

## Working Relationship between Central and Provincial Governments in Pakistan (1971-77)

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### Abstract

*This paper explores the working relationship between the centre and the provinces during Z. A. Bhutto's period from 1971 to 1977. This era was full of political turmoil at the domestic level. The issues like formation of central government and provincial governments, transfer and sharing of power, provincial autonomy, Balochistan insurgency, political assassinations, Urdu-Sindhi conflict, Ahmedia controversy, framing the constitution and the demand of national elections had disturbed the center-provinces relations. The confrontation between the PPP and NAP confirmed that the period was characterized by politics of power and personal interests. Balochistan experienced the worse kind of repression than any other province during Bhutto's rule. A military campaign was started against them leading to worse clashes between the local forces and the military troops by federal government. The ban on NAP resulted in the formation of UDF which aimed at restoration of the democracy. Bhutto saw it as a threat to his office and ordered the Federal Security Force (FSF) to stifle it. Insurgency in Balochistan, assassination of Sherpao in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP), Language riots in Sindh and the Ahmedia controversy in Punjab made the position of PPP weak not only at the center but also at the provincial level. The series of bomb blasts, killing of people and assassinations became the routine matter which paved the way for the opposition to establish PNA, an alliance against Bhutto. This was enough to illustrate that Bhutto did not adopt conciliatory policy towards the opposition rather he tried every possible mean to curb them.*

**Keywords:** Federalism, Pakistan People Party (PPP), National Awami Party (NAP), Jamiat-ul-Ulma-e-Islam (JUI), Qayyum Muslim League (QML), The Constitution of 1973, Constituent Assembly, Separatist Movement, Tribalism, tribal leaders, Pakistan Army, London Plan, Insurgency, Baloch Student Organization (BSO), Baloch Nationalists, Opposition Parties, United Democratic Front (UDF), Provincial Autonomy, General Elections, Constitution, Martial Law, Democracy, Pakistan National Alliance(PNA).

### Introduction

In 1971, when Z. A. Bhutto assumed power, he inherited many problems. Center-provinces relations were not cordial, the Baloch and Pashtoon nationalists were demanding provincial autonomy, and country needed a new constitution, and above the entire nation was aggrieved on the humiliating defeat in the War of 1971. Bhutto had assumed presidency at the time of the gravest crisis in the history of Pakistan. The surrender of Pakistan's army in Dhaka on December 16, 1971 had caused agony in West Pakistan. So General Yahya transferred power to Bhutto. He had returned from New York on the morning of December 20, and a few hours later Yahya Khan swore him in as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan (CMLA).<sup>i</sup> After few hours, Bhutto addressed the nation on radio and television. He addressed the issues of provincial autonomy and said that there was indeed a "thin line" between autonomy and secession."<sup>ii</sup> Removing the ban on the National Awami Party (NAP)<sup>iii</sup>, placed by the Yahya regime, he declared:

I will start with a clean state. I am assuming that we are all patriots and that we all want to serve Pakistan. So I am withdrawing the ban on the National Awami Party and I am going to request the leaders of NAP to meet me very soon. In this connection I am also going to ask leaders of other political parties to meet me.<sup>iv</sup>

Even after the lifting of ban from NAP, the political tussle between PPP and NAP province continued because the situation had become complicated due to party position in the remaining four provinces of West Pakistan. The results of general elections held in 1970 as show in the following tables show the seats won by the PPP and other parties.

**Table 1: National Assembly Elections, 1970: seats won**

Provinces	Total seats	PPP Pakistan People's Party	PML(Q) (Pakistan Muslim League) Qayyum Group	PML (Conv.) (Pakistan Muslim League) Convention	PML (Coun.) (Pakistan Muslim League) Council	JI Jammat-e- Islami	JUI Jamiat Ulma-e- Islam	JUP Jamiat Ulma-e- Pakistan	NAP National Awami Party	Independents
Punjab	82	62	1	2	7	1	-	4	-	5
Sindh	27	18	1	-	-	2	-	3	-	3
Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP)	18	1	7	-	-	1	6	-	3	-
FATA	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Balochistan	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	-
Total	138	81	9	2	7	4	7	7	6	15

**Source:** Election Commission, *Report on General Elections Pakistan 1970-1971*, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, Vol. I, pp.204-5

As far as National Assembly elections were concerned, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had won 82 seats out of 138 in West Pakistan in the 1970 elections but it enjoyed majority only in Punjab and Sindh. In Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan, NAP and Jamiat Ulma-e-Islam (JUI)<sup>v</sup> had won majority seats as shown in the above table.<sup>vi</sup> The PPP had lost the election in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan, the two provinces where the movement for provincial autonomy had been strong.

