

Pattern of Politics of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain during Musharraf Era

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Abstract

Politics and political strategies during democratic rule are entirely different from the politics during the rule of dictators. This research aims to study the politics of politicians under Martial Law administrators especially the politics of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain during the rule of Musharraf. First of all, the behaviour of Pakistani politicians towards dictatorship and then the conduct of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain during Musharraf rule were studied. For this purpose, data was collected from various articles written in different newspapers, YouTube, online sources and articles written in different newspaper. The data was analysed qualitatively. It was found that though, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain favoured his policies but he differed with Musharraf in many issues of public interest.

Key Words: Martial Law, General elections, King's party, Difference of Opinion, Punjab Government.

Introduction

Politics has always been a game of chess. At one time, one is at the zenith of one's career but at another time, don't have the worth of even of a common man. According to Machiavelli, politics has no morals. Pakistani politics has always been unpredictable. One can't predict

what will happen next. Similar was the case with Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 1999. He was a powerful prime minister of Pakistan having two third majority in the parliament but with the military overtake in October 1999, he was imprisoned by General Musharraf and the era of Musharraf rule started.

Though, Musharraf was in power at that time and there was none in Pakistan who could challenge him because the whole army was in his command that's why it was not easy to oppose such a powerful and forceful institution. Even then he needed to justify his authoritarian rule in front of the world as said by Crises Group in Asia Report (2005). So, by maligning politicians and marginalising the parties of opposition, he tried to consolidate his regime. As both PMLN and PPP had roots in the masses, Musharraf felt difficulty to control the situation completely. Musharraf created his own political party PML-Q like his military predecessors to show his martial law in the cover of civilian rule and to undermine the political opposition. Though, he denied having control over it but this party was under his control. He included all the annoyed members of PMLN and PPP. In local elections of 2000-01, PML-Q was given full support and this party was expanded to the whole country which was helpful in the general elections of national and provincial assemblies of 2002.

To get success in general elections, Musharraf also used NAB and ISI to gather the politicians under the umbrella of PML-Q. Zahid Hussain (2001) wrote an article "How to steal an election" in Newsline and gave his analysis in these words, "never before had the [intelligence] agencies been used so rampantly for political manipulation". So, a lot of politicians due to the threat of these agencies joined the party but even then PML-Q could not get comprehensive victory and Musharraf issued a series of executive orders that helped in the formation of the Govt. of PML-Q in the centre and in Punjab, Sindh and Blochistan and coalition Govt. NWFP (now KPK). Akbar (2002) wrote an article in a newspaper named Newsline 'The rise of the king's party'. He estimated that "at least two-thirds of the candidates fielded by the PML-Q are either from PPP or PML-N legislators"

When Nawaz Sharif was ousted Ch. Shujaat Hussain waited for some time in the wings to part his ways from Nawaz Sharif though he immediately made a distance from Sharif by using one excuse or other. Nawaz Sharif was also distrustful of him as he had appointed Kalsoom Nawaz, his wife, to look after PML-N's affairs and she ran campaign for release of her husband more effectively than untrustworthy leaders of party like Chaudhry Shujaat.

Asghar (2012) reported in his writing 'Muslim League se Muslim league tak' published in Nigarshat, Lahore. He reports that the first meeting of PML-N, after military takeover, was held on the residence of Ch. Shujaat at Lahore. In that meeting it was decided that Nawaz Sharif would not be removed from the party leadership. Ch. Shujaat as well as Raja Zafar-ul-Haq viewed that PML-N should not take such steps that can end the chances of the resolution of the assemblies. But when Nawaz Sharif was sent on exile and Raja Zafar-ul-Haq and Javed Hashmi were nominated as Chairman and president respectively Ch. Shujaat decided to change the party.

