

Political Resistance against the Zia-ul-Haq's Dictatorial Regime: A Case Study of Punjab Province.

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Abstract

Punjab being the major province after imposition of Zia's Dictatorial Regime became centre of political resistance from the side of political workers initially, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) took the step of resistance and they left no stone unturned for the restoration of democracy. Military administration imposed strict regulations to curb the move of resistance against dictatorial regime. The political workers of PPP bore all kinds of restriction with open arms. The move of political resistance got momentum when dictatorial administration could not fulfill the commitment of conduction free and fair elections. The move got extreme momentum when Z.A Bhutto was arrested and trialed. The series of political resistance continued with new phase when Bhutto was hanged in April 1979. As the strictness from the military administration was using various steps of strictness the resistance movement got momentum against dictatorial regime in form of political alliance. The politicians neglected their contradiction and formulated an alliance against regime of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. The move of political resistance continued against every step of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq and Punjab was the centre of political resistance till end of regime up to 17th August 1988.

Key Words: Political Resistance, Punjab, Dictatorial Regime, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq.

Initial Political Resistance and Punjab:

Zia ul Haq as Chief of the Army Staff imposed Martial Law on 5th July 1977 with a promised to conduct general elections. This stimulated the sentiment of anxiety among the PPP and it was estimated that PPP would lead the election this condition was threading for the army and Zia ul Haq that PPP would take revenge of military intervention.(Talbot,2012:123) Zia-ul-Haq regime looked affective temporary for the long run the set up could not be affective.(Zafar Jang 2nd October 1982) After imposition of martial law there was question in front of both main political sides Pakistan National Alliance and Pakistan People's Party what kind of attitude was to adopt with concern of regime. PNA was hopeful to win election with power support of army chief and when circumstances were not according to their favor raised the slogan of accountability prior to conduct election. While PPP had optimistic view that army chief would conduct election in month of October and PPP would win election. (Shaukat, 1993:170) The political well aware people of Pakistan were convinced that main solution was the conduction of election according to the spirit of 1973 Constitution. When dictatorial regime could not conduct election after promulgation of MLRs the popularity graph of PPP increased in the premises of Punjab due to arrest of Z.A Bhutto the founder of PPP (Baxter, 1985:68) under strict dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq.

The third dictatorial regime had to face the popular political force of PPP which was the representative of constitutional hereditary while Zia had to face trial under Article 6 of constitution which was continuous threat for Zia ul Haq if PPP would come into power caused legal punishment to him under constitution. Zia took every step to minimize the influence of Z.A Bhutto postpone elections. He also introduced Islamic pattern of administration and promoted fundamentalism in country with co operation of Jamat-e-Islami. He implemented strictness during his regime with perspective of punishment. (Waseem, 1989:432) General Zia ul Haq impression of impartiality related to political perspective changed into extended powers, through his pro- Islamic and anti Bhutto steps especially, he made efforts to strengthen his dictatorial regime in 1979 after Russian

assault upon Afghanistan and Islamic card against political opponents on all sides.(Anupama,2001:65-66) During the military regime Punjab was the centre of political resistance, when Bhutto toured Punjab first of all after releasing from custody and visited Multan, and afterwards Lahore. This was the indication that Punjab had special importance for the scenario. The welcome processions of Bhutto at Multan and Lahore provided political resistance on the level of mass against the regime. The resistance was originated by the PPP workers in the Province of the Punjab. The intensity of resistance increased with passage of time.

Restriction on Political Activities and Political Resistance in Punjab:

The MLR No.13 was promulgated with the imposition of dictatorship; one who indulged its violation was given the punishment of five years punishment with twenty flogs. The MLR so vast that every matter related to political activity was under the limits of issued MLR. (Shaukat Ali 1993:195) The political activities were strictly prohibited; the military administration was not giving relief to any kind of activities to political workers. General Zia ul Haq met Bhutto at Murree after imposition of dictatorship, *Quaid-e-Awam* reacted seriously against the step of military against represented government and expressed the support of people with him and clarified that he would come again in power with the support of mass. The meeting caused bitterness between Quaid-e-Awam and General Zia ul Haq. The welcome response of Punjabi people to their leader set the trend of resistance against dictatorship by ignoring the restriction of gathering. (Aziz,2019) Z. A Bhutto, after relieving from military detention toured Punjab first of all, according to schedule he was to depart from Karachi on 6th August 1977, on 7th August at Multan and 8th August was the day to arrive at Lahore through train but MLA banned the movement of politician through and gave direction to travel by air in which cities facility was available. It was cleared that the decision was changed only for Z.A Bhutto.(Shaukat,2005:308) On 8th August 1977 MLA took step to stop the entrance of PPP workers in the premises of Lahore, there were three points where transportation of the workers

were stopped; at Ravi Bridge, where workers inhaled from Rawalpindi, Sialkot, Sargodha, Mianwali and Sheikhpura, while at Kahna; where the workers inhaled from Qasur while at Chaung the workers inhaled from Multan, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan, when the military administration blockage the transportation of PPP workers, they began to walk in from of procession. The city of Lahore was filled with flags and banners of PPP. There was huge gathering of workers within twenty miles premises of Lahore. The military administration was trying its utmost effort to stop the entrance of political workers by stopping their transport vehicles and when workers began to travel on foot.(Shaukat,2005:310) Z.A Bhutto popularity was owing to the cause of spreading political consciousness among the mass and called them decision maker. Prior to Z.A Bhutto people were not given prestige in the matter of decision making. This was the result the people had affiliation with him and response actively on a single gesture. Zia ul Haq decided to remove Bhutto physically after his arrival at Lahore on 8th August 1977.(Masud,2020)

