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The PNA'S Movement

Abstract

It was January 7, 1977 when Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto advised President Fazal Ilahi Chaudhry to dissolve the National Assembly for holding the general elections on March 7, 1977, to be followed by elections to the four provincial assemblies on March 10, 1977, under the 1973 Constitution. This was the moment which brought the whole opposition to a single platform. Nine of the parties closed ranks and announced on January 11, 1977, the formation of a combined opposition, called the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA)². Though the component parties had some serious difference within, they were successful in achieving an electoral unity. The more significant was their continued cooperation and coordination during the election campaign. The factors which kept the PNA united were largely related to the policies of the ruling Pakistan People's party otherwise each of the nine parties maintains its different ideological identity.

Introduction

The Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) is an Islamic religio-political organization founded by the late Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi (18 Sep-1979). In 1977, it was headed by Mian Tufail Mohammad. Basically, the JI draws its membership from the lower middle classes, small businessmen with a sprinkling of educated followers from colleges, universities and professions. The JI's pre-partition politics was opposed to the Muslim League's conception of Pakistan. The centre of JI's endeavor was and has been the enforcement of Islamic System in the country, under the teaching of the Quran and Sunnah. The JI, however, has no significant record in electoral achievements. It has always remained anxious to achieve its objectives through electoral or any other means. Apparently the JI does not indulge in the debates on religious questions among the Diobandis, the Brailvis, the Shias or the Ahl-i-*Hadith.* However its members are very conscious of their point of view. Generally, moderates of the Ahl-i-Hadith, Diobandi and Brailvi schools of thought opt for the membership of the JI. Its limited exposure to the West allows it to use modern idioms from philosophy, social sciences and humanities to explain religious thesis. In this way, it is striving for a kind of neo-fundamentalism. Its opponents blame it for promoting centralization of power for a fascist system in Pakistan.³

The Jamiat-al-Ulama-i-Islami (JUI) is a body of Muslim theologians, and independent offshoot of the Jamiat-al-Ulama-i-Hind, founded by the divines of Deoband in pre-partition India. Mufti Mahmud, the leader of JUI, was educated at Deoband under the tutorship of Hussain Ahmad Madni. Madni was one of those Deobandi leaders who supported the Indian National Congress over the Pakistan

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issue and supervised the campaign against Pakistan⁴. The JUI is striving for the enforcement of the *Sharia* laws as envisaged in *Fiqh Hanfi* and interpreted by the *Ulama* of *Deoband* like Maulana Qasim Nanotvi.

Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Mufti Mohammad Shafi, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni. The JUI has a number of *Deeni Mudrassahs* throughout the country which feed it and supply workers. It has also a students wing namely *Jamiat Tubala-i-Islam* (JTI). However, the JTI has no effective role in the educational institutions. The JUI enjoys some support in the NWFP. It has got some experience of running the government in the Province during the Bhutto regime.

The Jamiat-al-Ulama-i-Pakistan (JUP) headed by Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani. The JUP started its independent political career by participating in the general elections held in 1970. It represents Brailvi School of Sunni thought. Its leaders feel pride in Brailvi Ulama's pro-Muslim League and pro-Pakistan career during the Pakistan movement. Ideologically the JUP offers a more simple and popular view of Islam than that of Jamaat-i-Islami¹. Its chief concern is about ritual and ceremonies associated with the saints and pirs and their mausoleums. This kind of Islam has a greater appeal for the common man than that of the JI and the JUT. It was the JUP which put forward the slogan of Nizam-i-Mustafa which later became a common slogan of the PNA's movement.

The *Tehrik-e-Istaqlal* Pakistan (TIP) was a middle of the road party. It was founded by Air Marshal (Rtd.) Asghar Khan, a former Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Air Force. He himself was the personification of his party. Many prominent tribal, industrial, bureaucratic, professional elites have joined and left the *Tehrik* but Asghar Khan's personality had kept it alive till his health allowed him. He is capable of attracting cross sections of the population. During the Bhutto regime he was out of the National Assembly, having lost the elections but he was still able to play the role of an opposition by drawing attention to those policies of the government appeared to him to be undemocratic. He had been running his party according to the book and there have been regular elections within the *Tehrik-e-Istaqlal* Pakistan.