NAB arrested Chaudhry Shujaat and Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi after the military takeover of 1999 on bank loan corruption charges but these allegations ended when they confirmed to cooperate with General Musharraf and when Nawaz Sharif went on exile as a result of agreement with Musharraf, they left PMLN and started supporting Musharraf as reported by Arshad (2004). Ch. Shujaat started to split PMLN with the help of Ex. governor of Punjab Mian Muhammad Azhar and gathered electable candidates under the umbrella of Musharraf. When Ch. Shujaat saw that his political purpose had been achieved as in the general elections 2002 PML-Q won, Mian Azhar was arranged to be removed from the position of president of PML-Q.

Ch. Shujaat had used his personal connections with Gen. Musharraf to get success in the politics. He had connections with Gen. Musharraf when they both studied at Forman Christian College Lahore. Both had another common college fellow Tariq Aziz, Musharraf's confidante who worked as secretary general of the National Security Council.

It was misperception that Chudhry Shujaat Hussain obeyed every order of Pervaiz Musharraf. The reason was the threat of the cases at the beginning and later on there was alliance between Musharraf and Chaudhries. Though Chaudhry Shujaat favoured Musharraf in many matters but it is not the truth that he obeyed everything said by Musharraf. Before we discuss Chaudhry Shujaat's romance with Musharraf, we will have to take a glance in history to know the politician's romance with the dictators of the past.

Zulifqar Ali Bhutto

In April 2019, UmerAyub Khan made a speech in the parliament in response to the speech delivered by Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He reminded Bilawal Bhutto Zardari that his grandfather Zulifqar Ali Bhutto usually used the word 'Daddy' for Ayub Khan. He said that he was one of the most obedient persons to Ayub Khan at that time. In June (2019) an article was written by Munir Ahmad in 'Daily Times' with the title of 'Its' not so civilian' in which he discussed the conformity of different leaders with the establishment. According to him, Zuliqar Ali Bhutto was groomed by General Ayub Khan and he was one of the most favourite ministers of his cabinet. So, it is obvious from the fact that he got guidance of Ayub Khan at the start of his career and he was obedient to General Ayub Khan though later on, he rebelled against him.

Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif

Abbas(2018) wrote an article in April in Geo News online with the title of 'From Entry to Exit'. He said that late Mian Sharif handed over his sons Mian Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaaz Sharif on the condition that they would be groomed first in politics by the army. Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif got help of Zia ul Haq and his allies to come up to the horizon of politics. The only purpose was to counter the politics of PPP. When there was a clash between Junejo and Zia UIHaq, Nawaz Sharif proved faithful to Zia UIHaq. As it is reality that Muhammad Khan Junejo was also humble and obedient Prime Minister under Zia UIHaq though later on he was kicked out due to his disobedience to General Zia UIHaq. Due to his faithfulness and

obedience, he was pushed up as a CM Punjab with the help of establishment.

By the examples given above, it can be deduced that it is the history of the majority of the politicians that they were groomed by the establishment. They were the blue eyed of the establishment and why they became favourite, it was due to their obedience and faithfulness to the military dictators. Though, Bhutto rebelled against Ayub Khan during his rule but Nawaz Sharif remained faithful to Zia UlHaq till his death.

Review of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain's Book '*Sach Tu Yeh Hai*'

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain wrote a book with the title of "Sach to Yehhai" (The Truth is This). The book comprises 328 pages and 20 chapters which describes his complete life history, his political career and major events that he witnessed or experienced that shows the political condition of Pakistan. The gives complete detail of his experiences but in this paper we will discuss only those events in which he took principal stand on different issues which he described in his book.

One of the important events in which he took principle stand was the wish of ex Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in which he asked him to frame Zardari in narcotics case when he was interior minister. But he refused for this as he wrote in his book. Though he had some other personal issues too with Nawaz Sharif among which was Nawaz's cheating with Hussain on a specific time, as he says, "Before Nawaz was sworn in as the prime minister for a second time in 1997, Mian Sharif visited me and promised to make Pervez Ellahi the chief minister of Punjab." But Nawaz Sharif appointed Shehbaz Sharif as chief minister.

