

TOPIC 30

GENERAL ZIA UL HAQ 1977-1988

General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq was the one who enforced Martial Law for the third time in the brief history of Pakistan. Second child and eldest son of **Muhammad Akram**, a teacher in the British Army, Zia-ul-Haq was born on **August 12, 1924, at Jalandhar**.

He was commissioned in the British Army in 1943 and served in Burma, Malaya and Indonesia during World War II. On **April 1, 1976, in a surprise move the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, appointed Zia-ul-Haq as Chief of Army Staff**, superseding five senior Generals. Bhutto probably wanted somebody as the head of the armed forces who would not prove to be a threat for him, and the best available option was the simple General who was apparently interested only in offering prayers and playing golf. However, history proved that General Zia-ul-Haq proved to be much smarter than Bhutto thought. When political tension reached its climax due to the deadlock between Bhutto and the leadership of **Pakistan National Alliance** on the issue of general elections, Zia-ul-Haq took advantage of the situation. On July 5, 1977, he carried out a bloodless coup overthrowing Bhutto's government and enforced Martial Law in the country.

After assuming power as Chief Martial Law Administrator, Zia-ul-Haq **promised to hold National and Provincial Assembly elections in the next 90 days** and to hand over power to the representatives of the Nation. However, in October 1977, he announced the postponement of the electoral plan and decided to start an **accountability process** of the politicians. In a statement, he said that he changed his decision due to the strong public demand for the scrutiny of political leaders who had indulged in malpractice in the past. The Disqualification Tribunal was formulated and many former Members of Parliament were disqualified from participating in politics at any level for the next seven years. PPP was also banned.

In the mid-1980s, Zia-ul-Haq decided to fulfill his promise of holding elections in the country. But before handing over the power to the public representatives, he decided to secure his position. **Referendum was held in the country in December 1984**, and the masses were given the option to elect or reject the General as the future President of Pakistan. **The question asked in the referendum was phrased in a way that Zia-ul-Haq's victory was related to the process of Islamization in the country.** According to the official result, more than 95 percent of the votes were cast in favour of Zia-ul-Haq, thus he was elected as President for the next five years.

After being elected President, Zia-ul-Haq decided to hold **elections in the country in February 1985 on a non-party basis**. Most of the political parties decided to boycott the elections but election results showed that many victors belonged to one party or the other. **To make things easier for himself, the General nominated the Prime Minister from amongst the Members of the Assembly.** To many, his nomination of **Muhammad Khan Junejo** as the Prime Minister was because he wanted a simple person at the post who would act as a puppet in his hands. Before handing over the power to the new Government he made certain **Amendments in the Constitution** and got them endorsed from the Parliament before lifting the state of emergency in the country. Due to this **Eighth Amendment** in the Constitution, **the powers of the President were increased to an absolute level.**

On **May 29, 1988, Zia-ul-Haq dissolved the National Assembly and removed the Prime Minister under article 58(2) b** of the amended Constitution.

After 11 years, Zia-ul-Haq once again made the same promise to the Nation to hold fresh elections within next 90 days. With **Benazir Bhutto** back in the country and the Muslim League leadership annoyed with the President over the decision of May 29, Zia-ul-Haq was trapped in the most difficult situation of his political life. The only option left for him was to repeat history and to postpone the elections once again.

However, before taking any decision, **Zia-ul-Haq died in an air crash near Bhawalpur on August 17, 1988.** The accident proved to be very costly for the country as almost the entire military elite of Pakistan was on board. Though United States' Ambassador to Pakistan was also killed in the misfortune, the remains of Zia-ul-Haq were buried in the premises of Faisal Mosque, Islamabad. His death brought a large number of mourners to attend his funeral, including a large number of Afghanis.

During his rule, Zia-ul-Haq tried his utmost to maintain close ties with the Muslim World. He made vigorous efforts along with other Muslim States to bring an end to the war between Iran and Iraq. Pakistan joined the Non-Aligned Movement in 1979 during Zia-ul-Haq's term. He also fought a war by proxy in Afghanistan and saved Pakistan from a direct war with Soviet Union.

Islamisation under ZIA:

In his first address to the nation, he declared that Islamic laws would be enforced and his attention would be devoted towards establishing the Islamic society for which Pakistan had been created. General Zia wanted to bring the legal, social, economic and political institutions of the country in conformity with the Islamic principles, values and traditions in the light of Quran and Sunnah, to enable the people of Pakistan to lead their lives in accordance to Islam.