The Pakistan Muslim League (PML) comprised some of the reassembled Leagui factions under whose banner Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah had led the Pakistan Movement. The Jinnah's views about the future shape of Pakistan were free from the theological and doctrinal subtleties. He wanted the immediate uplift of the masses. Once he said, "there are millions of our people who hardly get one meal a day. Is this civilization? Is this the aim of Pakistan? If that is the idea of Pakistan I would not have it"⁵. After him, Kiaquat Ali Khan kept the party united but when he was killed in 1951, the PML came under the control of civil and military bureaucracy. The party leaders could not maintain links with the masses. They used the name of the Quaid-i-Azam and his great achievement i.e. Pakistan for their own benefits. But they never paid attention towards party's ideological progress. Thus the PML became just like a club of industrial/feudal elites, always planning how to enter into the government. Bhutto was the only

ruler in Pakistan who depended on his own public support and did not feel any need of the PML, Otherwise almost rest Muslim League's politicians used the party's name for their won ends.

The National Democratic Party (NDP) was in fact, the new name of the National Awamy Party (NAP) which had been banned by the Bhutto Government. The NAP leaders, including Khan Abdul Wali Khan, had supplied an effective opposition in the National Assembly. They were at that time in 1977, being tried for treason by a special tribunal in Hyderabad jail. Ideologically, the NDP/NAP has been a regionalized leftist party which was co-founded by Abdul Ghaffar Khan in 1957, jointly with such other provincial autonomists like Maulana Bhashani and G.M. Syed. A significant aspect of Wali Khan's politics is his debt to his father. He has inherited his father's political philosophy, his anti-imperialist stance and his devotion to public life. His political constituency remains largely confined to his father's power base, comprising the rural areas of the central North Western Frontier Province. Due to his political affiliation with the slogan of *Pakhtunistan* his credential have remained suspect in the eyes of the state and the right wing political groups.

The Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP), led by Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, is a rightist political party of no great consequence other than the engaging personality of its President. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan started his political career from the platform of the *Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam* which at first had a pro-Congress agenda, later a nationalist and thereafter a rightist party. The *Ahrar*'s devotion to anti-*Ahmadia* movement in the 1950s did not match the political thinking of the Nawabzada. However, Suhrawardy's concept of a western democracy attracted him and he thus joined the Awamy League. His preparation for the 1970 elections revolved around cooperation between factional groupings under the banner of the PDP. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan always 'remained popular among the leaders but not among the masses'. He was not a person who would launch a movement in the pursuit of political ends. Instead, he was a person who would rather bring such a movement to a negotiating point.

The *Khaksar Tehrik* (KT) is a volunteer corps of extremist Muslims. It was founded in the 1930s by Allama Anayatullah Mashriqi, a former member of the Indian Education Service; it had almost been forgotten till its reappearance in 1977. When Allama Mashriqi wrote his *Tazkira* in 1924, it was condemned as a work full of anti-Islamic and atheistic views. In the 1930s he wrote a series of tracts entitled *Maulvi Ka Ghalat Mazhab*. In retaliation, the *Ulama* dubbed his party as the *bailcha beradari* a threat to Islam and as evil as the *Qadiani* tribulation (*Qadiani fitna*) ⁶. One of its members was responsible for an assassination attempt on the Quaid-i-Azam. In 1977 however the PML was in alliance with the KT along with other religious parties which had once condemned the party with venom.

The All Jammun and Kashmir Muslim Conference (AJKMC) is a rightist party of Azad Jammun and Kashmir. It was led by a former President of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Abdul Qayyum, who had been removed from office by Bhutto. The

AJKMC was founded in 1932. Its first session was held in Srinagar in October, 1939. Its history is nothing but the record of struggle of the middle and upper class Muslims for the achievement of their class rights in Kashmir⁷.