**Table 2: Provincial Assembly Elections, 1970: seats won**

Provinces	Total seats	PPP (Pakistan People's Party)	PML(Q) (Pakistan Muslim League) Qayyum Group	PML (Conv.) (Pakistan Muslim League) Convention	PML (Coun.) (Pakistan Muslim League) Council	JI Jammat- e- Islami	JUI Jamiat Ulma- e-Islam	JUP Jamiat Ulma-e- Pakistan	NAP National Awami Party	Independents
Punjab	180	113	6	5	16	1	2	4	-	27
Sindh	60	28	5	-	4	1	-	7	-	14
Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP)	40	3	10	2	1	1	4	-	13	6
Balochistan	20	-	2	-	-	-	3	-	8	6

**Source:** Election Commission, *Report on General Elections Pakistan 1970-1971*, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, Vol. I, p. 219

In the Provincial Assembly elections (1970), the PPP had won 113 seats out of 180 from Punjab and 28 out of 60 from Sindh, thus forming its majority in Punjab and emerged single largest party in Sindh Provincial Assembly. In Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) it got only 3 seats and in Balochistan it could not get even a single seat. The NAP had not won any seat from Punjab and Sindh but it secured 13 seats out of 40 from Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and 8 out of 20 from Balochistan and formed coalition governments with JUI in the two provinces which secured four seats in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and three in Balochistan Provincial Assembly.

### ***Tripartite Accord***

NAP leader Wali Khan was demanding to lift martial law. In February 1972, he gave the ultimatum to lift martial law or lose the cooperation of NAP. He even threatened to launch a mass movement for the restoration of democracy.<sup>vii</sup> Bhutto soon realized that he could not control the situation as CMLA for a long time and the martial law should be replaced by constitutional government. He was fully aware of the fact that complete consensus on the constitution was not possible so he started working on interim agreement. The first step taken by Bhutto in this regard was to lift the previous government's ban on the NAP headed by Abdul Wali Khan.

Bhutto had understood that he could not form provincial governments in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan. And he needed the support of coalition partners for the acceptance of constitutional draft. He decided to lift martial law. Ultimately, he reached an accord with Wali Khan and JUI led by Mufti Mahmood. The accord was agreed upon on 6 March 1972 and was called as PPP-NAP-JUI the Tripartite Accord.<sup>viii</sup>

Hayat Muhammad Khan Sherpao, Mustafa Jatoi, Hafeez Pirzada, Kausar Niazi and Rafi Raza participated in the negotiations from the PPP side.<sup>ix</sup> The NAP was represented by Wali Khan, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Arbab Sikandar and Khair Bakhsh Marri.<sup>x</sup> The JUI was represented by Mufti Mahmood and Maulana Ghulam Ghaus Hazarvi.<sup>xi</sup> The three parties (PPP, NAP and JUI) settled for the PPP rule at the center and in Punjab and Sindh, and the NAP-JUI rule in NWFP and Balochistan. It was also decided that although the center had the right to appoint governors in the provinces, but as a compromise, the center would appoint governors, in consultation with the majority party in the two provinces of Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan.

Bhutto agreed to appoint NAP nominees- Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil as Governors of Balochistan and Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) respectively w.e.f. April 1, 1972. In return, NAP-JUI would support the continuance of martial law until August 14, 1972. This agreement was the result of the concession from both sides. Bhutto imposed presidential system which was introduced on central level and parliamentary form of government was opted for the provinces.

This accord soon ran into trouble, when Bhutto removed a large number of public servants from their services without giving them access to the courts. In March 1972, over 1300 federal and provincial civil servants were dismissed under the cover of martial law on grounds of corruption, incompetence and misconduct.<sup>xii</sup> Thus martial law was used to restrict fundamental rights and judicial authority. This act developed serious misgivings about the continuation of martial law in the minds of Wali Khan and other leaders of NAP. Many of the dismissed servants were the employees of the provincial governments so Bhutto's move was considered as an open attack on provincial authority. In these circumstances, Wali Khan announced that his party would not vote for the continuation of martial law if the federal government would not review the cases of provincial civil servants dismissed under martial law regulation. Thus Bhutto lost the confidence of opposition.

