

**CO-RELATION BETWEEN
POWER DEPLOYMENT AND
SOCIO-POLITICAL MOVEMENTS
THE CASE STUDY OF AYUB KHAN'S REGIME**

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The coup of October 1958 derailed the process of parliamentary democracy and initiated a new era of dictatorship in Pakistan. The eleven years of General Ayūb Khan regime witnessed a number of socio-political, administrative and economic problems. The roots of those problems were related to the power structure and deployment of power by the regime. The current paper is an attempt to analyze some of the very important issues like what was the nature and mechanism of power structure during Ayub regime? How the new structure deployed powers? And what were the impacts of deployment of power upon the people and society both in West and East Pakistan. The current paper discusses different political, administrative and economic policies of Ayub regime and the resultant impacts in form of regional imbalances, disparity and the socio-political movements in Pakistan. It is an attempt to prove that how dictatorial, autocratic and personalized power deployment may affect the social balance, central provincial relations and national harmony.

Introduction

Pakistan faced a number of socio-political, economic, constitutional and administrative issues immediately after independence in 1947. The nature and direction of these problems resulted in diversion of the country from the path of economic development and democratic consolidation.

However, the fragile condition of democratic governments and the hurdles to which parliamentary system had always been exposed in Pakistan can be linked to a number of reasons including the void of leadership after demise of Jinnah, unreliable moral aptitude of political leaders, disruption and collapse of Muslim League, weak and disorganized party system, feudal and other traditional elites' supremacy over political process who always have shown no trust in democracy, unnecessary intervention of heads of state in day to day affairs of state, gradual ascendancy of civil and military bureaucracy to powers, deficiency of free and commendable elections during martial law regimes.¹ After independence, both Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan put their faith on non-democratic elements like the civil servants*. It has been observed that in total of four provinces of Pakistan, officers of the three provinces were selected from earlier ICS. Moreover, most of the central government's ministers lacked administrative acumen while they were running government departments. At that particular time, leadership of new Pakistan just knew nothing more than the British vice regal system dominated by bureaucracy.² Thus, the country moved towards a new political life influenced by bureaucracy. Jinnah and Liaquat were followed by Malik Ghulam Muhammad, a bureaucrat who was stranger to political arena.³ Of course, Ghulam Muhamamd and Choudhry Muhammad Ali, as leading civil servants, exercised their influence in elevating bureaucratic elements into Pakistan's political life and authority.⁴ Similarly, way was paved for military encroachment when in February-March 1953 the Ahmadis riots resulted in the bloody clashes and killings and the authorities used army for controlling the situation. It was here when for the first time martial law was imposed in Pakistan in Lahore (on 8th March 1953).⁵ Although from 1951, the government was headed by Bengali representatives but in fact it was just a façade. Muhammad Ali was not a politician and had limited contacts with political groups.⁶

Another undemocratic action was taken in form of dissolution of the Constituent Assembly when members of the Assembly amended section 9, 10, 10B and 17 of the Government of India Act 1935. The

*In India Sardar Patel refused to weaken the bureaucratic system because it was keeping Indian administration united and intact. Pakistan had inherited a small number of these officers. From where else the founder could appoint new officials. In India strong democratic and political parties helped to lead the country. Here the death of Quaid and murder of Liaquat Ali Khan gravely affected the government and the country. When the local Indian Commander-in-Chief Gen. Cariappa tried to defy the Central Civil Government, Pandit Nehru removed him from service. It decided the equation between the civil and military administration for ever – *Ed.*

amendment divested governor general of all the discretionary powers pertaining to appointment of prime minister, ministers, their salaries and allocation of business. The governor general prepared a plan for counter coup and dissolved the Constituent Assembly on October 24, 1954.^{7*} However, after passing nine long years when Pakistan succeeded in making the constitution of 1956, it was not allowed to run smoothly. On October 8, 1958 the president of Pakistan Iskandar Mirza implemented military rule in Pakistan. Under this action, 1956 constitution was abolished, ministers were sent homes, assemblies both central and provincial were dissolved and all types of political movements were disallowed.⁸ As according to Robbin M. and William Jr., political rivalries within state contributed to ethnic salience and collective mobilization.⁹ In a similar way, the political imbalance and game for power struggle from 1947 to 1958, paved way for military intrusion and generated ethnic rivalry and collective mobilization.

