

Authoritarianism in Pakistan

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Abstract

Pakistan has remained under both de facto and de jure authoritarian rule for the most part of its existence. It has led to a weakening of institutions, including the media, which is harmful from the perspective of the country's evolution as a true democracy. It is because of this menace that the country is still struggling to function as a state. Political instability, economic deprivation and terrorism can be laid at the door of this deficiency in our system. Whether Pakistan acquired this authoritarian streak after independence because of the weaknesses of its political parties, mainly the founder of Pakistan, Muslim League, or the vice is rooted in the pre-independence mindset and factors is an enlightened debate. Using an analytical method of inquiry, this article attempts to trace the roots of authoritarianism in Pakistan by using the data in the form of books available on the subject.

Authoritarianism is a malaise that has tainted Pakistani politics since time immemorial. Authoritarian rule has also affected media freedom in the country, with negative effect on democracy. The state of the media in Pakistan after independence can vouchsafe for this fact. There are innumerable reasons for this but to understand the phenomenon of political authoritarianism in South Asia, particularly Pakistan, one has to trace its roots to the pre-partition era of Indian Subcontinent. From great Mauryan ruler Asoka to the Mughals, all rulers have practiced authoritarianism in one way or the other. The British were no different. They practiced their own set of authoritarianism.

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“In the Indian Subcontinent, the whole concept of the power of the monarch differed from that of European feudalism, in which the king had authority over all persons and things in his domain. This authority was delegated to the lords and the barons who vowed allegiance to him. Thus, the hierarchy of authority was built up. Both the lands and the people connected with it belonged to the feudal lord and through him to the king. This was a development of the Roman concept of the dominion. In India, the king had the right to collect certain taxes from the land, and this revenue collecting power was delegated to others. With disastrous results, the British broke up the traditional village communes known as *Panchayats* and introduced oppressive feudalism.”² Feudalism in itself is a form of authoritarianism. “In delimiting a formal sphere of politics, the British colonial system aimed at reconsolidating its authority and placing the networks of social collaboration and control on a firmer footing.”³

Both Pakistan and India inherited the colonial legacy of authoritarianism. It was quite evident in the political system of both newborn countries. Immediately after independence in India, “the rule of law was ever bent to subserve either executive action in the administration or the will of dominant elements of society.”⁴ Whereas India made an effort to democratise itself – and has been quite successful – Pakistan failed to make a viable transition to democratic rule after emerging from the debris of British colonialism. The colonial state was quickly replaced by authoritarian rulers, whether civilian or military. This was

² Khan, Lal, *Crisis in the Indian Subcontinent: Partition – Can it be undone?*, (Wellred Publications), p. 18.

³ Jalal, Ayesha, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publication), p. 37.

⁴ Misra, B.B, *Government and Bureaucracy in India, 1947-1976*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press), p. 90.

because the Muslim elite of Pakistan comprised of opportunists who only joined the Pakistan Movement after it was apparent that a new Muslim state was going to emerge soon.

The founder of Pakistan, Jinnah himself has been accused of being authoritarian. “Notwithstanding the differential administrative legacies, both India and Pakistan drew heavily on the colonial state’s methods of bureaucratic control and centralisation [after partition]. The government of India act of 1935, strengthening the very bureaucratic ‘steel frame’ of the British *raj* that had been the *bête noire* of Indian nationalists, was adapted to serve as the constitutional framework in both countries. In principle, the ideal of democracy based on the Westminster model of parliamentary government ensured a formal separation between the bureaucracy and a representative political executive. But in actual practice the bureaucratic authoritarianism inherent in the colonial state structure remained largely intact.”⁵

Like in India, Lord Mountbatten thought he would be asked to remain the Governor-General of Pakistan too. But he was in for a surprise. “Mountbatten hoped and indeed expected to be asked to stay on as joint governor-general over both new dominions, at once symbolising their friendly and continued cooperation while expediting the process of the final division of assets in an equitable manner. Jinnah would hear nothing of that, however, insisting he must become governor-general of Pakistan himself...He was eager to enjoy at least a taste of power, to which he had given so much of his energy...Being governor-general would raise him eye-to-eye with Mountbatten, Attlee,

⁵ Jalal, Ayesha, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 18.