### ***Interim Constitution***

On 21 April, 1972 martial law came to an end and the Interim Constitution was promulgated. On the same day, Bhutto sworn as President under the Interim Constitution of 1972. After some further negotiations, the nominees of NAP-JUI, namely Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, and Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil, were appointed Governors of Balochistan and Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) respectively on 29 April 1972.<sup>xiii</sup>

The Interim Constitution provided base for a Presidential form of government at the center and a parliamentary system in the provinces.<sup>xiv</sup> From April 1972 to February 1973, the NAP-JUI formed coalition governments in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan. Maulana Mufti Mahmood was elected as leader of the house in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) Provincial Assembly and Mr. Ata Ullah Khan Mengal in Balochistan Provincial Assembly. Both provincial assemblies started to function early in May 1972, when the new administration became fully operational under the Interim Constitution. Thus a new phase began in the relationship between the center and these two provinces.<sup>xv</sup>

Under the Interim Constitution, Bhutto exercised unlimited authority as the President of Pakistan. It was a clear violation of his pre-election commitments. The PPP manifesto<sup>xvi</sup> promised to introduce parliamentary form of government.

### ***Politics of Rivalry in NWFP***

Bhutto wanted to get rid of undesirable or defiant provincial ministries. For this purpose, he encouraged rival political forces in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan to disrupt the NAP-JUI provincial governments. Bhutto took Abdul Qayyum Khan, leader of Qayyum Muslim League (QML), as minister for the interior in his cabinet.<sup>xvii</sup> Qayyum Khan's Muslim League had agreed to support PPP in the National Assembly. Although Bhutto did not need Qayyum's support, but he took him as Interior Minister only because the latter had been a foe of NAP and he used his office to harass the NAP-JUI governments.<sup>xviii</sup> Hayat Mohammad Sherpao, Minister for Water and Power in the central government, became at the same time the leader of the opposition in the Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) assembly. As a central minister, he could deny the province funds and cooperation and, as leader of the opposition in the provincial assembly he could denounce the NAP-JUI governments for its failure in solving the people's problems.<sup>xix</sup> All these political maneuverings of Bhutto made the center-provinces working relationship impossible.

From the beginning, Bhutto was apprehensive of the popularity of NAP of Wali Khan. The annulment of One-Unit in 1969 as well as the victory of NAP in 1970 general elections gave added strength to the regional autonomy movement. Therefore, in order to counter the threat of NAP, Bhutto cultivated forces to create hurdles in the smooth functioning of the NAP-JUI governments in the provinces of Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) and Balochistan.

NAP-JUI government in Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) made concerted efforts to convince the central government about the need to extend opportunities of political freedom. Abdul Ghaffar Khan returned to Pakistan in 1972, after eight years of self-imposed exile in Kabul. He offered unconditional cooperation to the Bhutto government with a view to establishing a purposeful dialogue between the Pashtoon people and the government of the country. But it was misinterpreted by Bhutto and he restricted the activities of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan to his native town Charsadah.<sup>xx</sup> He accused the NAP-JUI government of having sympathy with the alleged separatist activities of Khan Ghaffar Khan. The Pashtoon leaders assured the center that they would extend every possible support on the matters of national interest and would play their part in the protection and integrity against internal and external threats.

### ***Situation in Balochistan***

Balochistan had shown clear signs of discontent with the Central Government in Bhutto period. Balochistan had been, (and continues to be), the most backward region of Pakistan. In the new Pakistan of 1971, Balochistan was very important, it now comprised forty-three percent of our total area but its population was less than four percent of Pakistan. Only fifty percent of the population of Pakistani Balochistan was of Balochi origin. The Pashtoons and other ethnic groups constituted the rest of the population. The Baloch and Brohi tribes were concentrated in Sibi, Chagi, Kalat, Makran and Kharan, while Pashtoons overwhelmingly inhabited the Quetta, Pishin, and Loralai areas. So there was ethnic prejudice in this province along with tribal rivalries and conflicts among the Baloch themselves.<sup>xxi</sup> After the creation of Pakistan, Balochistan was not identified as a separate province. Prior to the imposition of 'One Unit scheme', it was a federally administered region. When the One Unit scheme was introduced in 1955, Balochistan was merged into the province of West Pakistan. Balochistan became a province in 1972 under Bhutto regime. The Interim Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan (April 1972) formally recognized the provincial existence of Balochistan.<sup>xxii</sup>