This was the indication of political power from the side of PPP at that time when there were restricted MLRs against the political activities and on the vast level when there was huge gathering it was alarming situation for the military administration. The political mobilization under the leadership of Z.A Bhutto left an impact on the political scenario of Pakistan during the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq. The Lahore event left an ever lasting impact on the political arena of the country. General Zia ul Haq took situation seriously and plan was made to arrest Bhutto under charge of murder.(Aziz,2019) Professor Ghafoor Ahmad pointed out that martial law administration caused the popularity of Z.A Bhutto while PNA alliance devalued its existence while supporting martial law.(Suhail, 1988:38) NDP, TI and JUP separated from PNA while other remained the part of alliance to support General Zia until 1979 when Bhutto was targeted to oust from political arena.(Jaffrelot,2015:326) There were strictness and harsh steps from the side of dictatorial set up PPP activist organized resistance. (Jaffrelot:331) Khan Muhammad Arif Khan narrated that Pakistan came into being after ballot not of bullet. If Quaid-e- Azam would not willing to conduct election (National Assembly Debates,

1985), so democratic aspect caused the creation of Pakistan and political activism with political worker was the part and parcel of political arena and step to curb political engagement during dictatorial regime.

The forthcoming events caused the mobilization of political resistance against the dictatorial regime; firstly the impact of political workers at Lahore became the cause of reducing pressure upon the mass after the imposition of martial law in the country, while other was the threading impact with the concern of the imprisonment of Z. A Bhutto and caused the postponement of elections due to trial procedure. (Shaukat:313) The re-arrest event of Bhutto made him hero among mass, her wife Nusrat Bhutto and daughter Benazir Bhutto attracted the people in form of gathering (*Batra, 2019:17*) against dictatorial regime in spite of strictness and move of resistance got momentum in the premises of Punjab being the major province of Pakistan. The people inhaled from Punjab were the frontline workers of *Quaid-e-Awam* and they were ready to face any kind of restriction from dictatorship people were arrested and gave punishment of flogging through military courts.(Aziz, 2019) The people who had affiliation to PPP was enough evidence for police to arrest and trialed through courts. The whole dictatorial regime was the process of arrest and imprisoned PPP workers only under charges of violation MLRs.(Amin,2019) There were eighty percent people who were got punishment of flogging and detention of jail through summary trial inhaled Punjab during the movement of resistance, the percentage was more than other provinces of the country at that time.(Khalid,2020)

The pleader of Z.A Bhutto Johan Mathew Q.C expressed the sentiments and attitude of Punjabi people when he came to Lahore to defend the side of founder of PPP every person who I met me during the process had special regard even tea seller, taxi driver all gave me special privilege because I came to save their leader (Ainam, 1991:331) from the trial which was conducted under dictatorial regime. This was the observation of a foreigner against the dictatorial regime and affiliation to the popular leader of Pakistan. PPP after

hanging Z.A Bhutto in 1979 took the stance of opposition against a dictator in the political arena of Pakistan.(Chawla,2018:2)

The link between military and religious based parties provided legitimacy in political arena of country initially.(Siddiq,2007:86) PNA was formulated under the removal of Z.A Bhutto they had different political agenda and different backgrounds. The leadership of PNA could not remove the influence of Bhutto Charisma upon the people. After the removal of Bhutto their politics got the feature of differentiation among them in spite of their politics under the implementation of *Nizam-e-Mustaf*. Asghar Khan separated his political party from the alliance of PNA after the imposition of Martial Law under the agenda of removing of Bhutto from office status while other political parties was to continue alliance with Zia ul Haq till the conduction of elections.PPP had grass root level support as compared to PNA.(Mujawar,2019:190) When there was not the possibility of elections under dictatorial regime. PPP victory in election was obvious so the method of pending elections was taken and PNA lost its validity among people and devalued in political arena and remained successful only to remove Bhutto not to implement the Islamic system which was the main stance of PNA movement after 1977 elections.(Masud,2020)

Military Courts and Political Resistance in Punjab:

The circumstance during the Dictatorial Regime of General Zia ul Haq was moving towards the tight circumstances Z. A Bhutto was predicted during Lahore visit in a press statement at the residence of ex-Chief Minister Punjab Mr. Sadiq Hussain Qurashi that third martial law damaged the norms of democracy in the country and country reached up to the bank of destruction and if fourth martial law was imposed that would be dangerous and would not be bear up. The Bhutto was confident that PPP would contest in the forthcoming elections and would rule with the support of the people and if the elections would not organize it would be disastrous for the country.(Dawn^{14th} September, 1977) This was the main motive of resistance against the dictatorial regime which existed on the slogan of conduction of free and fair elections and elections were not the foundation of the regime was on falsehood.

The political resistance against the dictatorial regime in the Province of the Punjab continued after the postponement of the election in October 1977, Mr. Nizam Hussain Shah and six other political workers were, Latif, Mian Munir, Ahmad Farqan Butt, Malik Bashir, Muhammad Aftab and Sadiq arrested under MLR 13 and they were trialed in Summary Military Court.(Dawn 12th October,1977) During the election campaign at Fort Abbas (Bahawalnagar) Manzoor Ahmad Mohal PPP contestant Bahawalnagar III was arrested under MLR 19 by delivering a speech contrary to the martial law regulation in the public gathering (Dawn 19th September 1977) during the election which initiated after granting permission by the military administration.

