 1998*)

Bhutto had extended discussions with the U.S. administration, including President Nixon and others, before returning to Pakistan. At the United Nations, he arranged a lunch for George Bush and other permanent delegates. According to Lal Khan, the entire nation felt humiliated and questioned the role of the military in the dismemberment of East Pakistan, and both Washington and Rawalpindi used Bhutto to get out of this situation. The "revolution" failed because Bhutto connived with the U.S. and Pakistan's powerful elitist rulers to gain rule. (L. Khan, *Pakistan's other story: the 1968-9 revolution 2009*)

After the country's eastern wing was tragically fragmented, General Gul Hassan and Air Marshal Rahim persuaded General Yahya Khan to bring Bhutto into government. One of the Yahya Junta Generals was passionately opposed to Bhutto and reportedly stated that if other Generals were unable to overthrow him, he would lead the coup to dismantle the PPP. Some senior military officers vowed to start a movement against GHQ as well. Even when he took control, this psychological mistrust persisted. (Raza., *Bhutto and Pakistan*, 134.)

Some of the senior military officers plotted a coup just two days before Bhutto came into power. Those officers were discharged from the army prematurely on 9th August 1972. As a result, the conspiring officials were not subjected to any significant disciplinary penalty. Despite the fact that Bhutto had no animosity toward the establishment and may have played a role in connivance with the then general junta to keep Sheikh Mujib out of power but even then, the generals were not willing to hand over power to Bhutto after the dismemberment of half of the country. (Nizami 2000)

The powerful military and civil bureaucracy inherited the powers from the British colonial era in India. After the military defeat in East Pakistan, Bhutto perceived it as an opportunity to bring these institutions under civilian supremacy. But he couldn't succeed in establishing ultimate civilian supremacy but rather became dependent on those unelected institutions for key decision making (Talbot 2012).

A Tri-Partite Agreement was reached between PPP and JUI-NAP alliance on 6th March 1972. NAP-JUI coalition had to support PPP to form a constitution under the agreement and PPP to acknowledge the mandate of opposition to form governments in the provinces. Though the appointment of the governor was the prerogative of the federal government but on the recommendation of the NAP-JUI alliance, Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil was appointed as governor of NWFP (KPK) and Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo as governor of Baluchistan. Bhutto's government, under the power of martial law, dismissed more than 1300 civil servants from service on the charges of incompetence and corruption, which created doubts among the opposition regarding their intentions of Bhutto to lift martial law which was promised in the Tri-partite Agreement. (Kaushik 1985)

After the formation of NAP-JUI governments in KPK and Baluchistan, Bhutto appointed Hayat Muhammad Khan Sherpao as the opposition leader. At the same time, Shepao was the federal minister of water and power just to put pressure on the provincial government. Khan Abdul Qayum Khan, a severe political rival of NAP, was given a portfolio in the interior ministry in the center. (M. A. Khan 1997)

Bhutto government and state media propagated the alleged "London Plan" to dismember Baluchistan and KPK to form a greater Pakhtunistan State.

PPP was not in the majority in NWFP(KPK) but Bhutto appointed Hayat Sherpao as governor without any consultation with the majority parties of the province.

Sardar Ghaus Bux Bizenjo was appointed Governor of Baluchistan after a few days' delay without consulting the NAP-JUI coalition, which controlled those two provinces. (Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan: 1967-1977 1998*)

On 10th February, a heavy arm cache of Soviet-type weapons was caught by Pakistani agencies which were reportedly sent to Bloch insurgents working for greater Baluchistan, comprising of Pakistani and Iranian Bloch areas. Taking the plea of this incident, Bhutto first replaced the governors

of Baluchistan and KPK on 14th February and then dismissed the elected government of Baluchistan with Aytta Ullah Mengal as chief minister in an undemocratic manner. The very next day, Mufti Mehmood CM KPK resigned in protest. A rigorous military operation was launched in Baluchistan which remained continued till 1977, when General Zia imposed martial law. Both the provinces were put under presidential rule by Bhutto. On the allegations of the alleged "London Plan" and actions against Pakistan, NAP was and in 1975 in the infamous Hyderabad Conspiracy case and Nap leaders including opposition leader Wali Kan were kept behind bars till the last day of Bhutto in power. (Hussain 1979)

Even his own colleagues were not immune to Bhutto's vengeance. When Ahmed Raza Qasuri criticized Bhutto and his policies in the National Assembly, his arms were broken, he was beaten, he was attacked and a gunshot struck his leg, allegedly by security forces on Bhutto's behest. Cases were registered against Mukhtar Rana, a PPP leader and MNA and a left-winger from Faisalabad and other trade unionists. Rana remained in jail for more than three years. (Kardar 1988)

NAP under Wali Khan was a great exponent of provincial autonomy and claimed to be a party with a socialist-leaning, but in the election of 1970, NAP could secure support only in KPK and Baluchistan. When Yahya Khan announced his plan to abolish NAP over lunch on 26th November 1971 with Bhutto, and Bhutto enthusiastically agreed, claiming that Wali Khan, his father and Ghaffar Khan and other party leaders of NAP were involved in anti-state activities but after coming into power Bhutto lifted the ban on NAP. (Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics* 2014).