The Baloch leaders mainly belonged to NAP. Mir Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Khair Baksh Marri and Sardar Atallah Mengal were their outstanding personalities. Ghous Bakhsh Bizenjo was appointed Governor of Balochistan on 29 April and Mengal became the Chief Minister of the NAP-JUI provincial government on 1 May 1972.<sup>xxiii</sup> This was the first time that these NAP leaders were part of any government. Formerly, they had opposed all the governments. After they assumed power, center-provinces confrontation became a regular feature. The Baloch people were demanding compensation by giving them preferable treatment in the provincial services and return of the Punjabi civil servants to their respective areas. By that time the grievances of the people of Balochistan had been piled up because they were excluded not only from the central government but also from provincial authority within Balochistan. They were denied their due share in the governmental hierarchy i.e. military and bureaucracy. Balochistan was a region where *Sardari* System or tribalism reigned supreme. Bhutto wanted to abolish tribal system and at the same time he wanted to control the province.

The NAP-JUI government in Balochistan headed by Ataullah Mengal endeavored to convince the central government about granting regional autonomy to the province. It took specific measures for socio-economic reforms but Bhutto began accusing the NAP-JUI governments of seeking a confrontation with the central government. The NAP-JUI leaders spoke of traditional democratic values. They insisted that they would work for complete harmony between the provincial and central governments. To begin with, the provincial Chief Minister announced withdrawal of Section 144 in Quetta-Pishin region of Balochistan and lifted ban on press. He also promised to introduce land reforms, abolition of *Sardari* system, and strengthening cultural and ethnic bonds of the Balochi people with other people of Pakistan. The federal government interrupted these reformatory measures as anti-national and instructed the Provincial Governor to suppress the activities of the NAP-JUI government for the creation of independent Balochistan. The Provincial Governor assured the central government that it was not working against the integrity of the country and, in fact, was trying to create democratic conditions in the province.<sup>xxiv</sup>

The trouble in Balochistan, which began in May 1972 aggravated center-provinces relations. In Quetta, some people were killed and Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) Governor claimed that forty armed men had been brought to Balochistan by Federal Interior Minister Qayyum Khan. These men created disturbance in the province leading to series of clashes. Similarly, another incident took place in Dir in which two people were killed and many were wounded. The center blamed the coalition governments of NAP-JUI for the failure of law and order in the provinces. The relations between NAP-JUI and the center were going from bad to worse.

Since October 1972, there had been visible signs of impending trouble in some parts of Balochistan. Some tribal leaders had informed the Federal Government of their apprehensions. They wanted to wipe out all opposition. Jamote tribe had a running dispute with the Mengals and had voted against NAP in the 1970 elections. The NAP came into power in Balochistan by coalition with JUI and made a series of arrests in Las Bela which gave the Jamote tribe feeling that its members were being politically victimized. When some of their leaders were arrested, there were violent demonstrations. Sardar Ataullah Mengal, the Chief Minister, took an action under his personal supervision against the Jamote tribe by using his private armies.<sup>xxv</sup>

The worse political situation brought military troops in the province because violence by tribesmen since December 1972 was continued. Bhutto invited Wali Khan and Bizenjo to Lahore in January 1973 for discussion on the Balochistan situation and the constitution.<sup>xxvi</sup> The law and order situation was getting worse. In such situation, the Federal Government ordered the Pakistan Army to assume control over the district of Las Bela. In February 1973 military troops were deployed in Balochistan.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The federal government unleashed a massive campaign against the NAP-JUI government. After his return from Simla, Bhutto approved a publicity campaign about the 'London Plan'. This alleged conspiratorial 'London-Plan' was given wide publicity for denigrating the NAP-JUI government. The pro-establishment media accused the Balochistan Chief Minister, Ataullah Mengal and Khan Abdul Wali Khan of a conspiracy of dismembering the country into a confederation of semi-autonomous provinces during their stay in London.<sup>xxviii</sup> The provincial governor Bizenjo denied the existence of such plan. Bhutto indirectly referred to the so-called 'London Plan' in his speeches delivered during the second week of September, 1972.<sup>xxix</sup>