PPP workers were directed to gather at Sufi Shrines to pray for the releasing of Z. A Bhutto on Sufi Shrines in a situation where there was slogan of Islam everywhere, It was expected that forces would not arrest PPP workers to gather at Shrines and *Masajids* (Benazir,,2011:152) A procession was also organized under the motivation of Mr. Qayyum Nizami former MPA of the Punjab at *Data Darbar*. The participants were arrested under MLR 13.. All were indulging in raising slogans against the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq. The names of the participants in the procession were; Ch. Muhammad Yunus, Muhammad Altaf Qurashi, Muhammad Hassan, Mazhar ul Haq, Muhammad Siddiq, Jahangir Khalid Mahmood, Haji Tariq, Muhammad Tariq, Karam Din, Muhammad Saeed, Muhammad Shaukat, Ashraf Hussain, Zulifqar Muhammad Javed, Irshad Hussain, Shahid Hussain and Muhammad Sadiq.(Dawn 13th October 1977) Bahwalnagar Summmar Military Court gave one year RI punishment to Manzoor Hussain under the charge of violating MLR13 by delivering an objectionable address in front of the gathering (Dawan,(Karachi) 13th October 1977) which was against the MLR which was promulgated after 5th July 1977.

Mr. Ishtiaq Bukhari from PPP with twelve other supporters was arrested at *Data Darbar* Lahore under the MLR 5 and 13. All the arrested persons were raising slogans in the favour of Z.A Bhutto *Jiye Bhutto, Jiye Bhutto, Bhutto Ko Raha Karo*. The names of the people

who were arrested with Ishtiaq Bukhari; Jamshad Anwar Butt, Syed Mahmud Hussain, Muhammad Hafeez Butt, Ijaz Bukhari, Rifaqat Maqbool, Muhammad Sabir, Muhammad Sadiq, Shaukat Ali Butt, Rahat Mahmud Butt, Munawar Hussain, and Shahid Hussain Bukhari. The number of imprisoned persons increased thirty eight within previous four days.(Dawn, (Karachi)15th October 1977) This was reality that resistance against the dictatorial regulations in the province of the Punjab was existed in spite of strict punishment against the political workers.

The PPP workers decided to celebrate "Democracy Day" on 5th of January 1978 at Lahore. The workers were given the schedule to gather in mosques and after *Zohar* prayer the proceedings would be preceded (Pakistan Times 5th January 1978), related to democracy day. The administration also planned to control the situation the biggest gathering was planned at *Badshahi Mosque* Lahore on the eve of *Zohar* Prayers the police cordoned off the mosque and not to allow enter PPP workers in the mosque about two hundred young PPP workers reached up to the stairs of *Badshahi Masjid* and Police did not enter them when workers remained unsuccessful they moved towards walled city further police dispersed them from various places this hide and seek continued up to 4p.m to celebrate the "Democracy Day". About eighty persons gathered at the side of Old Campus Lahore and prayed for the restoration of democracy (Pakistan Times, 6th January 1978) on the eve of democracy day in the country especially in Punjab. The move of celebration of democracy day was successfully demonstrated throughout the Punjab and administration took action against all those who were actively participated in the matters against the dictatorial regime and step of arrest and judicial custody was taken against them.

When the move from the side of political workers was on the swing the administration took action in from of arrest and imprisonment through police and implementation of strict action against the political workers was the step to counter the step of resistance against dictatorial set up. Faisalabad under Magistrate imposed 144 Cr. P.C for the duration of two months. There was not permission of any kind of procession and gathering in the premises of District Faisalabad there

was restriction on union mobilization according to the prescribed duration. (Dawn 10th January 1978) The Summary Military Court *Sheikupura* sentenced nine month RI and ten lashes to Barkat Ali Ghayyur on the charge of taking a procession on 5th January 1978 as “Democracy Day” declared from PPP and he actively participated in the procession of *Nankana Sahib* and raising slogans against the military administration during political mobilization. The Military Court also rewarded punishment to other companions of the procession, they were Mr. Ghulam Rasool Pervaiz awarded punishment nine month punishment and six lashes, Rai Muhammad Sarwar and Rai Allah Ditta Bhatti six month RI and six lashes while Mr. Tasadq Hussain and Mr. Nasrullah was released by the court. (Pakistan Times 1st February 1978) This was the mobilization of the workers on the eve of democracy day from the side of PPP in spite of strict conduct of the dictatorial regime.

Faisalabad Police also took action against those people who were raising political slogans during Maild- un -Nabi procession, they were arrested by the police under MLR 24 the names of those were; Ashraf Nadeem, Liaquat Ali, Muhammad Iqbal, and Gulzar Ahmad (Pakistan Times 22nd February 1978) The *Jaranwala* Police detained the Secretary General PNA MR. Mr. Waseem Ahmad Farooqi under MLR24. The other persons were Sheikh Naseem Ahmad and Muhammad Aslam had detained under MLR12 inhaled from PNA. The workers were sent to Jail under judicial custody. (Pakistan Times (Lahore), 9th March 1978) The politically activities were on the full zeal in Punjab against the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq when the political workers were also arrested which was alliance of martial law after promulgation on 5th July 1977.

