Ayub Khan (1958 – 1969)

**Martial Law under Field Marshal Ayub Khan:**

**On October 7, 1958, President Iskandar Mirza abrogated the Constitution and declared Martial Law in the country. This was the first of many military regimes to mar Pakistan’s history. With this step, the Constitution of 1956 was abrogated, ministers were dismissed, Central and Provincial Assemblies were dissolved and all political activities were banned. General Muhammad Ayub Khan, the then Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, became the Chief Martial Law Administrator. The parliamentary system in Pakistan came to end. Within three weeks of assuming charge on October 27, 1958, Iskandar Mirza was ousted by General Ayub Khan, who then declared himself President. Corruption had become so widespread within the national and civic systems of administration that Ayub Khan was welcomed as a national hero by the people.**

**Ayub Khan as President:**

**General Ayub Khan gave himself the rank of Field Marshal. Most people in Pakistan welcomed Ayub Khan’s takeover because they were sick and tired of the political instability that had racked the country since its birth in 1947. Immediately after assuming his new responsibilities, Ayub tried to wipeout corruption and get rid of several social problems the country was facing. All these steps enhanced Ayub’s popularity among the masses. However, he was conscious of the fact that he could not rule under military cover for long and thus appointed a Constitutional Commission headed by Justice Shahab-ud-din. On Ayub’s instructions, the report presented by the Commission on May 6, 1961, was examined by many committees, modified, and was finally given the shape of a Constitution.**

**Indus Water Treaty:**

**Pakistan is an agricultural country. Eighty percent of its agricultural output comes from the Indus Basin. Pakistan has one of the world’s largest canal systems built much before Independence by the British. After Independence, problems between the two countries arose over the distribution of water. Rivers flow into Pakistan territory from across India. In 1947, when Punjab was divided between the two countries, many of the canal head-works remained with India. The division of Punjab thus created major problems for irrigation in Pakistan.**

**On April 1, 1948, India stopped the supply of water to Pakistan from every canal flowing from India to Pakistan. Pakistan protested and India finally agreed on an interim agreement on May 4, 1948. This agreement was not a permanent solution; therefore, Pakistan approached the World Bank in 1952 to help settle the problem permanently. Negotiations were carried out between the two countries through the offices of the World Bank. It was finally in Ayub Khan’s regime that an agreement was signed between India and Pakistan in September 1960. This agreement is known as the Indus Water Treaty.**

**The Constitution of 1962:**

With the aim of investigating the reasons of failure of the parliamentary system in Pakistan, and to make recommendations for a new constitution, Ayub Khan appointed a Constitution Commission under the supervision of Justice Shahab-ud-din. After a number of considerations, the Commission submitted its report on May 6, 1961. Ayub Khan was not satisfied with the report and had it processed through various committees. As a result the Constitution, which was promulgated on March 1, and enforced on June 8, 1962, was entirely different from the one recommended by the Shahab-ud-din Commission.

* It advocated presidential form of government with absolute powers vested in the President.
* The term of the President was for five years and nobody could hold the post for more than two consecutive terms.
* The President was to be a Muslim not less than 35 years of age.
* President was the head of the state as well as the head of the Government.
* The Constitution of 1962 provided for a unicameral legislature.
* The National Assembly was to consist of 156 members, including six women.
* Principle of Basic Democracy was introduced for the first time in the country and the system of indirect elections was presented.
* According to the Constitution of 1962, the Executive was not separated from the Legislature.
* Both Urdu and Bengali were made the national languages of Pakistan and English was declared as the official language of the country for the first ten years.
* The state was named the Republic of Pakistan, but the first amendment added the word “Islamic” to the name.
* The President had the power to dissolve the National Assembly.
* The Constitution of 1962 was a written Constitution upholding the fundamental rights of the citizens.

When Ayub Khan handed over power to Yahya Khan, Martial Law was enforced in the country and the Constitution was terminated on March 25, 1969.

Ayub Khan’s Era:

Ayub Khan’s era is known for the industrialization in the country. He created an environment where the private sector was encouraged to establish medium and small-scale industries in Pakistan. This opened up avenues for new job opportunities and thus the economic graph of the country started rising. He also tried to raise the education standards of the country by introducing educational reforms. He was the first Pakistani ruler who attempted to bring in land reforms but the idea was not implemented properly. Labor, law and administrative reforms were also introduced during his regime. Ayub Khan also initiated Family Laws in the country. He planned a new city and moved the capital from Karachi to Islamabad in 1962. Everything was moving in the right direction for Ayub Khan till the start of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965.