The London Plan, Bhutto felt, would serve to discredit the NAP. At the same time, he played on tribal rivalries and ambitions, both supporting and encouraging anti-government factions. The federal government finally dismissed the NAP-JUI government and also the provincial governor Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, on February 15, 1973, accusing them of conspiring against the state of Pakistan. The alleged discovery of arms cache was given as the sole cause for the dismissal of elected government in Balochistan. The province came under the Presidential rule.<sup>xxx</sup> The new Pro-PPP governor Akbar Bugti continued the central rule until the formation of a coalition (PPP-QML-JUI) government. Mir Jam Ghulam Qadir Khan assumed the charge as Chief Minister on April 23, 1973.<sup>xxxi</sup> The new Governor was Mir Ahmad Yar Khan of Kalat who continued as Governor till Bhutto's downfall.<sup>xxxii</sup>

The arms discovered were displayed in various parts of the country. The controlled media was used for this purpose. This arms incident was linked to the NAP but there was no proof that the NAP either in Balochistan or Khayber Pakhtunkhwa (Former NWFP) was involved in it. But it was made a reason to remove the Mengal

government in Balochistan. The dismissal of democratically elected NAP-JUI coalition government incited the tribal insurgency in the province.

The NAP activists and various Baloch militant organizations, like the Baloch Student Organization (BSO) and The Balochistan People's Liberation Front For Arms Resistance (BPLFAR) demanded re-introduction of NAP-JUI government in the province.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

On the other side, as the Federal government's armed forces moved into Las Bela, Governor Bizenjo resisted the induction of the Army units into Balochistan. His constitutional position was that he was the President's Agent in the province, and no government worth the name could suffer such defiance. Instead of bringing reconciliation between the warring tribes, his policies were leading to general unrest in Balochistan. So the President removed him of the office.<sup>xxxiv</sup> As a result of the military intervention in Lasbela and the dismissal of Balochistan Government, a large number of tribal gunmen started sniping at posts of Pakistan's armed forces and other subversive hostile activities. In May 1973 a serious incident took place in the Marri. Some Marri tribesmen killed Dir Scouts men and seized their weapons at Tandoori. So the new Governor Akbar Khan Bugti called military to help civil power to control the situation.<sup>xxxv</sup>

For the next sixteen months, trouble remained confined to two main areas; the Jhalawan and the Marri. When the Army established its presence in the heart of the disturbed areas the Federal Government announced that a partial amnesty would be granted and the military operation would be frozen in May 1974. This was misunderstood by the insurgents who accelerated their activities in Marri. The Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto called on the hostile elements in the Marri and Jhalawan areas to come down from the mountains and lay down their arms by October 1974. By December 1974, the resistance was crumbled.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Apparently, the federal government failed to assess the gravity of tribal insurgency. It issued a 'White Paper on Balochistan' on October 19, 1974 and claimed that the situation was normal in the province. The nationalist Balochi leaders asserted that the extent of the rebellion was far worse than conceded in the White Paper. They claimed that a large number of Balochi nationalists were in jails and the military had not only arrested the insurgents but also burnt their villages.

In the early 1975, the pro-government media started accusing NAP of instigating 'four-nationality concept' which according to Government was against the national ideology (two-nation theory) of Pakistan. The center imposed ban on NAP on February 10, 1975. The Supreme Court of Pakistan declared the government action as legal. The tribal insurgency in Balochistan continued. Bhutto dismissed the provincial government headed by Mir Jam Ghulam Qadir Khan on the plea that it had failed to prevent tribal insurgency.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The province came under the Governor rule which lasted for till 1976. Finally, Bhutto lifted Governor rule in Balochistan in view of the forthcoming elections and installed another pro-center government headed by Mohammad Khan Barozai on December 6, 1976.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

### ***Riots in Sindh***

Sindh, Bhutto's native province could also not escape the political turmoil. His party was not as successful in Sindh as in the Punjab. Out of 60 Provincial Assembly seats, the PPP won only 28, even though it secured 18 out of 27 in the National Assembly. Mumtaz Bhutto was appointed as Governor of Sindh. His administration proved effective as he effectively dealt with the Sindhi nationalists led by G. M. Syed who had disturbed previous regime. Mumtaz Bhutto improved the bad law and order situation but a far more difficult problem lay ahead. As in East Bengal, language was a sensitive issue in Sindh. The influx of Urdu speaking Mohajirs from India following the partition of Subcontinent in 1947, helped to entrench Urdu language to the detriment of Sindhi. Sindh was the main reception of Urdu speaking migrants from India. Mohajirs settled in its cities and towns. The Sindhis in general feared that their native language was on the verge of extinction.