An analysis of the leadership composition and aims and objectives of these nine political parties will show that most of them had nothing in common with each And yet they came together in an alliance. The only common feature was their grievances and differences with the ruling party and its leader, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Their primary aim, therefore, was to bring him down from the premiership. The eight point economic policy of the PNA was nothing but a photocopy of the PPP's manifesto. Talk about social justice and end of all forms of exploitation and just distribution of wealth can be found in the manifesto⁸. The manifesto did not use the words 'Rotti, Kapra and Makan', but it promised the "provision of basic necessities of life for all citizens of the country". The PNA's manifesto however, presented a sharp contrast to that of the PPP in that it extended an open protection to the private sector and sought to end class prejudice in the name of the "Islamic Order" 10. It was a proposal of a mixed economy. But its equilibrium was heavily in favour of free modes of business. Maulana Noorani of the JUP had made it clear that "Islam does not allow anybody to snatch properties of the others¹¹. Therefore, the PNA leaders had promised to return the cotton and rice factories to their private owners. This must have increased the PNA's fund raising sources from these factory owners ¹².

The PNA also promised to abolish the family planning centers and convert them into hospitals. Private educational institutions were to be allowed to function along with the nationalized one. This provision of PNA's electoral agenda safeguarded the private ownership of Education. The tax system was to be liquidated and an interest-free economy was to be introduced in support of which the PNA leaders frequently quoted the example of China, a country which had a centrally controlled economy. The PNA spokesmen pledged to bring down the prices to a reasonable level — or at least to that of 1970 within six months. These electoral slogans were floated without doing proper home work. The Nawa-i-Waqt which was a pro-PNA Urdu newspaper placed it on the front page with فالممكن العمل وعد المحلفة وعداء Such slogans were raised to get support of the masses. The PNA promised to annul the so called "undemocratic" amendments to the constitution which, it maintained, had reduced the powers of the judiciary, made the executive all powerful and had taken away the civil liberties and the fundamental rights of the citizens. In the opinion of the opposition leaders these clauses had given unlimited authority and protection to the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers of the Provinces¹⁴.

The PNA's view about the enforcement of Islamic punishments was loud and clear. The manifesto promised that the "Prohibitive Islamic injunctions and punishments will be enforced within a month". The opposition charged Bhutto of having conspired with Yahya Khan for the separation of East Pakistan. So it included in its manifesto that high-powered Commission would be set up to determine the responsibility of the East Pakistan debacle and prosecute those who proved to be responsible ¹⁵.

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The main issues for which the PNA blamed Prime Minister Bhutto provided it base to launch electoral campaign were (i) responsibility for breaking Pakistan (ii) high cost of living and rise in prices (iii) curbing of civil liberties and political atrocities (iv) religious issues (v) corruption made by the PPP leadership (vi) and compromise with India and "sell-out" on Kashmir¹⁶.

Mufti Mahmud, the President of the PNA emphasized that the Alliance would remain united even after the elections "with all the added might [that] it may gather at the polls" But their energies were directed towards the setting up of an Islamic judicial system in the country and the abolition of Obscenity and drinking R. The PNA leaders declared that their manifesto was the Holy *Quran* and if voted they would enforce the Islamic laws within one month 19. These high sounding slogans were intended to paper the serious differences over the formation of a combined election manifesto. That is why they over stressed the Islamic issues. Even Asghar Khan, the Chief of TI, declared that if voted to power the PNA would enforce a system of government based on the *Quran* and *Sunnah*20. And Mian Tufail Muhammad of the JI, for the first time in his life, celebrated the *Eid-i-Miladul Nabi* (the birthday of Holy Prophet) which used to be celebrated only by *Brailvi Ulama*21.

As a mark of solidarity and in order to answer Kausar Niazi's charge that the PNA leaders were divided even religiously, Mufti Mahmud Joined in prayers with others under the Imamate of Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani. To consolidate their internal unity further, about 150 *Ulama* of the different schools of thought supporting the PNA, decided not to discuss their mutual differences in public meetings any more ²².