In his book he told that the elections of 2008 were rigged because 'America wanted Benazir Bhutto to come to power' and American ambassador said if PMLQ wins, it would not be fair elections. So, he protested against this attitude to undermine the power of vote.

Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain mentioned in this book about the reason of clash between Musharraf and CJP Iftikhar Chaudhry. Hussain almost resolved the issue between the two but Musharraf paid heed to the counsels of others who didn't want reconciliation between the two. He was against the enforcement of emergency and disqualification of Judges and he clearly communicated it to Musharraf.

He says in this book that Nawaz government in 1999 could have been saved if the orders of the diversion of Musharraf's plane were not given by Nawaz Sharif because according to him the army didn't had any intention to overthrow his government. He said that Hamza Shehbaz, the nephew of Nawaz Sharif and son of Shehbaz Sharif was in contact with him to resolve the issue when Nawaz Sharif left for Saudi Arabia.

After the extra-constitutional killing of Nawab Akbar Bugti, Musharraf called a meeting in which top military officials were present and he was told that the people of Pakistan were happy and were distributing sweets. Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain wrote in his book that at that time he was also present in that meeting. He intervened and recited a couplet of Mian Muhammad Bakhsh, a sufi poet,

“Dushman Mary Tay Khushi Na Karye,
Sajna Vi ik Din Mar Jana,”.

According to Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Musharraf did not like this attitude because he opposed him at that time when he was got a success over his enemy. It shows that he never thought his loss to say what is right and tried his best to communicate it too.

Research Question

The research is based on following questions.

- How have Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain dealt different issues during Musharraf rule?
- Whether he opposed Musharraf or not in any issue during his rule having difference of opinion with Musharraf.

Objectives of the study

The main aims and objectives of the research are as under:

- To find out what is the style of politics of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain.
- To find out how he dealt with the different issues.
- To find out whether he opposed dictator on his wrong decision or not.

Methodology

This is qualitative type of research. In this study, the historical method has been adopted. The data was collected through speeches, newspapers, government records, reports and interviews. The authentic information has been analysed in the light of the comments passed by journalists, political opponents and supporters. The political strategies have been examined in the light of their effects.

Discussion

Ch. Shujaat's Different Views from Gen. Musharraf as Party Leader

Ch. Shujaat was diametrically opposed to the line of Gen. Musharraf on many issues during 2004 and 2005. Even Ch. Shujaat was supporting Gen. Musharraf's government and military regime yet he was not altogether in favour of what Musharraf thought differently. In fact Ch. Shujaat, on many issues, would take line altogether different to that of Gen Musharraf. In August 2005 the US diplomats were surprised on the matter that Ch. Shujaat took altogether different stance than that of Gen. Musharraf. It was contrary to his posture that had been built generally that he was just an obedient politician to the military establishment in Pakistan. Pakistani media had been highlighting the stories about differences between Gen. Musharraf and Ch. Shujaat on many issues.

These issues were enlisted as

- It was well known all over Pakistan that at the time of removal of Zafarullah Khan Jamali Gen. Musharraf wanted to make Humayun Akhtar as next Prime Minister of Pakistan and it was Ch. Shujaat who stopped the nomination and support of Musharraf to Humayun Akhtar as Prime Minister.

- Expulsion of the students who had come to Pakistan for Islamic education from madrassas

- Handling of the madrassas

- Inclusion of the column of religion in the identity cards

- Close links with the liberal parties like Pakistan Peoples' Party

- Softness for the Hudud Bill of the Muttahidda Majlis-e-Aml

- Rejection of Gen. Musharraf's proposed changes in the laws relating to Islamic Hudood.