In July 1972, the Sindh Assembly passed the Language Bill. Sindhi Language was declared as official language of the Sindh province. The passage of the Bill resulted in widespread agitation and protests in Karachi and other urban centers of the province by the Urdu speaking Mohajirs. Soon, agitation took on a violent turn and curfew had to be imposed in certain areas of Karachi, Hyderabad, Tando Jam and other urban centers of Sindh having Urdu speaking population.

Mumtaz Bhutto was removed as a Chief Minister at the end of 1973 because the passage of the Bill had made him among the Sindhis. Z. A. Bhutto could not tolerate this and began to consider him as his potential competitor.

Soon, he was replaced by Ghulam Musfata Jatoi another influential feudal from Sindh. Z. A. Bhutto continued interfering in the provincial affairs.

It was true that his party's Provincial Government had mandate but he did not allow autonomy under the constitution to take root.<sup>xxxix</sup> The law and order situation was deteriorated by that time because each feudal wanted to protect his fiefdom from the influence of the outsiders.

During this period, Pir of Pagaro-a popular spiritual leader of Sindh- became a strong opponent of Bhutto. He eventually became a leading figure in the ouster of Z. A. Bhutto in 1977 by joining Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). Although the majority of Sindhi people continued to support the PPP in the later years but Z. A. Bhutto had to face fierce opponents like G M Syed and Pir of Pagaro. They accused Z. A. Bhutto of killing and torturing many Sindhis and also charged him with plundering of the country.<sup>xi</sup>

### ***Political Turmoil in Punjab***

The role of Punjab in power-politics cannot be easily underestimated. Bhutto could not have assumed power without the support of Punjab. In 1973, he first appointed an influential leader of Punjab, Ghulam Mustafa Khar as the Chief Minister of the province. He was first appointed as Governor of Punjab on December 22, 1971 and remained in that office till November 12, 1973. He enjoyed wide powers after the imposition of the 1973 Constitution; Ghulam Mustafa Khar was made Chief Minister<sup>xii</sup> but was removed from the office in March 1974.<sup>xiii</sup> The new Chief Minister was Haneef Ramay. Mustafa Khar was once again appointed as Governor. But he was not satisfied with the subservient role of Governor under the 1973 Constitution. He developed differences with Chief Minister Haneef Ramay. Bhutto dismissed both of them in July 1975. Governor Mustafa Khar was replaced by Nawab Mohammad Abbas Abbasi of Bahawalpur and the successor of Chief Minister Haneef Ramay was Sadiq Hussain Qureshi.<sup>xiiii</sup>

Sadiq Hussain Qureshi, also a big landlord had no roots in PPP but he was allowed to make headway. Therefore, after Mustafa Khar's removal from the office, the position of PPP and Z A Bhutto became very weak in the Punjab. The movement against Bhutto in the Punjab had started in 1975 soon after expulsion of Mustafa Khar from the PPP. The opposition parties in province assailed Bhutto for ignoring the interests of the Punjab. They launched the 'Save Punjab Movement' in October 1975 posing a serious threat to Bhutto's political prestige. It was supported by former Governor and Chief Ministers of Punjab Mustafa Khar, Haneef Ramay and other political opponents of Bhutto regime.

However, due to their mutual rivalry and parochialism, the opposition parties could not make an effective bloc against Bhutto regime. His PPP became more assertive in view of the prevailing weakness of the opposition parties. Even the joint efforts of the opposition parties could not pose a considerable challenge to Bhutto and his PPP. The United Democratic Front (UDF)<sup>xliv</sup> proved less formidable in countering Bhutto's leadership. The basic reason of this weakness was the lack of strong leadership capable to counter Bhutto. The UDF confined its activities to boycotting of the National Assembly sessions and demanding fresh general elections.

Other religious and conservative political groups in Punjab also became active. Besides 'Save Punjab Movement', Punjab was also engulfed by another agitation that was against the Ahmadis.<sup>xlv</sup> In May 1974, some students from Multan boarded a train to Peshawar. As the train stopped at Rabwa, the center of the Ahmadis, the students came out and shouted anti-Ahmadi slogans. The Ahmadis attacked them upon their return from Peshawar killing a number of students. This incident instigated wide spread demonstrations throughout the country. Bhutto addressed the nation on radio and television on June 13 1974, and assured the people that the matter would be discussed in the National Assembly. But the opposition wanted immediate discussion and thus the situation continued to deteriorate. Finally, Bhutto took the issue to the assembly which passed the bill declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims in September, 1974.<sup>xlvi</sup>

In addition to these above mentioned political problems, ethnic conflicts and linguistic controversy also added to the problems of central government. The liberal and progressive groups in Punjab stood for 'Punjabi' as the official language. They demanded that Punjabi should be made the medium of instruction in all educational institutions of Punjab province.