The Government of Zia-ul-Haq took a number of steps to eradicate non-Islamic practices from the country. He introduced the **Zakat, Ushr, Islamic Hadood and Penal Code** in the country. The Government invited eminent scholars to compile laws about Islamic financing. **The Zakat and Ushr Ordinance to Islamize the economic system was promulgated on June 20, 1980.** **Zakat** was to be deducted from bank accounts of Muslims at the rate of 2.5 percent annually above the balance of Rupees 3,000. **Ushr** was levied on the yield of agricultural land in cash or kind at the rate of 10 percent of the agricultural yield, annually.

The Government appointed Central, Provincial, District and Tehsil Zakat Committees to distribute Zakat funds to the needy, poor, orphans and widows. **Shias** were exempted from Zakat deduction from their accounts due to their own religious beliefs. The Zakat was to be deducted by banks on the first day of Ramazan.

A **Federal Shariah** Court was established to decide cases according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Appeals against the Lower and High Courts were to be presented before the Shariah Court for hearing. Blasphemy of the Holy Prophet (S. A. W.) would now be punishable by death instead of life imprisonment.

Zia-ul-Haq selected his **Majlis-i-Shoora in 1980**. It was to be the Islamic Parliament and act as the Parliament of Pakistan in place of the National Assembly. Most of the members of the Shoora were intellectuals, scholars, ulema, journalists, economists and professionals belonging to different fields of life. The Shoora was to act as a board of advisors for the President.

A number of other Islamization programs were carried out including the teaching of **Islamic Studies and Arabic**, which were made compulsory. **Pakistan Studies** and **Islamic Studies** were made compulsorily for B. A., B. Sc., Engineering, M. B. B. S., Commerce, Law and Nursing students. For professional studies, extra marks were given to people who were Hafiz-e-Quran.

A **Shariah Council** consisting of ulema was established to look into the constitutional and legal matters of the State in order to bring them in line with Islamic thought. Since Islam does not allow interest, On January 1, 1980, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq introduced a "**Profit and Loss Sharing System**" according to which an account holder was to share the loss and profit of the bank. The media was also targeted. Television especially was brought under the Islamization campaign, **news in Arabic** were to be read on both television and radio, female anchor persons were required to cover their heads, the **Azan** was relayed regularly on radio and television to announce time for prayers.

In the armed forces, the status of the religious teachers was raised to that of a Commissioned Officer. This was done to attract highly qualified individuals from the universities and religious institution to serve on such assignments.

As the government grew further in its Islamic leanings, the numbers of mosques were increased. **Ordinance for the sanctity of Ramazan** was introduced to pay reverence to the holy month of Ramazan. The Ordinance forbade public drinking and eating during the holy month of Ramazan. A three months imprisonment and a fine of Rupees 500 were imposed for violating the Ordinance. A program to ensure the regularity of prayers called the Nizam-i-Salaat was launched by General Zia himself.

Zia's Government introduced the **Hadood Ordinance** for the first time in Pakistan, which meant the punishments **ordained by the Holy Quran or Sunnah on the use of liquor, theft, adultery and qazf**. Under this Ordinance, a culprit could be sentenced to lashing, life imprisonment and in some cases, death by stoning.

General Zia-ul-Haq wanted to make Pakistan the citadel of Islam so that it could play an honorable and prominent role for the Islamic world.

ECONOMIC REFORMS:

In **economic** affairs Zia announced the policy of **denationalization** of industries. Some nationalized industries were returned to the owner. Incentives were given in the form of fiscal and monetary concessions, and in import of machinery and raw material. Foreign investment was welcomed and full protection was granted. Industrialization gradually started and Zia's policy was successful. **Steel mill** was completed and **Karakorum highway** was built. Industrial and agricultural production showed an increase. Therefore it can be said that Zia had most success in economic affairs.

POLITICAL REFORMS:

Pakistan got the membership of NAM in 1979. Zia attended Havana conference and clarified Pakistan's nuclear policy and other issues. Zia attended the **OIC** meetings and gave full support to the Arab cause in Palestine. Zia supported the **afghan mujahidin** against the Russian forces in Afghanistan. With American military and financial help Russian forces were pushed out in 1988. Zia's Afghanistan policy and foreign policy was a success.