Theories of Power Structure

The fundamental problem about the relation between democratic stability, institutional consolidation, progress, participatory governance and changes at the level of society basically lies in the fact that how societies describe their power structure.¹⁰ In political sociology there are five theories which try to illustrate and put the very nature of power structure under analysis. These theories are pluralism, state autonomy theory, elite theory, Marxism and class domination theory.¹¹ According to Pluralism contemporary societies are exposed to wide variety of groups and people who contemplate power. On the other hand, the state autonomy theory believes that state is the basic entity that exercises political power. In the similar way, the elite theory puts stress upon organizations, state and other enterprises and states international and local societies are usually influenced from the command big organizations, state or big enterprises and their leaders set their prospects. Marxism, on the other hand, lists societies on the basis of social class; in which every person enjoys a 'status' in the process. Moreover, class domination theory investigates power in social composition with regard to how the power is wielded (who benefits? who governs? and who wins?).

This perception defines the nature of competition among various groups for occupying the society and its impacts upon social development.¹²

*It is strange that Kh. Nazimuddin and others offered no effective opposition – *Ed.*

Understanding Socio-Political Movement

It is indeed not easy to accurately define social movement. It does not come under the category of a political party. It also does not come in the list of interest groups because they are established political bodies. They also have continuous approach to power and political elites. Moreover, social movement is not mere group of people unorganized and without goal. When, however, social movement is shared by some political objectives or political forces, if it takes the form of a socio-political movement.¹³ Collective struggle, known opponents, informal networking and collective identity among the participants are the fundamental features of a social movement. The activities of the movement are above differences and are focused upon a goal or goals. These goals are either related to a definite and constricted policy or be more largely aimed at cultural transformation.¹⁴

In the beginning, scholars thought that collective action was directed towards introducing social reformation. In this regard, some scholarly wise people attempted to investigate that why people are brought under compulsion to start joint action. They also tried to explore the conditions responsible for stimulating social movements. Their scholarly wisdom revolved around theories like 'mass society'. This theory believed that rising industrialization of culture have created a sense of isolation among people as the conservative structures and support networks at social level broke down.¹⁵ Among the prominent and famous scholars who struggled to study social movement process was Herbert Blumer. He developed the idea that social movement goes through four stages. According to him, social agitation, popular stimulation, formulization and institutionalization are the basic four stages of a movement. However, later various scholars polished the above stages into appearance, coalescence, bureaucratization and decline.¹⁶

Emergence is the first stage of a movement. It is a preliminary stage which occurs because of widespread discontentment among the people. The participants of a movement may be unhappy with some policies of a government. Coalescence is the second stage in which the movement overcomes some obstacles. However, no formal organization and widespread mobility are involved at this stage.¹⁷ The third phase of bureaucratization involves advanced point of organization and partnership oriented policies. At this stage, the movement does not rely on rallies or inspirational leaders rather it needs trained staff to carry out functions. However, at this stage the leaders have greater access to power elites.

Finally, the last stage of decline comes in the shape of repression, co-optation, success or failure.¹⁸

Power Structure During Ayūb Regime

Basically, political power is the capability to encourage, persuade, pressurize, modify, manipulate or to change belief, value or action someone else. Moreover, the political power is usually focused upon bringing and causing change in direction. Power structures usually impacts changes or modifications. If we historically examine political aggression, internal or external wars, insurrection, military intervention, rebellion, occupation, all these will show impacts of authority and the essential significance of evaluating how power is structured and how it is employed in human society.¹⁹