The PNA was an alliance of the opposing political groups. Therefore, while the leaders were using Islamic rhetoric there were others who were talking in terms of democracy and civil rights. An in fact, in spite of the religious overtones of the PNA-PPP fights, the real issues centered on the civil rights. In one of its issues the Economist remarked:

"....the two most compelling election issues are civil rights and prices. The opposition alleges that the Bhutto Administration has taken away all civil liberties by banning political activity, gagging the press and curtailing the powers of the superior courts"²³.

Shariful Mujahid in his analysis of the priorities of election issues has come to a similar conclusion:

"....it may be observed that neither Islam nor socio-economic matters were the real issues but in fact restoration of civil rights and democracy were made the central theme of the acrimonious debate"²⁴.

Main political Themes and Their Relative Frequency in the Manifestoes and Major Addresses of the PPP and PNA leaders (in percentage)

	P.P.P.		P.N.A.		
Themes		Manifesto	Bhutto & Major leaders (a)	Manifesto	Council Members (b)
1.	Democratic Institution; constitution	4.91	(c)	5	5.545
2.	Civil rights	4.31	-	25.46	51.201
3.	Inherited political problems	6.10	(c)	-	-
4.	Socio-economic problems and reforms	61.06	17.40	46.37	15.73
5.	Islamic Ideology	4.46	2.954	8.18	17.730
6.	Foreign policy and defense	15.92	4.008	10.45	0.237
7.	Miscellaneous	3.14	17.51	1.82	9.534
8.	Negative Approach	-	44.198	2.72	0.70 (approx)

- (a) Major PPP leaders include, Abdul Hafeez Pirzada, Mumtaz Ali Bhutto and Kausar Niazi, while PNA leaders include all the members of the PNA Coordinating Council (Mufti Mahmud, Asghar Khan, Mian Tufail Muhammad, Shah Ahmad Noorani, Sherbaz Khan Mazari, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Malik Muhammad Qasim, Ashraf khan, Sardar Sikandar Hayat, and Rafiq Ahmad bajwa), besides Ghafoor Ahmad and Begum Nasim Wali Khan, who addressed major meetings together.
- (b) Contents or materials which are either anti-regime PPP or anti-PNA have been computed under "Negative Approach" head.
- (c) Contents under the two heads cannot be easily separated

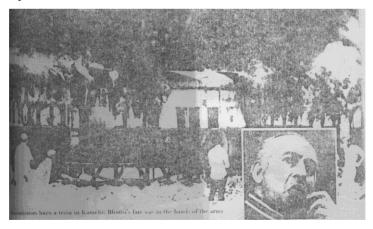
As the polling dates came closer the election campaign gained a momentum. There were acrimonious attaches, accusation and counter accusation. The PNA and the PPP both tried to impress each other by arranging long and noisy processions. This they expected to obtain a verdict in their favour and the elections on March 7 would only formalize the people's will. Publicly he is reported to have told his supporters that they should be prepared to move to the opposition benches after the election²⁵. And to many observers that seemed a very real possibility.

When the voting took place on March 7, the results were not according to the expectations of the observers or the ambitions of the PNA leaders. Out of the 200 total seats of the National Assembly, the PPP secured 155, the PNA 36, the Qayyum Muslim League 1 and the independent 8²⁶.