# Field Marshal Ayub Khan Becomes President:

In March 1962, Ayub Khan suspended the Martial Law and proclaimed the Constitution of 1962. Presidential elections were held in January 1965, and Ayub Khan defeated Miss Fatima Jinnah, Jinnah’s sister, to once again become the President of Pakistan.

During his term, the “Great Decade” was celebrated, which highlighted the development plans executed during ten years of Ayub’s rule. The 1965 War was fought during Ayub’s term and Ayub Khan represented Pakistan in the subsequent Tashkent Talks.

# The Tashkent Declaration:

In September 1965, the long-standing border dispute, communal tensions, and conflict over the question of Kashmir flared up in a full-scale war between India and Pakistan. Fearing that this regional conflict within the boundaries of Indo-Pakistan would escalate into a conflict of global dimensions, the Soviet Union and the United States pressurized the U. N. to arrange an immediate ceasefire. The diplomatic efforts of the United Nations resulted in a ceasefire that came into effect on September 23, 1965.

The Soviet Union, which had remained neutral when India and Pakistan went to war in September 1965, played the broker afterwards at Tashkent. The Soviet Government formally announced on December 8 that the Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Pakistani President Muhammad Ayub Khan would meet at Tashkent on January 4, 1966. The Tashkent Conference lasted from January 4 to January 10. Largely as due to the efforts of Soviet Premier Kosygin, India and Pakistan signed a declaration that is known as the Tashkent Declaration.

The President of Pakistan and the Indian Prime Minister agreed that both sides would continue to meet at the highest and other levels on matters of direct concern to both the countries. Both the sides recognized the need to set up joint Indo-Pakistan bodies, which would report to their governments in order to decide what further steps need to be taken. In accordance to the Tashkent Declaration, talks at the ministerial level were held on March 1 and 2, 1966. Despite the fact that these talks were unsuccessful, diplomatic exchange continued throughout the spring and summer. No result was achieved out of these talks, as there was a difference of opinion over the Kashmir issue.

Euphoria had built up during the 1965 war, which had led to the development of a public perception that Pakistan was going to win the war. News of the Tashkent Declaration shocked the people who were expecting something quite different. Things further worsened as Ayub Khan refused to comment and went into seclusion instead of taking the people into confidence over the reasons for signing the agreement. Demonstrations and rioting erupted at various places throughout the country. In order to dispel the anger and misgiving of the people, Ayub Khan decided to lay the matter before the people by addressing the nation on January 14.

It was the difference over Tashkent Declaration, which eventually led to the removal of Z. A. Bhutto from Ayub’s government, who later on launched his own party, called the Pakistan People’s Party.

Despite the fact that Ayub Khan was able to satisfy the misgiving of the people, there is no doubt that the Tashkent Declaration greatly damaged the image of Ayub Khan, and became one of the many factors that led to his downfall.

## **Failure of Mohammad Ayub Khan:**

Following are the major causes of the failure of Ayub’s regime

### **Ayub’s Constitutional Dictatorship:**

In 1958 Ayub’s Martial Law had been held by a popular acclaim as it put promise to put an end to the misuse of power, corruption and political stability but when he ascended to thrown, he started thinking of life-long rule and when he gave ‘his one rule’ legal cover under the 1962 Constitution, the political parties and democratic minded people were not ready to tolerate his dictatorship for a long time and bitterly opposed the system.

### **Presidential System:**

President Ayub introduced Presidential system under 1962 Constitution because he considered strong executive to be sole panacea of all the political ills prevalent in the country at that time, but the fact was that he wanted to concentrate everything in his own hands. There was no real division of powers between the legislature and the executive. As a result the legislature became less important and executive more authoritarian.

### **Federal form of Government:**

Under 1962 Constitution Pakistan was a federation. It is the essence of a federation that all federating units must autonomous in their internal affairs and decisions but it was not the case with Ayub’s federation. It was federal only in theory while in practice the units were under the supreme control of the centre. They depended upon the centre regarding all their matters and decisions. The centre dictated them in terms.

### **Ayub’s System of indirect Election:**

Under the 1962 Constitution indirect system of election was adopted. The primary voters were to elect Basic Democrats who were to serve as an electoral college for the election of the President, members of National and Provincial Assemblies. Their strength was 80,000 equally distributed between both the wings. Later on their strength was raised to 120,000. His indirect system of election was criticized on the ground that the government and other political parties could easily force the limited number of Basic Democrats to vote for their candidates and the common had been deprived of their right of proper participation in the affairs of the state or we can say that there was very restricted franchise.