Smuts, and all the other heads of dominions of the Commonwealth the world over.”⁶

After putting his name forward as the Governor-General, Jinnah’s first act “was to apply for powers under the 9th Schedule rather than Part II of the 1935 Act which gave him at once dictatorial powers unknown to any constitutional Governor-General representing the King.”⁷ The powers of the Ninth Schedule can be gauged from this: “The Ninth Schedule gave even greater powers to the Governor-General than those available in Part II of the [1935] Act. For example, under Section 67(b), if Legislature failed to pass a Bill in the form recommended by the Governor-General, the Governor-General might certify that the passage of a Bill was essential for the safety, tranquillity, or interests of British India, or any part thereof.”⁸

Pakistan was ‘Jinnah’s Pakistan’ until he was alive. “As long as Jinnah was alive (he died September, 1948), he was Pakistan. He held the position of Governor-General, but the powers and influence that he exercised were far beyond those normally associated with that office. The Cabinet rarely functioned without his directives. He was the supreme arbitrator between the Centre and the provinces.”⁹ Jinnah’s authoritarian legacy did not die with him. “The inability of the Muslim League to transform itself from a movement to a vibrant, unified, and coherent political party, as well as Jinnah’s death so early in the formation of

⁶ Wolpert, Stanley, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 333.

⁷ Campbell-Johnson, Alan, *Mission with Mountbatten*, (London: Robert Hale), p. 156.

⁸ Bin Sayeed, Khalid, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase: 1857-1948*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press), p. 236.

⁹ Bin Sayeed, Khalid, *The Political System of Pakistan*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), p. 62.

Pakistan, unleashed the divisive forces, that, more than India, threatened the survival of the young nation.”¹⁰

It is an undeniable fact of history that not more than 200 families have shared political power in Pakistan since independence. These politicians have exploited the country in collaboration with the military. Lust for power has proved to be disastrous for Pakistan. “Masters of the new nation, the bureaucrats had little interest in organising elections, and political developments following Jinnah’s death can only be described as chaotic. There were no fewer than seven prime ministers in ten years. Liaquat Ali Khan (50 months in office) was assassinated. His successors, Khwaja Nazimuddin (17 months); Mohammed Ali Bogra (29 months); Chaudri Mohammed Ali (13 months); Shaheed Suhrawardy (13 months); I.I. Chundrigar (2 months); and Firoz Khan Noon (11 months), all became victims of palace intrigues...Throughout the 1950s two archetypal bureaucrats, Ghulam Mohammed and Iskander Mirza, brazenly abused their powers as head of state to make or break governments. In April 1953, Ghulam Mohammed set an unfortunate precedent when, citing the government’s failure to resolve ‘the difficulties facing the country’, he dismissed Khwaja Nazimuddin and installed Bogra in his place. When Bogra responded by trying to limit the governor general’s power, Ghulam Mohammed dismissed him too. And so it went on.”¹¹

Power in Pakistan meant ‘no accountability’. It was a ticket to do as one pleased. Hence authoritarianism kept festering in the ruling elite. “In contrast with the ‘Congress System’, the Pakistani political process was chaotic immediately after independence, displaying a bewildering array of shifting allegiances and

¹⁰ Suleri, Z.A., *Pakistan’s Lost Years* (Lahore: Progressive Papers Ltd.)

¹¹ Jones, Owen Bennett, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 230.

alliances. By 1954 the Muslim League which had founded the state was in terminal decline. Personalities counted rather than ideologies or party institutionalisation. The lack of expenditure on what would today be termed human development hampered the emergence of a civil society which might have questioned the growing influence of the army.”¹²

Since there was no one to question the whims of the army or the politicians, Pakistan kept falling deeper and deeper into the abyss of authoritarianism. The military is supposed to defend the country and secure its borders, but in Pakistan the military wanted to seize power from the civilians. “In Pakistan, it was only with the assurance of the support of the army that Governor-General Ghulam Mohammad dismissed Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin, in 1953, when he enjoyed the support of the Constituent Assembly. It was again with the support of the army that the Governor General, in 1954, was able to dissolve the Constituent Assembly. In the circumstances, it was not surprising that General Ayub Khan, in addition to his duties of commander-in-chief of the army, assumed the responsibilities of the minister of defence in the new government.”¹³

As explained by Plato, “‘Ruin comes when the trader, whose heart is lifted up by wealth, becomes ruler’; or when the general uses his army to establish a military dictatorship. The producer is at his best in the economic field, the warrior is at his best in battle; they are both at their worst in public office; and in their crude hands politics submerges statesmanship. For

¹² Talbot, Ian, *India and Pakistan: Inventing the Nation*, (London: Arnold), p. 218.