Naturally, the PNA refused to accept the results and alleged that the elections had been rigged massively in accordance with a calculated plan. On March 8, Rafiq Ahmad Bajwa, Secretary General of the PNA, addressed a press conference in Lahore and presented three demands: (i) the immediate resignation of the Prime Minister (ii) the replacement of the Chief Election Commissioner (iii) the holding of fresh elections under the supervision of the judiciary and the army²⁷. The PNA

also decided to boycott the elections to the Provincial Assemblies scheduled for March 10. The opposition intended to bring the people into the streets, to break law deliberately and to confront with the police and the security forces. In the weeks that followed, the PNA leaders, under an orchestrated plan, developed a massive movement against the alleged rigging. They went about speaking from various platforms and delivering statement after statement against Bhutto and his party. Asghar Khan, for instance, called the results "a farce" and declared that Bhutto was a dictator of the worst sort²⁸. Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan stated that the movement for the enforcement of the Islamic System could not be stopped by "rigging" 29. Mufti Mahmud maintained that their struggle was of political and ideological nature and it would be continued till the purpose was achieved. According to him, the PNA's struggle was for the enforcement of Islamic system against the ruling party's socialistic economy and its denial of Islam as a complete code of life³⁰. The PNA leaders called upon the people to stage a countrywide strike on March 11. They warned that if their demands were not accepted they would organize protest processions from March 14, which would continue till the objectives were achieved. The Ulama of the PNA used their religious rhetoric to the maximum. They called their movement "Tehrik-i-Nizam-Mustafa."

Consequently, the mosques became the centers of demonstrations in which the lower middle class, very receptive to religious appeals, participated with enthusiasm. They fully exploited Bhutto's unguarded statement that "he drank win-not people's blood". The *Ulama* whipped up feelings for a Jihad against an "evil regime" Almost all *khateeb* criticized the socialists and the communists of the PPP who they alleged had lost their faith in Islam. Anti-Bhutto processions defied section 144 and mob violence was seen everywhere throughout the country. Public property also became unsafe. Such a trend of the movement increased the worries of Bhutto and compelled to seek help from the Army. Following illustration will help to explain the law and order situation in Karachi.



(Newsweek, May 2, 1977)

The PNA leaders took the agitation to such a pitch that the "Nizam-i-Mustafa" movement came to be called a worship of God³². When the Bhutto Government tried to suppress the movement by using force, it became an added source of irritation for the PNA workers. Its leaders and workers voluntarily began to offer themselves for arrests, wearing garlands of marigold around their necks. And some times held copies of the Holy *Quran* instead of garlands, symbolizing their movement as a war for the cause of Islam and against *Kufr*. This was their *Jihad* to save Islam which they thought was in danger. The picture below will help to understand the prevalent scene.



The PNA justified the use of the Mosque for their politics on the plea that religion and politics could not be separated in Islam. Sometimes, however, there were some unhappy incidents in the mosques, especially when Maulana Saeed Naqshbandi the Imam of the mosque adjacent to the tomb of Data Ali Hajvairi at Lahore, disallowed the PNA workers to use the mosque for political purposes. As a result the PNA workers, some of them wearing garlands of marigolds, attacked and beat the Imam ³⁴. On the other side the PNA's subordinate, *Ittehadal-Ulama-i-Pakistan* of Lahore, advertised in the new-papers that the use of the mosque for political activities was quite in accordance with Islam and Islamic traditions. A specimen of such an advertisement will explain the point.



(Nawa-i-Waqt, Rawalpind, March 18, 1977)

The PNA's women wing equally participated in anti-Bhutto movement. It tried to show that the women had not voted in favors of the PPP as had generally been claimed³⁵. Therefore, the repression would make no exception. Women of all ages faced tear-gas and *Lathi* charges bravely.



(Newsweek, April 18, 1977)

This was a risky step which the PNA leadership took at the hour of its crises as the orthodox *Ulama* are generally against allowing women to look a *Ghair Mahram*. But at that particular time they openly welcomed the women to come into the streets and fight the war for them. It is a fact that though the slogan of enforcing the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* had been raised at almost all public meetings and processions, the PNA Council had never formally enunciated the demand. In March and April, 1977 the Council's major demands revolved round the annulment of the allegedly rigged elections and the holding of fresh elections. Among other demands were the freedom of the Press and the independence of the judiciary. Until 5 July, 1977, when the Army intervened and ousted Bhutto, there was no talk of the *Nizam-i-Mustafa* on the part of the PNA Council 36. But the PNA's religious element which was leading this movement, always spoke in religious terms. They fully utilized their following and cited Iqbal's verse خدا ہو دیں معالی المعالی ال