### **The 1965 War and the Tashkent Declaration:**

The 1965 War proved to be a great setback in Ayub’s career. He had adopted a war strategy according to which the East-Pakistan was left defenseless. However, the strategy remained useless during the war. The Tashkent Agreement after the 1965 war was not welcomed by the people because it provided withdrawal retreat of the troops to their respective pre-war positions. That why Z.A. Bhutto declared that what Pakistan had gained in the battlefield was lost on the diplomatic table. The core issue of the war was Kashmir dispute but it was not mentioned in the Tashkent Declaration. Hence no advancement was made for the solution of this problem in the post-Tashkent Agreement period, which created disappointment not only among masses but also in the army.

### **Economic instability and Disparity:**

After coming into power Muhammad Ayub Khan resolved to make Pakistan economically developed. But he failed to stabilize Pakistan’s economy on sound footings. Wealth began to concentrate in few hands particularly to 22 families. In 1968 Dr. Mehboob-ul-Haq a chief economist, disclosed that these 22 families controlled 67% of the entire industrial capital, 80% of banking and 97% of insurance capital. This socio-economic injustice widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The number of educated jobless people was increasing day-by-day, prices of essential commodities raised to such an extent that in 1968 there occurred serious shortage of sugar and drinking, water in Karachi. Ayub’s economic activities did not bring any change and revolution in socio-economic position of common man. Hence the people frustrated slowly and gradually of his regime.

### **Insistence on One Unit:**

In October 1955 One Unit was established to create parity between the two wings. Small provinces and regional political parties had been condemning. One Unit from the very beginning of its creation when Ayub came to power, he insisted on One Unit, which produced instance reaction among the small provinces and regional political parties of Bengal. For this purpose they started agitation against Ayub’s regime to force him to dissolve One Unit.

**Ayub’s Elective Body Disqualification Ordinance:**

President Muhammad Ayub Khan had introduced EBDO. Many politicians of both the wings of Pakistan were EBDO for misuse of power. In addition many politicians including Ayub Khan were arrested on specific grounds and charges. Ayub Khan’ aim of this ordinance was in fact to remove his political opponents from political scene. This ordinance was severely criticized by the politicians who termed it as everybody disqualification ordinance.

**Ayub’s Family Law Ordinance:**

Ayub’s regime had promulgated Family Law Ordinance under which polygamy was banned, age limit was fixed for both the sexes from 14 to 16 years, husbands were restricted to divorce and sale of daughters was banned etc. Such laws invited the wrath of orthodox religious leaders and people. Besides, his family planning programme was declared un-Islamic by the staunch Ulama. All the above policies were also bitterly criticized by religious scholars. Even some enthusiastic mullahs passed a verdict and declared him ‘Kafir’.Their response also came in the shape of agitation and demonstrations.

**Press and Publication Ordinance:**

Ayub khan had issued Press and Publication Ordinance in order to revise the existing laws pertaining to the proprietorship editorship of newspapers etc. But this ordinance severely affected the freedom of the press as it was used to propagate the idea of the Government and to defame the Opposition parties. People and the political parties were deadly opposed to this ordinance, which brought the press under tight grip.

### **Ayub’s University Ordinance:**

Under the University Ordinance of Ayub’s regime, Bachelor degree course was extended from 2 to 3 years and a method of monthly exam was introduced. The results of monthly tests were to be considered while determining the annual final results etc. These measures were rejected by the students and universities staff. Students of East-Pakistan formed a Students Action Committee to stress him to carry out their 11 Points programme. The movement gained further momentum when on 20th January 1969 a student leader was killed by police firing in Decca.

Reforms of Ayub’s khan era:

### **Constitutional Reforms:**

In Oct. 1959, the president Ayub Khan issued the Basic Democracies Order. It was a four- tier structure, in which people were involved in different levels of decision making. The four-tier structure would consist of a Village Council at the most basic level, a Sub-district council, a District Council and a Divisional Council. The local district magistrates and the divisional commissioners would act as chairmen of local bodies. Under this system 40,000 basic democrats were to be elected by the local bodies. It also consisted of an electoral college for the election of President and members of provincial and national assemblies. On the basis of this system, 1962 constitution was imposed. It enforced a presidential form of a govt., who was authorized to appoint governors of the provinces, who in turn would appoint the ministers of the cabinet. He was also given the power to veto the laws passed. Urdu and Bengali were recognized as the national language, and the principal of parity was implemented i.e. equal representation between EP and WP.  No doubt, they were aimed at greater participation of the local people for decision making but these reforms invited lots of criticism since they concentrated lots of power in the hands of the president. Moreover East Pakistanis too demanded greater share in the seats on the behalf of their greater population.