So far as Pakistan is concerned, it inherited an unstable political system which could not evolve, as or has not been allowed to evolve, a functioning democracy.²⁰ The so called power elite presiding over the operation of state machinery has sought to perpetuate the in-egalitarian class structure in society and played upon the intra-social divides to retain its hold over power. In the process, however, political system of the country becomes fragmented.²¹

Deep analysis of Pakistan's political history reveals that power structure during Ayub regime was highly centralized and bureaucratized. No doubt, long before coming into power, Ayub and Iskandar Mirza, who were the two major influential personalities of civil-military establishment, had firm determination that Pakistan could rightly be administered through strengthening the hold of civil and military bureaucracy on government and people.²² During Ayub regime, the civil and military elites administered Pakistan with the cooperation of some landlord and industrial elites belonging to West Pakistan.

The real power to rule was exercised by the Punjabis, the Muhajirs and the Pashtoons.²³ No representation was given to the Sindhis, Balochis and Bengalis in the power structure. Herbert Fieldman argues that "army had 60 percent Punjabis, 35 percent Pashtoons while others had the representation of only 5 percent."²⁴

After coming into power, Ayub soon took side of the Right and ignored the Left. He tried his best to make civil and military bureaucracy the recognized rulers and biggest vested interest in Pakistan.²⁵ In fact, during Ayub regime, the civil service, monopolized by West Pakistan, played an important role in decision making and economic policies while

the military's role expanded and monopolized the formation of defense policies.²⁶

Deployment of Power and Socio-Political Movements under Ayub Regime

No doubt, power sharing is a strategy of choice in search of peaceful co-existence in ethnically divided societies.²⁷ However, with such a bureaucratized, personalized and militarized power structure, Ayub Khan could not be expected to deploy power towards creating regional parity, institution building and social integration. He preferred central government to be powerful for the purpose of social strength and above all for national integration.

Therefore, as an alternative of sharing power, Ayub Khan amalgamated power.²⁸ It is important to note here that from 1958 to 1962 two cabinets remained in function. In these cabinets, he shared powers with the collaboration of West Pakistan professionals, and civil and military bureaucracy. Majority of his cabinet members, who had important portfolios, also belonged to West Pakistan during this phase except Muhammad Ali Bogra who had been Ambassador to USA for two times and had experience to be appointed as Foreign Minister in 1962.²⁹ The underline table clearly indicates that with whom Ayub Khan shared his powers.

Social Group	1958-1962 Martial Law Era	1962-1969, Cabinet Under 1962 Constitution	Total
Professional	4	15	19
Landowners	1	2	03
Civil Bureaucrats	6	8	14
Military Bureaucrats	4	2	06
Industrialist and Businessmen	1	01	02
Total Ministers	16	28	44

Source: The above table is taken from 'Naumana, Kiran, A Study of the Composition of Federal Cabinets in Pakistan: 1947-1977', *Journal of Political Studies*, vol. XXI, Issue No. 1, 2014, p. 145.

He deployed power in an unjust and dictatorial way in both wings of the country. Initially, the coup was welcomed because masses had some expectations from the regime. It has been observed that peasants and workers had the perception that in the new political set up grip of capitalists, landed class and dishonest civil service would be wiped out as Ayub Khan had assured them for doing all these and for taking such steps.³⁰

To fulfill his promise, Ayub had to introduce some land reforms and the government seemed to be active against feudal structure. His land reforms in agriculture sector, however, failed as most of military officers belonged to middle-sized landlord backgrounds. So, bringing any type of deficit in the lands of these officers could have direct impact upon military support to the president which Ayub did not want to happen.³¹ Similarly, it is important to mention here the influence of landlords which could easily be seen in the new National Assembly. The members were elected by the 80,000 Basic Democrats. It was however observable that about 70 of its total 156 members had landed backgrounds. This force and numbers were further larger in the provincial assembly of West Pakistan where 76 were landlords out of total 155 members.³² Similarly, Ayub Khan deployed powers in an unjust and dictatorial way when the regime explicitly and legitimately sponsored the capitalist policy of “functional inequality” to reach high level of savings and investment.³³ Under this perspective, the industrial policy of Ayub Khan could not give productive positive results. In fact, by 1968 the wealth had been concentrated in the hands of few while majority of the people were facing acute poverty.