Summary Military Court at Lahore eight persons were awarded punishment under MLR24. The persons who were detained under MLR were; Muhammad Rafiq Alias Bhuttin nine month RI and three thousand rupees fine, Muhammad Akhtar nine month RI and three thousand rupees fine, Zafar Iqbal, Waliur Rehman, Muhammad Irshad Ahmad, Alias Manna, Javed Akhtar and Feroz Din were awarded punishment of nine months and three thousand rupees fine while Mirza

AkramBaig six months RI and three thousand rupees fine. If the sentenced persons failed to pay fine the imprisonment duration would increase three months more.(Pakistan Times 13th March 1978) Lahore the capital of Punjab was the centre of resistance against the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq.

The political workers were also detained to control the political activities in the premises of the Punjab. They were detained under MPO under the Magistrate which was the civil administrator of the military administration. The political workers were detained in jail or their residences with specific duration but in spite of the entire resistance move from the side of workers continued in the premises of Punjab. Mrs. Nargis Naeem and Mr. Anwar Khan were detained for the period one month in their residences.(Pakistan Times 23rd March 1978) Three workers of PPP inhaled from Rahim Yar Khan, they were Azam Slungi, Hakim Asghar Hussain and Barkat Bajwa under MPO 16 after delivering a speech in the gathering.(Dawn 26th August 1978) The series of the arrest of political workers continued after one event and the other, four PPP workers were arrested by police under MLR 3 and 13, in the premises of Raja Bazar Rawalpindi the political workers were; Masud Munawar, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Zubair and Syed Zulifkar Ali Shah.(Dawn (Karachi),18th September 1978) Two political workers were arrested from Gujranwala *Fawara Chowk* under MLR3 and 33 while raising slogans against the government.(Dawn 19th September, 1978) Thirteen more workers were arrested under MLRs 13 and 33 while raised slogans against the government in the premises of Rawalpindi. (Dawn 22nd September,1978)

Summary Military Court Lahore gave one year RI and ten whiplashes to Arif Iqbal Hussain Bhutti, two more people Mansoor Malik and Hamid Nawaz were given one year RI by organizing political mobilization openly without prior permission and sentiments of opposition against armed force. They were trialed under MLRs 5, 23 and 33 by the summary military court. (Dawn ,2nd October 1978) PPP was the symbol of opposition against the dictatorial set up in the premises of Punjab, the political workers were arrested on daily based and number of detained persons increased with the passage of time. Two workers inhaled from the PPP were arrested in the *Rangmahal*

Chowk Lahore (Dawn 4th October 1978) as the matter of resistance from the side of PPP against the military set up in the premises of Punjab. More two PPP workers were arrested from *Laksmi Chowk* McLeod Road Lahore; they were Akram and Sher Muhammad (Dawn (Karachi), 7th October 1978) in the aspect of resistance against dictatorial regime in the premises of Punjab. Sahiwal Police also arrested political workers under MPO who were Niaz Ahmad, Mohad, Aslam, Iqbal, Ahmad Din, Mansha and Rafeeq Dogar (Dawn 10th October, 1978) were detained under strict regulation which main objective was to reduce the move of resistance in its zeal but the political workers committed with the increasing tempo of reaction from the side of military set up in the premises of Punjab. Mian Yasin Watto the eminent figure of PPP was arrested by Lahore Police at Ravi Bridge when he was returning from Rawalpindi under MPO of the *Sahiwal* Magistrate the police handed over Mian Yasin Watto to the administration of *Sahiwal* premises where he was detained for three months (Dawn 13th October 1978) duration for diverting the move of resistance on low pace against the dictatorial regime.

The Summary Military Court Lahore sentenced various kinds of punishments to political workers who were under the custody of police in the charge of protest, procession and slogans they were; George Masih S/O S.M Danial one year RI and ten flogs further he was fined of two thousand rupees, Niaz Ahmad S/O Fazal Din same kind of punishment as the previous one, Mohd Saleem S/O Mohad Latif, Dildar Khan S/O Fazal Hussain, each were awarded one year RI and ten flogs further he was fined of two thousand rupees, Niaz Ahmad S/O Taj Din six month RI and also fined five thousand, Abdul Qayyum S/O Azimullah six month RI and five flogs, Muhammad Tariq S/O Muhammad Ibrahim, Qamar ud Din S/O PirBuksh each was awarded six months RI and five whiplashes while Muhammad Afzal S/O Muhammad Shrif was awarded only six month RI only, punishment of whiplashes were awarded at *Kot Lakhpat* (Dawn 15th October 1978) after announcement of punishment.

The step of military court trialed against the political workers in the premises of Lahore continued the resistance movement against the

dictatorial regime continued with the same zeal as reaction against dictatorial regime. The Summary Military Court sentence those persons who were arrested from Lakshmi Chowk Lahore, they were Abrar ul Haq Farooqi, Shakir Ali Siddiqui, they were sentenced one year RI and ten flogs and two thousand rupees fine, while Muhammad Mansha was sentence one year RI five whiplashes and five thousand fine. Muhammad Hussain was six months RI and Zulifkar Hussain three months RI while trialed under MLRs 13, 18 and 36; the main charge was to motivation among people against government and raising slogans.(Dawn 20th October 1978)