¹³ Khan, M. Asghar, *We've Learnt Nothing from History, Pakistan: Politics and Military Power*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 247.

statesmanship is a science and an art; one must have lived for it and been long prepared.”¹⁴

A military rule inherently means dictatorship. The military dictators are even worse than civilian authoritarians. “The first thing I did on the morning after the declaration of Martial Law was to call a meeting of all the Secretaries to the central government. I explained to them what had happened and what they were required to do: I also gave them a general outline of policy. I noticed that one or two of them looked rather sulky, and I went for them; they all settled down after that fairly quickly.”¹⁵

Ayub’s rule came to an end in 1969, but the power paradigm remained the same, that is, with the military. “On 25 March 1969, seeing his political epitaph if not its logic, Ayub quietly handed over power to General Yahya Khan, the commander-in-chief of the Pakistan army.

Unexpectedly lumped with the task of healing the rifts in a deeply polarised country, General Yahya was in no hurry to relinquish command...In November 1969, Yahya unfurled his plans for a transfer of power. Polls were scheduled for the fall of 1970; political parties could kick off their election campaigns by January of that year...To put it bluntly, the Yahya regime had no intention of transferring power to any political configuration – whether from the eastern or the western half of the country – which aimed at circumscribing the interests or reducing the dominance of the two main institutions of the Pakistani state.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Durant, Will, *The Story of Philosophy*, (New York: Simon & Schuster), p. 434.

¹⁵ Khan, Mohammad Ayub, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography*, (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 90-91.

¹⁶ Jalal, Ayesha, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan’s Political Economy of Defence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 308-09.

It is ironic (and amusing) that all military dictators claimed that they wanted to bring 'genuine' democracy, yet it is no secret that what each and every military ruler has brought to this country is tyranny. "[Tuesday, March 2, 1971]...Pakistan faces terrible contradictions. It wants unification and democracy, but facts of life are against this combination. East Pakistan is against unification and if democracy is accepted, then East Pakistan has to be given freedom of its choice, secession. The army can hold the country together, but for how long. It can at best be a temporary expediency. If secession is considered unavoidable then the sensible course would be to carry out the process of separation under the cover of martial law to make it a tidy operation...What the East Pakistani reaction will be remains to be seen. Chances of it taking a violent turn and even declaring a unilateral decision of independence are great but then they may decide to lie low and wait for a more suitable opportunity to break away. In any case, separation is drawing closer. The Bengalis are doing everything possible to make it do so. Meanwhile, Bhutto, in conjunction with Yahya will do everything to accelerate the process."¹⁷ Military rule is a disaster waiting to happen. Each and every military rule in Pakistan has brought with it many ramifications.

A civilian dictator, though not as bad as a military dictator, is a dictator nonetheless. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a shrewd politician who played his cards right. "The next day, 25 November [1971], Zulfi [Zulfikar Ali Bhutto] met with Yahya, who now took him fully into his "confidence", hoping to remain the president in a new government, with Zulfi as prime minister. As soon as the war ended old Nurul Amin would be displaced, of course, because Yahya and Zulfi knew he was mere Bengali window dressing for

¹⁷ Edited and annotated by Baxter, Craig, *Diaries of Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 457-58.

the outside world. What Yahya himself did not as yet understand was that he too would soon be jettisoned by his ambitious new “ally”.¹⁸ Zulfikar Bhutto had his eyes on the ultimate position of power. “Now it was Yahya’s turn to be Zulfi’s target, as Ayub previously had been. Zulfi told his people that Yahya only intended to “lead the politicians to their doom”, that he was “a liar, drunkard, and a fraud” who conspired against the people.”¹⁹