On the other hand, in South Punjab, the movement for a separate 'Saraiki' province was also revived during Bhutto's rule. The leaders of the Saraiki province movement were insisting that a new province Saraikistan should be made in Punjab, consisting of southern parts of Punjab. They claimed that provincial administration and federal establishment had been neglecting their region leading to underdevelopment of the area.

The government had favored the interests of the central region of Punjab only. By the end of 1975, the demand for separate province of 'Saraikistan' got momentum. Finally, Bhutto had to appoint ex-ruler of Bahawalpur, Nawab Abdul Abbasi, as the Governor of Punjab.

### **Conclusion**

As a matter of fact, the issue of regionalism and provincial autonomy demand did not start or end with the separation of East Pakistan. Basic issues concerning the relation between federation and provinces had not been resolved since the creation of Pakistan. After the announcement of that the general elections would be held in January 1977, the constituent parties of the UDF formed a new alliance known as the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). The PNA also failed to provide an alternative to Bhutto's leadership. Like the UDF, it also lacked unity and well defined line of action. The Tehrik-e-Istaqlal of the Air Marshal (R) Asghar Khan, who was not part of the UDF, also joined the PNA.

The Constitution of 1973 was a great achievement of Bhutto as it was the result of the consensus of all the political parties. It represented a broad national consensus. The constitution provided significant safeguards for provincial interests. The Constitution called for a Council of Common Interests to redress the provincial grievances over the distribution of river waters, revenues from the sale of natural gas and electricity and industrial development. This council was composed of the four provincial chief ministers and an equal number of federal officials to formulate the policies regarding industrial development, water, power and to supervise the related establishments. Its decisions would be made by majority vote but a dissatisfied province could appeal to a joint session of Parliament whose decision would be final. The supporters of autonomy had not been able to reduce the power of central government but they could look for the Council of Common Interests and National Finance Commission for redress of provincial grievances.

The constitutional provisions relating to the provincial autonomy were not allowed to be implemented. Bhutto's approach to the problem of provincialism was quite different from that of the supporters of the autonomy in the opposition parties. Whereas, Wali Khan and his associates were of the view that the devolution of power to the provinces was the only way to protect the rights of the smaller units. But Bhutto considered that a strong center was necessary in order to promote national unity.

As a matter of fact, the Constitution of 1973 was the most centralized constitution. The Government of India Act 1935 gave the center 61 items of powers. Under the Constitutions of 1956 and 1962, these items were reduced to 30 and 49 respectively. While in the constitution of 1973, it was enlarged to 114. The Constitution of 1973 provided less room for provincial autonomy but it was the result of the consensus of all major political parties thus, capable to facilitate harmonious center-provinces relation. However, it did not happen.

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- <sup>iii</sup> The Nap was established in 1957 as a result of drift in the Awami League. Maulana Abdul Bhashani who was one of the prominent leaders of East Pakistan had developed some serious differences with the party president Hussain Shaheed Suharwardy and left the party with his supporters. In West Pakistan, Bhashani and his political supporters joined NAP which was a combination of Azad Pakistan Party (APP), the Khudai Khidmatgars, The Sindh Awami Mahaz (SAM), Sindh Hari Committee and many other minor political parties. So, from the beginning NAP was an amalgamation of regionalists having leftist tendencies. Later on, some differences between Bhashani and Ghaffar Khan resulted in two fractions of NAP namely NAP Wali Group and NAP Bhashani Group. For further details see Supreme Court Verdict. *Historical Background of NAP*, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan, pp.3-4, Afzal, Rafique (1980), *Political Parties in Pakistan (1969-197)* Vol. 3, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, pp.77-78, Mahmood,