- Ch. Shujaat was also different to the opinion of Gen. Musharraf about the Balochistan Crisis. In that Gen. Musharraf had vowed that he would sort out the insurgents saying that "they would not know what hit them," but Ch. Shujaat compelled him to use political path. The lines that Ch. Shujaat took were natural according to the position of the Chaudhry as being the head of the political party but the diplomats were worried as well as surprised on the way that whenever Ch. Shujaat embraced Gen. Musharraf the later had to accept his point of view without taking into consideration what he had publically declared. The military style of Gen. Musharraf would not prevail before the political mind of Ch. Shujaat.

- Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain also very effectively sabotaged Gen. Musharraf's efforts of reconciliation with PPP and its leaders Benazir Bhutto and Asif Zardari. Ch. Shujaat publicly declared that he would not let Gen. Musharraf and PPP get together. Shujaat handled Asif Zardari's return from Dubai to Lahore got the PPP activists thrashed at the occasion by the Punjab police when Asif Ali Zardari was released from jail first time. It testified very had

stance of Chaudhry that directly defied Gen. Musharraf. (Asghar 2012 p.424)

Ch. Shujaat, the US diplomats also would think, took an opposed line on all key issues related to curb the religious extremists and terrorist. The US diplomats could not believe that on all occasions it was Ch. Shujaat who won at the end.

The US diplomats were unable to understand the constituency of Gh. Shujaat who was considered a yes man to the military establishment and did not have public support in their view. The different stance than the military ruler and then application of that stance showed that Ch. Shujaat not only had support from other circles but also was able to take different stand to the military establishment. It appeared the Ch. Shujaat did not want to go to that limit where he could have faced political persecution.

The politics of Ch. Shujaat was so crafty that the US diplomats wanted to know that who was, in fact, supporting Ch. Shujaat. They wondered that such crafty politics could not be expected by such a subservient politician of army. The US diplomats, Shaheen Sehbai noted, were bothered to know who secretly supported Ch. Shujaat and what the strength of that secret supporter was. The US diplomats thought that it was some Punjabi Corps Commanders in the army who supported Ch. Shujaat that he was able to prevail over the decisions of Gen. Musharraf.

The support of any corps commander behind Ch. Shujaat created an impression that liberal Musharraf could be stopped or forced to go back by those religious commanders who supported Ch. Shujaat's points of view or who were making Ch. Shujaat to impress Gen. Musharraf. It meant that Gen. Musharraf could be led by those Islamist generals who were behind Ch. Shujaat or whom Chaudhry was leading politically.

It was impression that either Gen. Musharraf was helpless in front of Ch. Shujaat or Gen. Musharraf knew that who was behind Ch. Shujaat whom General Musharraf could not tackle. The power of Ch. Shujaat

and acceptance of Gen. Musharraf to him told that Chaudhry was not altogether weaker and he had some strength behind him.

It was surprising for the men who knew Ch. Shujaat that he had been involved in dirty politics in past and he was also one of alleged accused of infamous cooperative scandal but he was making disturbance for a powerful military dictator when the later was in full form and had full power of army behind him.

The impression about Ch. Shujaat was that he was the changing face of Pakistan and he had assumed the role of the leader of political wing of the religious forces who had their strings in the Pakistan army as well. Whether this was incorrect one thing was clear that Ch. Shujaat did not blindly accept the opinions of Gen. Musharraf and would convince him to follow the lines of Ch. Shujaat.

The power of Ch. Shujaat was such that was expressed by a statement of ShaheenSehbai. The statement tells that

So I asked the US diplomat why was it that they were not pressing Musharraf to make alliances with genuine liberal and enlightened political forces in the country if he was feeling so threatened by Shujaat Hussain, the new front man for Jihadis. This million dollar question was never answered but what left me wondering was whether Musharraf was really so weak now that he cannot control a politician like Shujaat Hussain.(Sehbai 2005)

The strength of Ch. Shujaat in contrast to Gen. Musharraf led the analysts to think that if a politician like Ch. Shujaat who had record of cooperation with military establishment could create such difficulties for General Musharraf what would happen if he had to deal with powerful and mass represented leaders like Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto. It was considered that Gen. Musharraf will prove weaker in case of dealing with leaders who had popularity more than Chaudhry.