Bhutto understood that a constitution could not be implemented in the NWFP and Baluchistan without the cooperation of the NAP-JUI coalition government. On the other hand, certain PPP leaders in NWFP and the Qayum Muslim League believe that the NAP-JUI coalition should not have been given such prominence. They also believed that the PPP and Qayum League might form a government in NWFP with the help of independents. (Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan: 1967-1977* 1998)

Bhutto kept pitting the two parties, the NAP and Qayum Khan, against each other, perpetuating the cycle of political animosity. Bhutto used his skills as a negotiator with the Qayum League to bring NAP to the negotiating table. On the other hand, his conversations with the NAP were ongoing in order to put pressure on Qayum Khan to form an alliance with him on his own terms. (Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan: 1967-1977* 1998)

Opposition alliance UDF arranged a public rally at Liaquat Bagh Rawalpindi on 23rd March 1973. The FSF, a paramilitary force, attacked the rally led by NAP leader Wali Khan at Liaquat Bagh on 23rd March 1973, killing a dozen of workers. Wali Khan narrowly escaped the assassination attempt. The law enforcement agencies and FSF were accompanied by PPP workers attacking the rally. (Bhatia, 1979)

On 23rd March 1973, opposition parties observed "Black Friday" against the Liaquat Bagh incident and demanded a genuine democratic system based on strong parliament and also boycotted the session of the national assembly, as well as launched protests against alleged authoritarian tactics such as the modification of the All Parties Constitutional Conference's agreed draft. (Majumdar, *Pakistan: Jinnah to the Present Day* 1998)

Wali Khan, the NAP's head and the opposition's leader accused Bhutto of being "counter-revolutionary" and rebuked him as "Adolph Bhutto" for dealing with dissent in "fascist" ways. (Haidar 1996)

At the request of the army, Bhutto agreed to put the Hamoodur Rahman Commission Report on hold and never publish it during his tenure, which created suspicions about his own role in the East Pakistan conflict. Asghar Khan considered joining Bhutto's PPP before joining the opposition camp. He was a harsh critic of Bhutto's "authoritarian" methods, and when he later offered him to join his PPP, they met for two hours. During the 1970 election campaign, however, Asghar Khan vehemently addressed public gatherings against PPP candidates, highlighting "Bhutto's" ambition and the dangers of his ascendancy. (Burki, *Pakistan under Bhutto, 1971-1977*. 1988)

Later on, Asghar Khan offered his cooperation to Bhutto's government in a press conference on the eve of the New Year in Lahore on three conditions including freedom of expression and speech, fulfillment of his promised economic agenda and negation of relations with Bangladesh. During the same press talk, he criticized the Bhutto's highhandedness against dissenting voices and vowed to

struggle against the government's oppressive actions. He claimed that Bhutto once offered him to join hands with him and if they did so, they could rule the country for the next twenty years and they could force Yahya Khan to hand over power to them. He further added that Bhutto said that he would rule the country with force as according to him, the nation could be ruled in an oppressive manner. He said that Bhutto had the agenda and program would be to "rule the masses and that they are stupid, and I know how to make them fool. Therefore, *danda* (stick) would be in my hand and no one would be able to stop me." (P. i. Khan 14th April 2013)

On 8th January 1972, former President Yahya Khan and Chief of Army General Abdul Hamid Khan were placed under house arrest. After developing differences with the top brass of the military in 1972, Prime Minister Bhutto ousted the Army Chief General Gul Hassan and the Air Chief Air Martial Rahim Khan in an "un-ceremonial" way and the charge of army chief was handed over to General Tikka Khan. On that day, Bhutto went public and declared, "Finally, today, we have destroyed the Bonapartist culture in Pakistan." As a result, Pakistan may now look forward to a bright future in the coming years. Unfortunately, it was not possible since the Generals were unwilling to give up their space. As a result, they declared martial law in 1977, executed the mighty Bhutto to remove him from the political arena, and began the US-led Afghan *jihad* in 1979. All of this gave Bonapartism a new lease of life and strengthened the Army's grip on Pakistan's politics and decision-making. (Fakhr Zamān 1973)

On 3rd March 1972, just after three months of coming into government, Bhutto took resignation from the then Army and Air Chiefs forcibly in an unprecedented manner. Bhutto charged them for being involved in "Bonapartist" activities. These senior military officers were instrumental in helping Bhutto come into power. After forceful resignation, they were taken to Lahore in the official escort of Governor Punjab. These services chiefs were kept hostage literally at the governor's house and then, after a few days, were sent to Spain and Germany as ambassadors. They enjoyed ambassadorial positions there for years. But when the opposition launched a massive campaign against the Bhutto government, they returned by resigning their ambassadorial portfolios and joining the opposition movement in 1977. (M. A. Khan 2005)