Losing its east wing in 1971 was the biggest blow for Pakistan, yet Bhutto rose from its ashes due to his popularity. “If ever there was a leader who drew strength from the disgrace and demoralisation of a nation, it was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Martial law remained in force after Bhutto’s swearing-in ceremony as the new President of Pakistan, and given the humbling of the Pakistan Army and the disarray in its high command, he also became Chief Martial Law Administrator, the first civilian to hold such a position among the new nations. The duality and inter-relationship of the two roles illustrated the total power acquired by the PPP politician. The centralisation of authority in his person, the rapt attention of those around him, and the animated popular support for his presidency, proved to be the most exhilarating experience of the young man’s life.”²⁰

Being an authoritarian by nature, Bhutto strengthened the military apparatus, which led to his own downfall. “Bhutto’s attempt to establish an authoritarian rule led him to rely more and more on the coercive apparatus of the state and the intelligence agencies. Bhutto did little to strengthen the democratic institutions and to make the process of democratic

¹⁸ Wolpert, Stanley, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan: His Life and Times*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 162-63.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁰ Ziring, Lawrence, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History*, (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 375.

reform irreversible. Instead, his entire effort was aimed at promoting a personalised rule. He did not trust anyone...The collapse of democratic institutions and the Constitution's loss of sanctity created a vacuum of authority that provided a favourable condition for the Bonapartist generals."²¹

Bhutto had surrounded himself with 'yes men' but he was unaware that some of the puppets around him would turn the tide against him. After overthrowing Bhutto in a military coup, General Ziaul Haq became the supreme ruler of Pakistan. "Unlike Generals Ayub Khan and Yahya Khan, General Ziaul Haq started with a handicap. He had stepped into the office of a charismatic and once populist Bhutto, who would have certainly won at least one more term as prime minister had elections been held in a fair and free environment. Zia neither possessed the charisma of Bhutto nor did he have the support of a public mandate behind him. Nor, indeed was he an intellectual. Initially, the foreign media called him a 'reluctant military ruler' but Zia shed his reservations, if he had any, when he quickly developed a taste for power and authority."²²

The reason why true democracy has not been established in Pakistan is due to a number of reasons. "Building a democracy in a country devoted to religious tradition has been a problem in numerous states. The founding fathers of the United States constitutional system acknowledged the problem in eighteenth-century Europe and it was their judgement that only by a strict separation of church from state was democracy attainable."²³ Pakistan has not been able to separate its (Islamic) church, that

²¹ Hussain, Zahid, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam*, (Columbia: Columbia University Press 2007), p. 14.

²² Arif, General K.M., *Khaki Shadows: Pakistan 1947-1997*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p. 413.

²³ Ziring, Lawrence, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*, (Oxford: Oneworld), pp. 276-77.

is, the mosque from the state. Those in power have used the religious card to further their own vested interests. "The common man had been told that perhaps the greatest factor responsible for the establishment of Pakistan against overwhelming odds was the Islamic bond, which could overcome any divisions. After the establishment of Pakistan, the wranglings of politicians, the dismissal of governments – all accompanied by intense regional conflicts between Bengalis and West Pakistanis and between Punjabis and Sindhis, and Punjabis and Pakhtuns – confirmed the common scepticism and disillusionment about Islamic unity and the Islamic state."²⁴

The people of Pakistan are still waiting for genuine democracy. "A brief review of South Asia's history over the past six decades would suggest that the democratic system accepted as an accompaniment to independence has faced the following problems:

* The founding fathers of the new South Asian states adopted a narrow definition of democracy, choosing to govern in the name of the people without involving them in the process of governance. That undermined the rulers' capacity to meet the challenges of diversity, except to some extent in the case of India, though there too without empowering the masses. There the dominant elite that had led the fight for independence remained united and thus saved the democratic edifice from collapsing. Elsewhere, the comparable elites split and the states chose to rely on extra-democratic props, such as belief (e.g., Pakistan and Sri Lanka) or authoritarianism (e.g., Pakistan and, later on, Bangladesh)."²⁵

²⁴ Bin Sayeed, Khalid, *Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change*, (New York: Praegers Publishers), p. 167.

²⁵ Rehman, I.A., 'Democracy's ills & cures', *Dawn* newspaper, May 04, 2007.