- Safdar (1984), *A Political Study of Pakistan*, Lahore: Educational Press, p.124, Mahmood, Safdar, *Pakistan: Political Roots and Development 1947-1999*, London: Oxford University Press, p.167.
- <sup>iv</sup> Government of Pakistan (1974), *White Paper on Balochistan*, Islamabad, p.6.
- <sup>v</sup> JUI was set up in 1945 to support the demand for Pakistan. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani was elected its first President. The party was identified with the Deobandi School of religious thought. The party participated in the 1970 elections and won seats in Balochistan and NWFP. Safdar, *A Political Study of Pakistan*, p.156-157.
- <sup>vi</sup> Ali, Mehrunnisa (1996), *Politics of Federalism in Pakistan*, Karachi: Royal Book Company, pp. 137-8.
- <sup>vii</sup> *Dawn*, 7 February 1972 and 12 February 1972.
- <sup>viii</sup> Government of Pakistan (1972), *PPP-NAP-JUI Accord, March 6, 1972*, Islamabad: Government of Pakistan.
- <sup>ix</sup> Hasan, Mubashir (2000), *The Mirage of Power: An Inquiry into the Bhutto Years 1971-1977*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, p.86.
- <sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*, p.87.
- <sup>xi</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xii</sup> Rizvi, Hasan Askari (2003), *Military, State and Society in Pakistan*. Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, p.153.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Khan, Hamid (2005), *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, p.254. For further detail see Anwar. *The Discourse and Politics of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, p.181, Raza, Rafi (1997), *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan : 1967-77*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, pp. 152-156, William, L. F. Rushbrook (1975), *Pakistan Under Challenge*, London: Stacey International, pp. 35-36, Tahir. *Ethno-National Movements of Pakistan*, pp. 122-123.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Rafi. *Bhutto and Pakistan*, p.153.
- <sup>xv</sup> William. *Pakistan Under Challenge*, p.85.
- <sup>xvi</sup> On 30 November, 1967, a convention was held at the residence of Mubashir Hasan who was a close political associate of Bhutto. The interim constitution of the party was finalized by A. J. Rahim during the convention and set out its four-fold motto; Islam is our faith, democracy is our polity, socialism is our economy, all power to the people. Rafi. *Bhutto and Pakistan*, pp, 5-6.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Askar Ali Shah. "The Story Behind the Hurry", *Outlook*, April 22, 1972, p. 5 quoted in Anwar. *The Discourse and Politics*, p.182.
- <sup>xviii</sup> *Ibid.*, p.183.
- <sup>xix</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xx</sup> Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, p.161.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Rafi, *Bhutto and Pakistan*, pp. 266-267.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, p.167.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> *The Pakistan Times*, April 30, 1972 and May 2, 1972. See also in *Jang*, 29 April and 2 May 1972.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, pp. 168-169.
- <sup>xxv</sup> *White Paper on Balochistan*, p.20.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Rafi, *Bhutto and Pakistan*. P.268.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>xxviii</sup> *The Pakistan Times*, September 10, 1972.
- <sup>xxix</sup> The pro-establishment media accused the Baloch Chief Minister, Mengal and Abdul Wali of dismembering the country into confederation of semi-autonomous provinces during their stay in London. See *The Pakistan Times*, September 10, 1972.
- <sup>xxx</sup> See Appendix II for detail.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, p. 170-171.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> *Ibid.*, p.172.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> *Ibid.*, p.171
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22
- <sup>xxxv</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25-28.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> *Ibid.* p.175
- <sup>xxxviii</sup> *The Pakistan Times*, December 7, 1976.
- <sup>xxxix</sup> Rafi, *Bhutto and Pakistan*, p.265.
- <sup>xl</sup> *Ibid.*, p.266.
- <sup>xli</sup> *Ibid.*, For details see Surrendera Nath Kaushik, *Pakistan under Bhutto's Leadership*, p.146.
- <sup>xlii</sup> *Ibid.*, p.277.
- <sup>xliiii</sup> Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, p. 146.
- <sup>xliv</sup> In March 1973, the eight opposition parties, NAP, JUI, JUP, Jamat-e-Islami, PDP, PML (Pagora), Khaksar Tehrik and Muslim Conference, formed a joint front, namely, the United Democratic Front. Kaushik, *Pakistan Under Bhutto*, p.122
- <sup>xlv</sup> Ziring, Lawrence (2003), *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political Study*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, p. 134-43, Anwar, *The Discourse and Politics*, p.197-201, Hamid, *Constitutional and Political History*, p.295-96.
- <sup>xlvi</sup> *Ibid.*, p.198-200.