In reality, twenty two families had occupied sixty six percent industrialized resources, seventy percent assurance resources and had authority over eighty percent bank finances.³⁴ Here again, power was deployed in an unjust and a partial way when it was determined that for the purpose to increase development, West Pakistan should be selected first for investment. East Pakistan was ignored just for the reason that it had less developed economic infrastructure and uncertain political conditions in East Pakistan.³⁵ Thus, the government followed a strategy of profits disparity among different sections of society which was pursued at the same time with the plan of regional discrimination between the two wings of Pakistan. The resultant inequality produced by the policy is evident from the fact that between 1959-1960 to 1969-1970 per capita GDP in terms of 1959-1960 continuous prices hiked only by 17 percent in East Pakistan but 42 percent in West Pakistan.³⁶

Similarly, the press which is an anathema to bureaucracies was either censored or nationalized by the regime like *Imroz*, *Mashriq*, and *Pakistan Times*. In 1960, the Press and Publication Ordinance was promulgated. Every newspaper and other periodicals were bound to obtain a license from the government before going to publish anything.³⁷ Thus, through the ordinance anti-government voice of the press was curbed by Ayub Khan in an undemocratic way. Moreover, powers were not deployed towards creating provincial autonomy or structuring central-provincial government harmony under the 1962 constitution which was enforced on June 8, 1962.

The president, under the constitution, exercised that much powers that Choudhry Muḥammad Ali called it as “the government from top to bottom occupied by the president.”³⁸ Ayub Khan exercised unchallenged executive, judicial, legislative and financial powers under the 1962 constitution. However, apart from exercising that much dictatorial powers by the president, Ayub government also pressurized members of legislature for passing the Second Amendment Bill in June 1964.³⁹ The Bill amended ten articles in the constitution. Apart from others, the it empowered the President to dissolve National Assembly before the expiration of his tenure as President.⁴⁰ Here, the government lacked two-third majority while because of the policy of pressurization, nine members crossed the floor and allowed the passage of the bill.⁴¹ Similarly, undemocratic, personalized and regional based powers were deployed regarding the share of East Pakistan in the power structure. To be very true, Bengalis constituted 5 percent officers in military, 16 percent officers in Air force and 10 percent in Navy.⁴² Moreover, Ayub failed in adopting any particular strategy for the purpose to make the military representative of the whole country.⁴³ Similarly, the Bengalis faced a very fragile representation in Central Civil Services. East Pakistan ultimately put forward the demand of equality in civil services because of its vital role in decision-making and policy formulation.⁴⁴

Moreover, the imbalance in power structure and its negative deployment is evident from the fact that people of the Bengal province had very minimal representation particularly in the policy-making departments at central level. They were near to disappearance in commissions of investigation, central secretariat and public cooperation. Ironically, the Commission of Inquiry had only 75 Bengali members out of total 280 that is only 27 percent.⁴⁵ The influential position together with those of Finance Ministry that were deemed vital for the allotment of resources had been captured by the civil services members of West

Pakistan. Moreover, they had minimal representation in commercial category, policy formulation throughout Ayub regime.⁴⁶ Similarly, the extreme dictatorial nature of the regime and autocratic power deployment can be observed when Governor East Pakistan 'Abdul Monem Khan, in Ayub regime, attempted to disallow the transmission of Tagore's songs and poetry on Dacca radio station and prevented the imports of Bengali literary works from Calcutta.⁴⁷

It was against this background that the regime started facing social and political challenges. To reconstruct the power structure and to oust the president from the arena of political activities, when it was agreed upon that election for the president will be held on January 2, 1965, opposition parties of National Assembly joined together. They formed the Combined Opposition Parties (COP) which consisted of Council Muslim League, Awami League and National Awami Party⁴⁸ and selected Miss Fatima Jinnah as a candidate for the presidency to oppose Ayub Khan.