The so-called democratic rulers themselves are not willing to share power. Their parties are based on dictatorial models. "Parties are loosely structured fiefdoms of political heritage either inherited or usurped through opportunity and patronage of the military during intermissions of dictatorships. There are two major shortcomings in political parties.

First, there are little or no grass root structures with genuine participation of the people. Whatever structure there is exists by the dint of top-level discretion and preferential appointments. The monarchical character of parties suspends on personality cults. Change of party leadership through grass root, party elections is a rarity. Party heads do not encourage independent thinking and ideological debate within the party. The most progressive and liberal on the face value, PPP [Pakistan People's Party] has opted for a lifetime president in Benazir. Nawaz remains the PML (N) head in absentia.

Second, there is no room for democratic choices within the parties. Intra-party elections for selecting party officials and nominees for elections are not conventional; Byzantine intrigues and string pulling is."²⁶

After General Zia's draconian rule ended with his mysterious death in a plane crash, the people of Pakistan heaved a sigh of relief. The return of Benazir Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's daughter, was inevitable. The masses were excited. What they did not know was that "Benazir Bhutto's assumption of power, touted at the time as the dawn of a new democratic era, was in

²⁶ Mustafa, Iqbal, *Dysfunctional Democracy: A Case for an Alternative Political System*, (Lahore: Jang Publishers), p. 47.

fact a transition from direct to indirect military rule.”²⁷ Not much was going to change. In fact, things would only get worse.

Benazir Bhutto betrayed the trust of the masses by not only co-opting with the military but also by not bringing about many reforms in the interest of the public. The excitement with which the people had welcomed her back turned into great disappointment. “But inside Pakistan the exuberance which had greeted [Benazir] Bhutto’s assumption of office had rapidly dissipated. On few occasions in history has a ruler squandered so much goodwill so quickly. Like her predecessors, Benazir had quickly become obsessed with Machiavelli’s axiom that ‘the first rule of politics is to stay in power’.”²⁸

Nawaz Sharif formed his government in 1991. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, a dictatorial president who wanted the political process to move according to his wishes, was not very happy with the Nawaz government. “Ishaq Khan saw in the increasing independence of Nawaz Sharif a threat to his own ambitions for power. The two leaders developed serious differences over appointment of the chief of army staff, posting of ambassadors abroad, economic liberalisation, and relationship with other parties.”²⁹

After the dismissal of the Nawaz government, Benazir Bhutto came back to power in 1993. “Like the Bourbons, Benazir learned nothing from her first disastrous stint in office, and her second regime has proved to be an even greater catastrophe, perhaps the worst in our history. Despite her ostentatious

²⁷ Hussain, Zahid, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam*, (Columbia: Columbia University Press 2007), p. 23.

²⁸ Lamb, Christina, *Waiting for Allah: Pakistan’s struggle for democracy*, (New York: Viking Penguin), p. 281.

²⁹ Mahmood, Safdar, *Pakistan: Political Roots and Development 1947-1999*, (New York, Oxford University Press), p. 393.

meanderings all over the world, her only international achievement for Pakistan appears to be its recognition as the most corrupt state in Asia.”³⁰

In a country where there is no freedom of press, authoritarianism festers. After the end of General Zia-ul-Haq’s draconian rule, when Benazir Bhutto of the PPP came to power in 1988, the nation expected miracles. This was not to be. The press was still not free as can be judged by the following:

“When *Jang* was boycotted all over Karachi by the MQM in 1989, the *Jang* management not only tendered an apology, but also reimbursed the MQM three lakh rupees which they claimed the boycott cost them. Similarly, the *Dawn* management wrote off lakhs of rupees that the MQM owed them for their advertisement campaigns.”³¹

There was no accountability for the powerful. The common man suffered while the affluent prospered. “Those holding executive authority and answerable to parliament were able less and less to influence government policies while real power came to rest with state officials unencumbered by such constitutional niceties as accountability to the people.”³²

Under any authoritarian rule, the press suffers a lot. In 1991, the MQM was at it again while the civilian government of Nawaz Sharif was not able to do much.

“This entire ugly drama started when the MQM was annoyed with *Herald* and *Takbeer* over the write-up in both the journals

³⁰ Khan, Roedad, *Pakistan – A Dream Gone Sour*, (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 208.

³¹ *Newsline*, April 1991.