### **Industrial Reforms:**

Ayub’s advisors pressed for greater industrial development. For this purpose, he took support of foreign aid, especially that of UK, Germany and USA. Policies such as tax holiday, tax free dividend income up to Rs.3000 and large scale import of technology, setting up National Investment Trust (NIT) to use private savings for industrial development, as well as prize bond schemes, and defense saving certificates were mainly introduced to encourage private industrial sector.  Moreover, a national Union, RCD was made to encourage trade. Setting up of Oil refinery on Karachi and PMDC (Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation) to explore minerals greatly boosted the economy. Production did rise rapidly and economy improved significantly which grew by 7% in 1960’s. However, it enabled the wealth to be concentrated in few hands. It was revealed that only 22 families controlled 66% of industrial assets as well as the banks and insurance companies. And, the fact that most of them were from West Pakistan was enough to ignite the spark of anger in East Pakistan. It also made the country increasingly dependent on foreign aid.

### **Agricultural Reforms:**

Ayub Khan also introduced reforms in the field of Agricultural to increase its productivity. No-one could own land holdings less than 12.5 acres or greater than 500 acres (irrigated) or 1000 acres (unirrigated). The land in excess was confiscated by the govt. and redistributed among the landless farmers. Landowners were forced to find tenets, hence the small farms were run more efficiently than large farms. Use of HYVs, use of fertilizers produced by fertilizer industries that were recently developed, encouragement of mechanization by the way of availability of tractors and harvesters on easy installments, installation of tube wells, better irrigational facilities due to the 3 dams built as a result of the Indus Water treaty in1960 with India which ensured constant water supply for 10 years, ensure increased crop yields. These policies brought about a green revolution and so crop yields were at an all-time record. However, it lead to large scale unemployment and these facilities could not be used by poor peasants who found them too expensive. So they made rich richer and poor poorer.

### Social and Educational reforms:

Ayub embarked on an ambitious plan of social uplift of the country. Making primary education free and education up to 8th class compulsory, as well as setting up of schools, colleges, technical and vocational institutes in both wings of Pakistan helped to increase the literacy rate to some extent. Moreover, vigorous family planning programmes financed by American loans by the use of radios, cinemas, newspapers, posters and leaflets created awareness among the people regarding birth control. The policies such as prohibition of polygamy, making the registration of marriage by the govt., the acceptation of divorce by law only if the person goes through a long procedure involving the union council, were all aimed to raise the status of women.  Moreover, equal rights of inheritance were given to those grandchildren whose father/mother was not alive. However, all these efforts were in vain as they were unable to touch the surface as they were not enforced with an iron will, nor a check was kept on the workings of the reforms. Family planning programmes too were not received with expected enthusiasm as they were opposed on religious as well as traditional grounds.

**Why did Ayub Khan fall from power?**

Class difference created by Ayub Khan’s economic policies eventually led to his downfall. The creation of new wealth was concentrated in few hands. It was revealed that only 22 families controlled 66% of the industrial assets as well as 80% of the banking and insurance companies.  Unsurprisingly, the fact that most of these families were located in WP angered EP. So a small group of wealthy elite class had almost complete control of Pakistan’s wealth. Such economic drawbacks resulted in Ayub’s resignation.

Secondly, the celebration of Decade of development also served as an important reason for Ayub’s downfall. It provided opportunity for various disgruntled elements to rise against Ayub. Widespread protest and riots led to major political crisis for Ayub, not only students protest erupted in WP in Oct 1968, but also his visit to Peshawar was marred with assassination. This agitation in both the wings paved the way for his resignation.

Thirdly, opposition by political parties and resignation of Basic democrats led to his downfall. In Jan 1969, eight opposition parties united to form Democratic Action Committee, who demanded proper election, lifting up of emergency powers and greater provincial autonomy for EP. Though, Ayub did made attempts of negotiation and pacifying them, but he had done too little, too late. Soon, large number of Basic democrats resigned and so it was impossible to replace them. Finally, on 25 March 1969, he resigned.