There were torture cells in Lahore at Awan-e-Tajarat now Children Complex and Royal Fort where majority of the political workers were kept during the move of resistance against the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul Haq. The political workers were kept under strict conditions. (Masud, 2020) The political workers who were faced torture cell; Malik Muktar Awan, Nazar Malik, Sadiq Tarrar, Javed Iqbal, Yousaf Khatak, Aslam Ludhanwi, Aman Ullah Khan, Abdul Razzaq Jharna, Rafiq Babar, Aurangzeb Zafar, Farooq Kashif, Zahid Chaudhry, Malik Manzoor, Ahsan Wayne Advocate, Iftikhar Shahid Advocate, Qayyum Nizami, Naseem Iqbal, Syed Nizam Hussain, Faisal Saleh Hayat, Agha Nadeem, Agha Waleed, Agha Naveed, Agha Tanveer, Agha Mubeen, Mufti Shafi, Barkat Ahmad Bajwa, Mian Munir Ahmad, Rana Farhat, Ghulam Abbas, Yaqoob Cheena, Waqar, Rasheed, Naveed Akhtar, Muhammad Yousaf, Jhangir Baddar, Nasir-ud- Din Nasir, Tauseek Sheikh, Asif Butt, Hamid Pervaiz, Malik Mahdi Hassan, Malik Atiqur Rehman, Azam Butt, Rauf Majeed, Asghar, Mahmood, Pervaiz Soleih, Shaukat Rizvi, Chaudhry Abdul Sttar, Rauf Rafiq, Malik Attiq, Munawar Hussain Shah, Chaudhry Akif, Maunawar Maan, Zahid Chaudhry. (Shaukat, 2005:386) The political workers from the side of PPP faced torture cell of Lahore Fort were Javed Iqbal, Aslam Lodhanvi, Yousaf Khatak and Talat Jaffari (Naveed, 2016:210) under the charge of resistance against dictatorial regime of Zia ul Haq. There was round about five hundred persons were brought in Shahi Qila imprisoned cell from duration of 1981 to 1985 under various charges. (Naveed: 213) The young men inhaled from JI were also deputed in torture cells against political workers

inhaled from PPP to give severe punishment along with police. (Masud, 2020)

Political Alliance and political resistance in Punjab:

There were two main aspects in consideration of the politicians during the formation of political alliance against dictatorial regime. The formulation of alliance was declared mandatory firstly by ignoring internal political differences, and secondly by countering the propagation by General Zia-ul-Haq that political parties were supporting him (Naveed:117) in prolonging the duration of the dictatorial regime. When the political activities were barred by the government, in such a case there was only one option left by ignoring internal differences to formulate an alliance to achieve their target. (Bahli, 1991: 145) The idea of a political alliance against a dictator initiated from Punjab as the PNA was exposed and had no value after trial and execution of *Quaid-e-Awam*. Ms. Nusrat Bhutto visited Punjab during the dictatorial regime, especially Lahore, and the Nicolson Road residence of Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan was the center of political movement during the dictatorial regime. The idea of a political alliance was discussed between Ms. Nusrat Bhutto and Nawabzada at Lahore. Similar to the creation of Pakistan, this was a time to start an allied resistance movement against a dictator who came in power on the slogan of election and Islam. (Aziz, 2019) The lawyers of Punjab also played a vital role in establishing the MRD on the political sphere and in establishing and strengthening their stance against dictatorship for the restoration of the Constitution 1973. The main lawyers were included in this movement were Afzal Haider and Mahmud Ali Kasuri. Afterward, the political parties belonging to PNA also joined the MRD. A final meeting was conducted at Lahore and Begum Nusrat Bhutto especially participated in the meeting quite secretly by wearing a *burka* and Arshad taxi driver brought Begum Nusrat Bhutto to participate in the MRD formation meeting. Arshad taxi-driver was sentenced with flogging as punishment from SMC on the charge of indulging in political activity. (Farrukh, 2020)

The process of forming the MRD was accomplished on 6th February 1981, and the news of the MRD manifesto was signed and the news

aired on BBC and was spread throughout the whole country. The masses gained confidence after the announcement of the MRD and realized that the move against the dictatorial regime would start (Shaukat, 2005:293) after the formation of a united platform against the dictatorial regime. On 26th February, 1981 the leadership of nine political parties assembled in Lahore under the banner of political alliance and finalized the movement of protest against non-representative and dictatorial administration. The JI and anti-Bhutto elements labeled it as the revival of Bhutto's philosophy to destabilize the process of Islamization. (Mujawar, 2019:204) The situation was strict, however a meeting was secretly summoned on 27th February 1981, after which General Zia-ul-Haq imposed strictness on political mobilization and there was a restriction on a gathering of more than five people and many were arrested on 21st February 1981. Many leaders were banished from Punjab and their entrance to its premises was restricted under MPO. The Governor of Punjab issued an order about the ban on the entrance of Begum Nusrat Bhutto and other leaders of MRD in Punjab. The main aim was to stop procession against the dictatorial regime but despite all his measures, Zia-ul-Haq could not restrict the wave of resistance. (Brohi, 2018:187)

The real decision depended upon the politics of Punjab because it was the major province of the country which consisted of sixty percent of the country's population. Punjab also had supremacy in the establishment and military. (Mehdi:1996:61) The people from Punjab were also supporting the resistance movement boldly and did not show cowardice in face of hardships caused by the dictatorial administration. (Nasira, 2019) The nine political parties including Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam, Council Muslim League, Pakistan Democratic Party, National Democratic Party, Qaumi Mahaz-e-Azadi, Mazdoor Kisan Party, PPP, and TI, signed an agreement for the restoration of democracy. This alliance challenged the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq and demanded free and fair elections and declared the dictatorial regime of Zia-ul-Haq unconstitutional. The alliance was given the name of Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). (Asghar, 2005:184) The eminent figures who signed the agreement of the MRD from the allied

parties were: Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference(Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan),Jamiat Ulema-i- Islam(Fazal ur Rehman), Council Muslim League(Khawaja Khairuddin), Pakistan Democratic Party (Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan), National Democratic Party(Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari),Qaumi Mahaz-e-Azadi (Mairaj Mohammad Khan), Mazdoor Kisan Party (Fatehyab Ali Khan), Pakistan People's Party (Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto), and Tehrikh-i-Istaqlal (Mian Mahmood Ali Kasuri).(Asghar:187)