But in spite of their religious overtones, they could not present any blue print or show any homework for the *Nizam-i-Mustafa*. After the coup of July, 1977, they left the masses disheartened and could not give a practical shape to their aspirations. The PNA Movement, however, was as much anti-socialism as was pro-Islam. Socialism and Islam were presented as anti-thesis of each other. Bhutto's response to this tendency was very defensive. He deliberately avoided the word socialism in his speeches and replaced it by the word "*Musawat-e-Muhammadi*" This was adopted largely to counter the PNA whose leadership was talking about returning to an Islamic system by raising emotions of the people Most of all, Bhutto believed that behind much of the bitter opposition that he had faced since March 7 elections loomed the ominous had of the United States of America. The U.S. Government's attitude towards Bhutto and the statements of some of the PNA leaders, strengthened that suggestion of the shade of the American human rights policy, the anti-Bhutto slogans were a clear indication of the policies of the Anglo-American block.

Bhutto tried his best to win over the PNA leadership. Many a time he invited them for dialogue. But the later did not want to break the momentum and demand Bhutto's resignation forthwith with those simultaneous holding elections afresh. Meanwhile some Middle Eastern Muslim countries, particularly, Saudi Arabia, entered the negotiations and persuaded both the parties to sit together and solve the problem politically. The first draft proposals which the PNA presented before the Government was mainly concerned with the following demands:

- 1. Lifting of the Emergency and Martial Law, release of political detenues and lifting of restrictions on the press;
- 2. Dissolution of Assemblies:
- 3. Formation of a new Election Commission with adequate legal, financial and administrative powers;
- 4. New governors should be appointed in all provinces with mutual consent;
- 5. Resignation of Bhutto from the prime Minister ship 40.

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Meanwhile, the negotiating teams of both the parties held intermittent meetings, sometimes there were breaks. However, the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan remained active and persuaded both to resolve and finally decide the matter on the table. Thus, by early July, the Government had reached an agreement with the PNA. The things which were settled were purely of a political nature and there was nothing in the nature of the *Nizam-i-Mustafa*. The PNA's first three demands were accepted by the Government, in principle. Then, it was seen that the PNA Council disallowed the agreement which had already been signed by its negotiating team. So, due to the political differences, mutual misunderstandings, personal enmities and vested interests of the PNA leaders, the settled issues remained unsettled⁴¹. This was the moment when General Zia lamped Martial Law in the country. This was the end of Bhutt's Government as well as of the so called *Nizam-i-Mustafa* movement.

It is clear from the foregoing that the PNA was a conglomeration of different political parties whose leaders were unhappy with Bhutto due to their own reasons. The main purpose of the PNA was to oust him and his government. But in spite of organizing big public rallies the results of the elections were unexpected which increased their frustration. In consequence, they decided to launch a movement against the election results alleging that the elections had been massively rigged. On his part, Bhutto was not ready to compromise with the opposition. He tried to suppress the agitation by using force. This act of Bhutto was a source of irritation for the PNA, which decided to declare a "Jihad" against the ruling party in the name of Islam. They were bent upon removing the Prime Minsiter Bhutto by any means Under the circumstances they invented the slogan of Mizam-i-Mustafa as the most appropriate means to raise the religious sentiments of the people. But it was the Army which made the PNA's job easy when it overthrew the Bhutto Government. But the fruits of the religious sentiments raised by the PNA went into the plate of General Zia, who very skillfully enjoyed them during his eleven years long Martial Law regime. In so doing he left the PNA leaders in such a quandary that they could neither reject nor accept his Islamization Order.

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²³ The Economist, February 19, 1977, p,71. Also see Air Martial (Retd) Asghar Khan's statement in Viewpoint, vol. II, No.23, Lahore, January 14, 1977.

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³² This was announced by Molana Shah Ahmed Noorani vide Nawa-i-Waqt (Rawalpindi), February 26, 1977.

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