Here, before and during the elections, people were expecting victory for Fatima Jinnah. Ayub Khan, however, again deployed power in a corrupt way and used every tactic to win the elections. Here the people realized that Basic Democrats could never be relied upon. They felt that only one way unlock to them was mass demonstrations and general revolts.⁴⁹ All tyrannies, according to Aristotle, are short lived. When the atrocities of Ayub Khan and his power deployment in a very negative, personalized, bureaucratic and corrupt way touched the boiling point, and when the people became fed up with the system, country wide agitation started against the regime. Here, though the top army officers firmly supported Ayub Khan, the wealthy twenty two families fully gave their support to rivals.⁵⁰ However, here powers were again used in a personalized and autocratic way when it was not allowed in the National Assembly to have discussion and deliberations over the processions and casualties during encounter with police in different places of the country.⁵¹ The regime adopted various coercive measures to implement observance. For example, salaries of teaching staff in schools and colleges in Karachi and other West Pakistan's cities were not issued for many months. At the start of January, agitating service class was at the verge of hunger.⁵²

Moreover, it is evident from historical sources that the troops of West Pakistan were deployed and used in East Pakistan which paved the way for speedy separation of East Pakistan. Similarly, in Karachi Frontier Constabulary was brought into operation to face the crowd demolishing the houses of the supporters of Ayub Khan.⁵³

However, in spite of Ayub Khan's coercive measures, demonstrations and riots were getting hard against the regime in major cities of Pakistan demanding death to Ayub. However, seeing no other option available, Ayub Khan first agreed to talks with opposition parties and later on March 26, 1969, handed power to Yahya Khan by violating his own constitution in an undemocratic manner.

Conclusion

In October 1958, Pakistan's process of democracy was derailed through a coup imposed by president Iskandar Mirza. General Muhammad Ayub Khan was appointed as the Chief Martial Law Administrator. However, General Ayub Khan succeeded in ousting Iskandar Mirza and became the sole administrator of the country. During his regime, the country faced a new power structure composed of civil-military bureaucratic oligarchy which was later joined by landlords and industrial capitalist class of the country. Powers were in the hands of those who had no or very little public support or populist basis.

This bureaucratic oligarchic class, throughout the Ayub regime from 1958 to 1969, deployed powers in an unjust, militarized, bureaucratic, personalized and bureaucratic way. The political history of Pakistan reveals that in the process the regime failed in building institutions, forging national unity or devolving powers to the grass root levels. Reforms, in any way, proved a farce and bitterly failed to achieve the set targets. The system of Basic Democracy produced a class composed of industrialist and landlords and subservient to the president. The industrial reforms concentrated wealth and produced twenty-two wealthiest families at the expense of widespread poverty in the country. Similarly, the regime failed in curtailing corrupt tendencies of the civil bureaucracy. The centralized power structure did not ensure the devolution of central authority regarding decision making to the provincial government both in East and West Pakistan.

Moreover, General Muhammad Ayub Khan concentrated sufficient powers in his own hands under the constitution of 1962. Under the constitution, he made himself the sole administrator of the country. No guarantee was given to provinces regarding provincial autonomy. Similarly, Ayub Khan failed in ensuring or in taking concrete measures towards curtailing disparity between the two wings. Throughout the regime, Bengalis felt themselves alienated from the mainstream political and economic equality. They were deprived of their due share in civil and military

bureaucracy. Important portfolios and ministries were run by the West Pakistanis.

The results of all these autocratic and dictatorial deployment of powers by the regime were seen in the form of socio-political movements in the country. The formation of Combined Opposition Parties and the subsequent processions, bloodshed and riots were the results of the undemocratic power structure and negative power deployment during the Ayub regime. However, the regime used coercive measures against the people both in East and West Pakistan which ultimately paved way for the separation of East Pakistan. After seeing no other option available, Ayub Khan handed powers to Yahya Khan by violating the norms of his own constitution.

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