Sheikh Rafiq Ahmad, the President of PPP Punjab expressed in a conference at Muzaffargarh that all the people who warmly welcomed the imposition of martial law had now left the dictator's side and joined the opposition against Zia-ul-Haq (Jang (Lahore), 5th March 1983) in the form of MRD. The political parties hailing from the PNA ultimately realized that General Zia-ul-Haq had no intention to quit ruling, so a new political alliance was formulated with the PPP. Mehdi:61) The slogan of Islamization by General Zia-ul-Haq could not get as much popularity as was expected and civil disobedience got momentum in Punjab which was the major and a stronghold of the PPP. Zia, with the support of JI and the slogan of Islamization, tried to neutralize the influence of MRD in Punjab. (Mujawar:222)

The alliance in the form of M.R.D was formulated against Zia-ul-Haq when the political activities were banned and all political parties had become weak. In such scenarios, political alliances have formulated been throughout history and the same was the situation in Pakistan during the Third Martial. There was no difference between right and left. Such an alliance was the necessary step for the survival of democracy. Many people were involved in the political activities of the alliance in Punjab, such as Salman Taseer, Aitzaz Ahsan, Malik Muhammad Qasim, Ahsan Wayen, Abid Hassan Manto, and Farooq Laghrai.(Afzal,2015:59) The formation of an alliance in the form of M.R.D was the initiative of lawyers, who played a vital role and the most important personality was Mian Mahmood Ali Qasoori who announced the formulation of the political alliance in the bar meeting.(Afzal:74) When political activities were limited, the result

was a change of strategy, and creating an alliance was the best option during the dictatorial regime.

The alliance got a positive response from after its formation and using means of processions, protests, and agitations to protest against the dictatorial regime of Zia-ul-Haq, while strict steps were taken in form of new orders (Brohi:184) to curb the movement of resistance. The PNA was an artificial alliance and majority political parties were limited up to the newspaper columns.(Mehdi:207) The MRD was formulated and Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan played a vital role in the formation of a genuine alliance and after its formation jails were filled with the activists of MRD including Mahmood Ali Kasuri, Aitzaz Ahsan, Muhammad Ali (Actor), Shuaib Hashmi (son-in-law of Faiz Ahmad Faiz), and Habib Jalib were imprisoned in *Kot Lakhpat* Jail while Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan was detained in Bahawalpur.(Saeed,2009:153-154) Afterward, Habib Jalib was shifted to Mianwali Jail where he was kept in death cell as punishment. It was said that it was a terrible jail for the prisoners. Later on, Rao Rashid, Chaudhry Asghar Khadim, Amin Mughal, and Janghir Baddar were also arrested.(Saeed:156) The MRD was a political platform that was formed with the coordination of PPP and other political parties with the aim to launch a nonviolent movement on the pattern of staging protests, processions, strikes, hunger strikes, rallies, marches, and processions with placards against the dictatorial regime.(Brohi:183)

Presidential Referendum and Political Resistance in Punjab:

The JUP launched an anti-referendum movement against General Zia-ul-Haq, especially on the eve of *Jumma* Prayer. The focus of the JUP movement was on Punjab, especially the mosques of Lahore, although the Voice of America (Washington) claimed to no effect. Yet BBC claimed that some Muslims Ulema demanded the boycott after *Jumma* Prayer under the notion that General Zia-ul-Haq was only using the name of Islam for political purposes.(Jang (Lahore),9th December 1984) *Ulema*, who were socially and politically conscious, took the stance of the resistance against the politics of Zia-ul-Haq and his misuse of the religion for political means. The SMLA Lahore took

strict action and announced at District Council Committee Room, where a gathering of various sections of society was summoned, that any person who would create hurdle in the process of the referendum would be tackled strictly and no lenience would be shown to the violators. The violators' would be punished through the military courts within one hour, and that the peace and security would be the first and foremost priority. (Jang 10th December 1984) The administration took every step to make the referendum process successful, whereas, the resistance was also exerting its influence in Punjab. When the official announcement was made about the invocation of the MPO, two persons belonging from Punjab were detained; one was Syed Salamat Ali (Faisalabad) while other was Qazi Ghiasud Din (*Toba Takesingh*). (Jang 11th December 1984)

The resistance against the referendum was an initiative by the people of Punjab and they remained stern on their stance despite the measures taken by the military administration against them. Sheikhpura Police arrested a PPP leader under MPO 16 and sent him to jail (Jang 17th December 1984) on the charge of instigation against the referendum. Moreover, *Okara* Police arrested the MRD Secretary Information, Chaudhry Ali Ahmad Mujahid Advocate, in the previous night, on the charge of raising voice against the conduct of a bogus referendum. The referendum organized by Zia's regime was not according to the international method or standard of a referendum. (Amjad, Jang, 1984)