Bhutto accepted that to put curbs on the alleged "undemocratic" role of opposition. He made three constitutional amendments in the almost unanimously passed Constitution 1973. He introduced six amendments in the constitution to give more powers to the executive. (Mujamdar)

The labour reforms introduced by Bhutto did not cover the daily wages and even did not fix a minimum wage which created severe resentment among workers and left-wing party supporters. Violent clashes broke out between protesting workers and the government's law enforcement agencies which resulted in the killings and injuries of a number of workers. Miraj Muhammad Khan, a minister and left-wing ideologue of the party, resigned in protest. (Gayer 2014)

The Downfall

During his "democratic" rule, Bhutto arrested two governors, two provincial chief ministers, and forty-four members of the parliament, the majority of whom were from the opposition. Before the elections of 1977, Bhutto gave an extension of three years to the Chief Election commissioner. Just to pave the way for Bhutto's unopposed election, the opposition PNA's candidate Maulana Jan Muhammad Abbasi from Larkana was abducted by police and kept in custody till the last date for the nomination was passed. (Mazari 2001)

Along with Bhutto, his four provincial chief ministers, 19 other PPP leaders and feudal lords for the national assembly, and 26 for provincial assemblies were all elected unopposed. This large-scale unopposed election of governmental candidates severely harmed the elections' credibility and further eclipsed the image of Bhutto as being a democrat. Sindh Chief Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, Qureshi, Balochistan Chief Minister Mohammad Khan Barozai, KP Chief Minister Nasrullah Khattak, and Punjab Chief Minister Sadiq Hussain were also declared unopposed, along with 26 other Sindh Assembly candidates and 22 Baluchistan Assembly candidates, despite the fact that in Baluchistan opposition boycotted the elections. (Niazi 1991)

On 7th March, the national assembly elections results were announced. PPP secured more than 60 per cent of the total casted votes and secured 155 seats as compared to the nine-party opposition

alliance with only 36 seats. Every impartial analyst was of the view that PPP would win the elections but no one predicted such a landslide victory for the ruling party. Opposition alleged the elections were massively rigged and boycotted the provincial assemblies' elections which were to be held on 10th March. A severe protest movement was launched against Bhutto, first on the rigging of elections and later on converted into the demands of *Nizam-i-Mustafa*, the system of the Prophet PBUH. Bhutto government used the state machinery to quash the movement with highhandedness. Protest demonstrations spread across the country, especially the urban centres. Major leaders of the opposition were put behind bars in various jails in the country. With Saudi facilitation, negotiations were started between the Bhutto government and opposition PNA but the rigorous protest demonstrations could not stop. On 21st April, the Bhutto government imposed martial law in three big cities including Karachi, Lahore and Hyderabad which reflects the fascist tendencies of Bhutto to deal with political turmoil in a military means instead of political measures. The labour unions, industrial workers' alliances and other trade unions also joined hands with protesting opposition. More than three hundred people were killed and thousands were injured and other thousands were arrested. (Chishti 1996).

In the last stage of negotiations, Bhutto overtly involved military generals in political affairs, giving them room in political decision-making. Finally military under General Ziaul Haq imposed martial law in the country despite an agreement between the opposition and the Bhutto government. This martial law lasted for eleven years and reversed all the egalitarian reforms of the Bhutto era and the process of change initiated by the class-conscious movement of 1968-69, and the country put on the same elitist authoritative pattern. (Burde 2014) The institution of democracy at a genuine level could not flourish in the country even today.

Conclusion

Since its creation, Pakistan has been ruled by an oligarchic elitist system till the Movement of 1968-69, which was predominantly a class-conscious movement in its nature. The elitist leadership could not frame a constitution till 1956; perhaps they did not want to frame a constitution to retain their powers. Just after eleven years of the inception of the country, martial law was imposed by the then-president Sikandar Mirza in connivance with General Ayub Khan, the then Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, by toppling the newly formed constitution. Just after twenty days, General Ayub took over power and retained it till 1969, when another General Yahya Khan took over the country. As a result of the movement of 1968-69, the generals were forced to hold elections, which proved disastrous and the eastern wing of the country was dismembered. Bhutto as the leader of the class-conscious movement took over the country with a socialist reformist agenda. He introduced a number of egalitarian reforms unprecedented not only in Pakistan but perhaps a few countries outside of the Socialist block. But his overbearingness and 'fascist' acts against the opposition, media, judiciary and even his own party leaders severely damaged the fruits of reforms and damaged the face of a newly established democracy. Despite his mighty reforms, his rule proved to be a 'Bonapartist Populism' than a true and genuine democratic polity. Consequently, the democracy was jeopardized and the longest martial law imposed in the country severely damaged the fabric of democratic norms and even passing more than three decades country could not flourish as a real and genuine democracy.

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