³² Jalal, Ayesha, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan’s Political Economy of Defence*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 136.

about an alleged “deep division in the MQM”. As the war of words was going on, on March 16 [1991], a section of the press, not Dawn, splashed another item regarding the MQM chief’s speech in which he was reported to have criticised the president and the prime minister. The next day’s *Jang* and *The News* had prominently published the item on their front pages. In some areas their distribution was disturbed by unidentified militants. The same evening the MQM chief issued a denial which was published along with “regrets” by both the paper. However, both the papers stated that the news “we carried was also published in other Karachi newspapers and broadcasted by BBC”. (*Jang*, *The News*, March 17). To prove their “innocence” both the papers published the transcript of the BBC report broadcast in its Urdu service on March 15.

Herald reporter, Zaffar Abbas happens to be the BBC correspondent in Karachi. At about 10 a.m. seven armed men, two masked, carrying daggers, two with machine guns, one with an iron rod and one wielding a heavy duty wrench, rang the bell. Abbas opened the door. The masked men enquired about Abbas and when he told he was before them, they pounced upon him. His brother Anwar Abbas and another ailing brother Azhar Abbas of *The News* came to his rescue. Zaffar was savagely beaten with their weapons, and with a glass which left splinters in his scalp and even with his typewriter.”³³

The weakening of the state’s institutions made the civilian rulers turn into dictators who thrived on power. “Indeed, from the moment he (Nawaz Sharif) was re-elected in 1997, he concentrated on making his political position impregnable. He began by undermining the parliamentarians by forcing through a Constitutional Amendment that required all members of the

³³ Niazi, Zameer, *The Press Under Siege* (Second Edition), (Karachi: Pakistan Study Centre), pp. 178-79.

National Assembly to vote according to party lines. He then bullied the press by arresting journalists who wrote against him and by ordering tax investigations into those editors who continued to print critical articles. He also tackled the judiciary. When the Supreme Court tried to hear a case in which he was a defendant, Sharif's supporters ransacked the building and terrified the judges into backing down. He moved on to tackle the presidency and forced Farooq Leghari to resign. By 1998 the only significant power centre that remained untouched was the army. And when chief of army staff, General Jehangir Karamat, voiced concern about the government's performance, he was also forced to step down. But in confronting the army, Sharif had gone a step too far and eventually Karamat's successor, General Pervez Musharraf, responded in the traditional manner. He forced Sharif out of office at gunpoint."³⁴

The military kept getting stronger, especially economically, even during the civilian rule(s). "The twice-elected regimes of Benazir Bhutto (1988-90, 1993-96) and Nawaz Sharif (1990-3, 1997-9) tried to appease the army generals through providing greater economic opportunities."³⁵ While all other state institutions suffered, the military prospered. "The military is the country's most powerful institution. It is the largest organised force with approximately 700,000 personnel. Compared with this, there seems to be no single democratic institution in Pakistan that can claim to have this number of members. In any case, the state's democratic system and institutions are weak."³⁶

³⁴ Jones, Owen Bennett, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 243-44.

³⁵ Siddiqa, Ayesha, *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007), p. 151.

³⁶ Siddiqa-Agha, Ayesha, *Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99 In Search of a Policy*. (London: Palgrave Press, 2000), p. 56.

Many in Pakistan were happy after Musharraf's coup in 1999, which only proved that we have not learned anything from history. "The military's withdrawal from power is a complex affair. Despite the promise of an early return to the barracks, most military rulers find it difficult to surrender power, not to speak of adopting an apolitical posture. Their self-styled missionary zeal, the post-coup political problems and their political goals and ambition, impel them to expand their goals and hang on to power. However, the military rulers are not able to overcome the crisis of legitimacy and they cannot continue ruling for an indefinite period under martial law and emergency. Sooner or later, they have to think about some political framework to replace direct military rule, although they ensure that such a transition does not adversely affect the professional and corporate interests of the military and their entrenched position is adequately protected."³⁷

As has been demonstrated throughout Pakistan's history, no matter how good the intentions of a military ruler, the rule would turn out to be tyrannical. "So wherein lies the fault? Not in the qualities or defects of character of Pakistan's military rulers but in the structural and intellectual limitations of their rule. It is not that one-man rule or autocracy is always and everywhere bad. England apart, the Europe that we see today is a product of various forms of kingship and authoritarianism. Democracy made a late arrival in much of the continent. East Asian prosperity, including China's emergence as an economic powerhouse, is based upon the politics of authoritarianism. It is just that the same solution does not fit every situation. The Pakistani model of authoritarianism which derives its legitimacy and currency from the army is flawed because the instrument at hand, the Pakistan

³⁷ Rizvi, Hassan Askari, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan: 1947-1997*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications), p. 273.

army, is not equipped to deliver the wages of good administration (the necessary condition for economic prosperity).