The religious parties and political figures also opposed the referendum openly and supported the stance of MRD in Punjab. The Secretary, Malik Muhammad Akbar Saqi, and Chief Organizer of JUP (Punjab) denied the news that JUP stood with General Zia-ul-Haq on the matter of referendum and would fully support him in the process. Both of them clarified the stance of JUP related to the matter of referendum. They opposed the referendum in an open statement and clarified that all those who supported the referendum in some newspapers would cease being a part of the JUP. *Pattoke Minar Masjid's* Imam Shabbir Ahmad also addressed the people against the referendum and had to face an investigation by the local administration. After informing the authorities about his address, the local people claimed he was that he

was arrested after delivering a speech against conducting the referendum. (Jang, 19th December 1984)

On the referendum day, the MRD workers gathered in huge processions against the process of the referendum at *Masjid Shuhada* Lahore. The police moved to disperse the procession but police could not succeed to arrest any worker. (Jang (Lahore), 19th December 1984) The MRD gave an active response related to the referendum and motivated the people not to become a part of it. The Vice President of TI in Gujrat, Chaudhry Muhammad Tufail, and the District Secretary, Syed Safeer Hussain Shah, were arrested by the police under the charge of distributing anti-referendum pamphlets among the people according to JK171. Furthermore, General Secretary of MRD Muridke, Muhammad Aslam, was detained in Sheikhupura Jail for three months on the charge of distributing pamphlets against the referendum among the people. (Jang 19th December 1984) In *Okara* and *Depalpur*, the police registered cases against unknown persons under MPO 16 and JK171 on the charge of distributing pamphlets against the referendum. (Jang (Lahore, 21th December 1984) Moreover, cases were also registered against the opponents of the referendum at various places in Punjab. In *Cheechawatni*, the police registered a case against two people on the charge of distributing anti-referendum pamphlets among the people. The police remained successful in arresting Saraj Din but could not become successful as others escaped before the arrival of the police. *Sahiwal* Police also registered a case on the complaint of a person who had received pamphlets against the referendum through the postal service. (Jang 21st December 1984)

Politics in Punjab after None Party Election:

In 1985, after the announcement of a non-party based election, the MRD leadership declared after the Jumma Prayer at *Masjid Shuhada* Mall Road Lahore that it would boycott the election process if they were conducted according to the regulations of 5th July 1977 instead of the Constitution (1973). The MRD leaders who addressed the gathering included Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Malik Muhammad Qasim, Aitzaz Ahsan, Rao Rashid, Aslam Ghurdaspuri, Sheikh

Muhammad Rafiq, Malik Muhammad Akbar Saki, Maulana Saifud Din Saif, Mustakeem, Liaquat Bahlwal, and Sir Shaukat Ali. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan argued that Islam cannot be implemented with dishonesty, hypocrisy, cheating, and falsehood. Also, he pointed out that after the referendum there was no possibility of taking part in the elections. (Jasarat 5th January, 1985) The stance taken by the MRD concerning the election was clear that they would not participate in an election under General Zia-ul-Haq if it was not held under the Constitution (1973). In 1985, before the elections, General Zia-ul-Haq made the 8th Amendment in the Constitution (1973) which ensured his supremacy (Mehdi: 55) and authority over all the state institutions.

The people of Punjab planned to resist against the conduct of elections without fear of arrest and harsh punishments. According to a BBC report about the general elections, Pakistan would be going in an election with 1500 of its opposition leaders in imprisonment. (Sartaj, 2009:68) As political movement got momentum in Punjab, the military administration imposed restrictions on political mobilization. In *Chiniot*, Section 144 of the Cr. PC was invoked and there was a restriction of the gathering of five or more people, raising slogans, use of loudspeaker, distribution of objectionable pamphlets; the restrictions were on remaining place for two months. (Jasarat 1st February 1985) The objective of imposing such restrictions was to control the mass mobilization against the dictatorial setup. There were several political prisoners detained in different jails of Punjab; details are as follows: 102 in *Kot Lakhpat*, 23 in Rawalpindi Jail, 3 in Jhelum Central Jail, 4 in Faisalabad Central Jail, 4 in Mianwali Central Jail, 2 in Shahpur District Jail, 10 in Jhang District jail, 5 in Multan District Jail, 22 in Bahawalpur Central Jail, 3 in Sialkot Jail, 15 in Sahiwal Central Jail, 1 in Sheikhupura Jail, and 2 in Attock Jail. The famous leaders who were jailed included Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Malik Muhammad Qasim, Malik Mahraj Khalid, Rana Zulkarnain, Pervaiz Saleh, Abdul Rashid Qureshi, Rao Abdur Rashid, Jahangir Badar, Nawaz Gondal, Afzal Sandhu, Rana Shaukat Mahmood, and Mukhtar Ahmad Awan. (Jasarat 7th February, 1985) Mian Riaz Hashmat Janjua pointed out that the letters of the political workers from the jails

showed that they faced cruel circumstances in the jails, were not given proper medical care, were well kept in "C" class imprisonment status with heavy binds, and were imprisoned in isolation. Also, he argued that they were being treated in a manner crueler than the colonial period.(Punjab Assembly Debates,1987:383)

The political parties resisted the plan to conduct the elections in 1985 on a non-party basis; the political workers conveyed dissent through publication and distribution of pamphlets against Gen. Zia dictatorial regime. The administration took strict measures against and they were arrested by the Lahore Police. All those who resisted against the election process were presented before the Military Court no.79 and were given in judicial remand for ten days. The individuals included Iftikhar Ahmad (MRD Joint Secretary Punjab), Muhammad Aslam Khan (National Liberation Front), and the members of Lahore Art Press like Munawar Hussain Zaidi (Senior Clerk), Bashir Ahmad (Clerk), Dil Muhammad (Painter and Owner of the Press), as well as, Muhammad Mohsin(President NDP) could not be arrested. There was a case registered against all of them under MLR 13 in the *Anarkali* Police Station.(Jasarat 9th February 1985) On the Election Day (of Provincial Assembly) MRD planned to gather at *Masjid Shuhada* Mall Road Lahore. Consequently, five prominent MRD leaders were arrested; they were Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan, Dr. Pervaiz Aslam, Khalid Rashid (TI), Mansoor Malik (PPP), and Naveed Anwar Naveed (PDP). (Jasarat 1st March 1985)