According to Sehbai (2005), Musharraf was really in trouble because on the one hand he had to tread the path made by Ch. Shujaat and on the other hand he had to deal with adept politicians who claimed to be more popular than Chaudhrys.

In January 2007 there was not any choice for Gen. Musharraf except the Chaudhrys of Gujrat and PML-Q. Therefore he reiterated that in election he will support PML-Q and its allies. He repeated that he will not support the politicians who were living abroad. He said that PML-Q will neither have seat adjustment with any other party nor any alliance will be made with any other political force. This statement of Gen. Musharraf was aimed to pacify the leadership of PML-Q. PPP Patriot that was formed on the instigation of Gen. Musharraf was said to join the PML-Q and Gen. Musharraf also satisfied the leaders of PML-Q that the current members of National and Provincial assemblies would be issued tickets for the next elections.

Lal Mosque and Balochistan Operation

According to Gondal (2008), While addressing a gathering in election campaign the Ch. Shujaat and Mushahid Hussain Syed said that they did not have any role in the Lal Mosque operation, Balochistan operation and Wana Operation. They said that they did not support these operations.

Goraya (2007) reported in Daily Express that in January 2007 Ch. PervaizElahi was paying attention to the Southern Punjab. Main cause of his concern was Shah Mahmood Qureshi who at that time had been appointed as the president of PPP Punjab. In order to respond the politics of Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Ch. PervaizElahi was making efforts to get the support from the South Punjab.

Reference Against Chief Justice and Chaudhrys

According to a report published in Express on May,1, 2007,Ch. Shujaat was not happy over the reference against the Chief Justice. Even then he decided to save Gen. Musharraf in form of rallies. When he saw that the opposition had started the movement against Gen. Musharraf, he led the rally in support of Gen. Musharraf even when he was ill and his backbone had been operated some days ago he came to Mall road leading a rally for eight kilometers and addressed the demonstrators. The objective was clear that he did not want to leave Gen. Musharraf alone at the time of need.

Chaudhrys on NRO and Musharraf-Benazir Deal

Goraya (2007) reported in Daily Express that in April 2007 there were news that the USA and other allies were supporting deal between Benazir and Gen. Musharraf. It was said that both should have an alliance and run the government for next five years jointly. For the PML-Q the news were in circle that Gen. Musharraf was given the choice to keep that party with him. The political reporters were prophesying that the deal between Benazir and Gen. Musharraf could be finalized at any time and Chaudhrys, in that deal would not be ignored at all. It was said that the Punjab government, once again would be given the Ch. Pervaiz Elahi.

According to Ilyas (2007), Chaudhrys did not like the deal between Benazir Bhutto and Gen. Pervaiz Musharraf. Benazir Bhutto was ready to return if Musharraf could end the cases against her and other leaders of her party. Ch. Shujaat and Ch. Pervaiz Elahi both opposed this deal. However they did not decide to leave Musharraf at this time. They adopted the policy to differ while remaining in the government. Even they did not leave the support of Musharraf. They decided to come out in demonstrations in order to support Musharraf in the face of rallies and meetings of the opposition. Ch. Shujaat had adopted the same policy on the issue of reference against the Chief Justice. He focused on his own efforts and planned to mobilize the people. In order to mobilize the people he announced to gather the people in Islamabad on 12th May 2007. Shujaat looked in it the way of expression of his power as well as the mobilization of the supporters in support of his point of view.

Conclusion

From the evidence of history, it can be observed that Zulifqar Ali Bhutto favoured all the policies of Ayub Khan but he left and rebelled against him when he was weak but Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif remained faithful and obedient till the death of Zia Ul-Haq. On the other hand, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain though favoured the policies of Musharraf but he opposed him in many policies being a part of his rule. He proved himself as politician-cum-statesman and

strategist by his political moves. He never favoured any decision that is against the public interest or that can harm him politically.

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