The Pak Army is not the Kuomintang of Taiwan. It is not the Communist Party or People's Liberation Army of China. It is not the British civil service of Hong Kong nor the army of South Korea. It can only produce the figures it has done; it can produce no Lee Kuan Yews. This is not to say it has no strengths. It has them indeed and they are not to be scoffed at. But among these strengths, as the history of the last 50 years has demonstrated, lies not the art of government or administration. The Pakistan army can do many things and it can do them better than the armies of many other countries. But it simply lacks the ethos or grounding to bring about a social revolution or lay the foundations of an enduring political order.

This is what makes Musharraf's assumption of the presidency such a sad event. For in laying bare his ambition, and perhaps that of his closest generals, this move reveals, as nothing else could, that we have learned nothing from the past."³⁸

Sending the military back to the barracks is quite difficult in a state like Pakistan where democracy was trampled upon by civilian rulers. Instead of opting for democratic rule, the civilian themselves became dictators. Military rulers are inherently authoritative. "The recent history of Pakistan, in the wake of General Musharraf's coup of 1999, demonstrates just how difficult it is to reverse the phenomenon of military authoritarianism. In the post-Cold War era, despite halting steps towards democracy and civilian rule, the military in Pakistan remains the most formidable and autonomous political actor, capable of influencing the nature and direction of change in

³⁸ Amir, Ayaz, 'Being nice is not the point', *Dawn* newspaper, June 29, 2001.

Pakistan's half-century-old search for a viable political system. It has produced the military-hegemonic regime which promoted the interests of the military-bureaucratic elite, consolidated the financial industrial groups, co-opted a feudal class and followed *laissez-faire* economic growth. Its basic objective was to curb participatory politics and to subordinate political parties and other autonomous interest groups to military hegemony. At the same time, through political control and political exclusion, the regime promoted centralisation and authoritarianism, delegitimised political parties and leaders and depoliticised the masses. This course of actions was exemplified by, the military-hegemonic regimes of Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan and Zia-ul-Haq. The present military regime of General Musharraf also works along the same lines."³⁹

President General Pervez Musharraf is no different from the military rulers of the past. "In 2002, Musharraf amended Pakistan's constitution to reintroduce the idea of a National Security Council and to enhance presidential powers, before holding parliamentary elections. [Benazir] Bhutto and [Nawaz] Sharif were barred from participating in these polls, as were several other politicians disqualified by a National Accountability Bureau (NAB) headed by a Lieutenant General. Before the election, Musharraf held a referendum to seek a five-year mandate as president."⁴⁰

If authoritarian rulers are not challenged, the state becomes weak. When the state becomes weak, the people get restless. This would lead to the state's collapse. "The two basic functions of the state are the maintenance of order and the collection of

³⁹ Edited by Kukreja, Veena and Singh, M.P., *Pakistan: Democracy, Development and Security Issues*, (New Delhi: Sage), pp. 17-18.

⁴⁰ Haqqani, Husain, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, (USA: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), p. 259.

taxes. The former task is the domain of the criminal justice system. The latter is the function of the financial administrative machinery. The manner in which power is exercised determines the effectiveness and justice of law enforcement and tax collection. Prolonged failure in the performance of these two core functions condemns the state to anarchy and collapse. Keeping the apparatus in line is the role of the central executive and political leadership. Without a reasonably strong, enlightened, and rational, directing impulse from above the full predatory potential of the state is in time unleashed upon society, which in turn becomes progressively more ungovernable.”⁴¹

⁴¹ Niaz, Ilhan, *An Inquiry into the Culture of Power of the Subcontinent*, (Islamabad: Alhamra), p. 1.

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