The PPP was focused on resistance against General Zia-ul-Haq till arrival of Benazir Bhutto in 1986 (Chawla:9) The people of Punjab from Lahore, Gujranwala, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, and other areas of Punjab gathered to welcome her at Lahore. (Waseem, 1989:416) The political figure of Benazir Bhutto (as Z.A. Bhutto's daughter) became the motivating factor of the resistance against the dictatorial regime that had oppressed the masses for the last eight years. She had suffered by the hands of the dictator which became the reason for the warm and historic welcome that she received. (Haider, 1992: 132) The people of Punjab took the masses to a trip back to the history by welcoming Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto like they welcomed *Quaid-e-Awam* when he visited Lahore. (Aziz, 2019)

Political Resistance in Punjab against wrong deeds:

A meeting was arranged after the incident of Ojri explosion under Nawabzada Nasrulla Khan and Sheikh Muhammad Rafiq. The participants' condemned the whole regime of Zia-ul-Haq and gave resemblance to the explosion of suspension of the constitution, the explosion of provisional constitution order, the explosion, the referendum, and a non-party elections MRD passed a resolution which consisted of the following points; first and major demand was the resignation of General Zia-ul-Haq from the post COAS while other demands were judicial inquiry of Rawalpindi incident under the supervision of Supreme Court senior judge and the result of inquiry would be shared with the people, MRD demanded from CMLA General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq took the responsibility of the incident and left the designation of COAS. In emergence meeting MRD demanded the inquiry within fifteen to twenty days and would share to the mass and the inquiry would be on open grounds and there would be no secret (Mashriq, 13th April, 1988) the tragic incident became the central issue in all sphere of life. The incident weakened the position of Zia-ul-Haq on the matters related to the administration and policy especially Afghan war efforts in the near country capital. (Belokrenitsky, 2013:296)

Afterwards General Zia-ul-Haq (CMLA) dissolved the assemblies of Pakistan through his press conference by using article 58(2b). He also expressed that assemblies had been unsuccessful to give protection to the citizens of Pakistan and targets which were set at the time of elections, it was necessary to take the step. According to CMLA, Senate would remain as its status but the provincial assemblies would also be dissolved with immediate effect. (Mashriq 30th May 1988) The dissolution of the assembly frustrated the politicians and the people inhale to the various fields of life. After CMLA action the sentiment of resistance refreshed against the dictatorial regime of Zia-ul-Haq and supported the decision of MRD not to participate in the election under martial law and Sharia Ordinance was not acceptable. Thirteen religious parties organized a conference under due to the motivation of JUI (Fazal ur Rehman) at Lahore and rejected step of General Zia-ul-

Haq to implement Sharia Ordinance after the dissolution of assemblies and declared it political tact to prolong dictatorial regime. (Kashmiri, 1995: 181) The step of general Zia-ul-Haq was considered to undemocratic that he took steps to dissolve assemblies in the political history of the country whenever he was not in a strong position against the opposition.(Belokrenitsky :295)

General Secretary Punjab Democratic Youth Organization Mr.Imtiaz Rasheed Qurashi commented on the step of General Zia-ul-Haq to dissolve assemblies proved the right step of MRD not to participate in the election which was conducted under martial law in 1985 he also presented congratulation to the central committee he further emphasized upon political leader move towards an alliance (Mashriq 31st May 1988) for the future election which announced by CMLA. The political activities accelerated after the announcement of elections. The prominent politicians like SM Zafar, (Acting President National Peoples Party), JUP Secretary Information, Pir Ejaz Hashim and leaders of JI Chaudhary Ejaz Jilani met Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan at his residence to the discuss the situation (Mashriq, 31st May 1988) which was prevailing after the dismissal of assemblies and conduction of elections for the further assemblies on the national and provincial level.

Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan expressed in a statement that stance of MRD related to the 1985 elections was right because under the dictatorship the election could not be according to the whim of the people. The restoration of the Constitution (1973) was the main demand of MRD and agreement between NDP and PPP was also the restoration of the Constitution. (Mashriq 9th June 1988) The step of dissolution of Zia's own selected government under Junejo. MRD became reliable after the forthcoming political scenario because the stance of MRD against Gen. Zia given confidence to the parties after the dissolution of the Junejo Government under the condition when three years had passed. Gen. Zia promised to conduct elections and political parties were planned about forthcoming scenario but due to incident of C-130 the end of dictatorial regime and beginning of new democratic phase in Pakistan.

Conclusion:

Punjab had been the centre of political activities after promulgation of Gen. Zia's Dictatorial Regime. The people of Punjab were politically aware of circumstances and played prominent role in leading a movement against dictatorial regime. Though Gen. Zia imposed martial law regulations and severe kind of punishments yet people of Punjab faced all strictness with open arms. There was none political scenario but the people converted into political scenario in spite of all methods of strictness. The beam of democracy remained alive in form of struggled against dictatorial of Gen. Zia in premises of Punjab.

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