Zia promised election within 90 days. But he established a nominated Assembly called Majlis-e - shoora which had limited powers and worked from 1981 to 1985. In 1985 elections were held on non-party basis and re-elected assembly was formed. **M. khan Junejo** became the PM and martial law was lifted. But Junejo govt. was dismissed and assembly was dissolved in May 1988. Zia promised fresh elections in Oct. 1988.

Afghan War Settlement:

In 1979, Russian forces invaded Afghanistan. Communism came to the threshold of Pakistan when forces led by Babrak Karmel overthrew the Government of Afghanistan. Some 120,000 Russian troops entered Afghanistan. The Afghan people organized a resistance force against this blatant aggression. The Soviet forces suffered greatly in terms of manpower and material, and the Afghan War proved expensive even for a world power like the Soviet Union.

General Zia stood against the spread of communism. The arms provided to Afghanistan freedom fighters were also provided to the Pakistan Army. As a result the Pakistan Army became better equipped.

Ultimately Negotiations on Afghanistan were carried out under Zia's Government, and the **Geneva Accord** was signed on April 14, 1988, under which the Soviet Union agreed to withdraw its forces in two instalments. The Soviet Government lived up to its commitment of withdrawal of forces according to the agreed timetable.

The victory in Afghanistan was achieved at a great cost to Pakistan. It had to look after and feed more than three million Afghan refugees that had crossed over to Pakistan. The refugees were a great economic burden on Pakistan. Not only this but, they also caused the problem of drugs and gunrunning in the country.

Mohammad Khan Junejo becomes PM 1985 to 1988:

After the Presidential referendum of December 1984, elections for the National and Provincial Assemblies were held in February 1985 on a non-party basis. President Zia-ul-Haq nominated Muhammad Khan Junejo as the Prime Minister of Pakistan on March 20, 1985.

After the lifting of Martial Law, Junejo tried to take a course independent of Zia. He annoyed military generals by withdrawing big staff cars from them and replacing them with small cars. He tried to conduct an independent foreign policy, particularly on Afghanistan, by taking into confidence and consulting leaders of political parties, including Benazir Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party. His government even tried to probe into the military fiasco at the ***Ojheri Camp near Islamabad on April 10, 1988***, which resulted in the death and serious injuries to a

large number of civilians. This probe perhaps became the immediate cause for the dismissal of his government.

General Zia dismissed Junejo's Government using the controversial rule under **Article 58(2) b** of the Constitution. Fresh elections were promised after 90 days but were eventually held on November 16, 1988, three months after Zia's death in a plane crash.

EXPECTED QUESTIONS:

Question no.1: was the promotion of Islamic values the most important achievement of General Zia between 1977-88? Explain your answer. (14) Nov 2000 Q.5 c

Question No.2: which of the following contributed the most to Pakistan's domestic policies?

Liaqat Ali Khan

Ayub Khan

Zia ul Haq

Explain your answer with reference to all three of the above. (14) June 2001 Q.4 c

Question No.3: how successful have governments been in the Islamization of Pakistan between 1947 and 1988? Explain your answer. (14) June 2002 Q.5 c

Question No. 4: In which of the following did Zia have most success between 1977 and 1988:

Islamization

Economic affairs

Political affairs

Explain your answer with reference to all three of the above. (14) June 2003 Q.4 c

Question No.5: Islamic reforms were the most important of Zia ul Haq's domestic policies between 1977 and 1988. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer. (14) Nov 2005 Q.5 c

Question No. 6: why did Zia introduce his Islamic reforms between 1977 and 1988? (7) June 2006 Q. 5 b

Question No. 7: Zia's foreign policy was more successful than his domestic reforms. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer. (14) June 2007 Q. 5 c

Question No.8: why did ZIA introduce a series of Islamic laws between 1979 and 1988? (7)

June 2008 Q 5 b

Question No. 9: how successful have governments been in Islamization of Pakistan between 1947 and 1988? Explain your answer. (14) Nov. 2009 Q. 5 c

Question No.10: Islamic reforms were the most important of Zia's domestic policies between 1977 and 1988. Do you agree or disagree? Give reasons for your answer. (14) June 2010 Q. 4 c

Question No. 11: Why did ZIA introduce his package of Islamic laws between 1979 and 1988? (7) June 2011 Q.5 c

Question No. 12: Was the promotion of Islamic values the most important achievement of General Zia-ul-Haq's domestic policies between 1977 and 1988? Explain your answer. [14] Nov.2014 Q.4 C