

The first time military was directly involved in politics of the country was when Ayub Khan, a serving Commander-in-Chief, was inducted into Muhammad Ali Bogra's Federal Cabinet in 1954, and was given the portfolio of Defense. As Commander-in-Chief and Defense Minister, Ayub Khan played a key role in negotiations concerning Pakistan's entry into United States' sponsored military alliances, C. E. N. T. O. and S. E. A. T. O. On October 7, 1958, Iskander Mirza enforced the first Martial Law in Pakistan with the help of Ayub Khan. Ayub Khan was designated as the Chief Martial Law Administrator. However, the two leaders couldn't work together for long. Ayub Khan snatched away Mirza's powers and assumed charge as the President of Pakistan, in addition to his role as Chief Martial Law Administrator. Later on he 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.

On June 8, 1962, Martial Law was lifted from Pakistan and the new Constitution was introduced. According to this new Constitution, Presidential form of government and the principle of Basic Democracy were introduced. The imposition of the Constitution made no change in the powers of Ayub Khan and he remained President even under the new setup. Presidential elections were held in 1965. The Combined Opposition Party nominated Fatima Jinnah as their candidate in the election but Ayub Khan managed to sweep the polls. His critics consider rigging as the chief cause of his victory as they believe that Fatima Jinnah secured fewer votes than her popularity, which was quite visible during her public meetings before the election. However, another factor considered for her defeat was that the franchise was limited in the election. Masses only had a chance to turn up in the public meetings but had no right to vote.

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.

Every thing was moving in the right direction for Ayub Khan till the start of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1965. The performance of the Pakistani army was good but the war caused a rapid decline of the country's economy. He is also criticized his role at the Tashkent Declaration. Many believe that he negated the victory on the battlefield with a defeat at the negotiating table. His right-hand man, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, also turned against him and launched his own party, the Pakistan Peoples Party, with the aim to remove Ayub from power. The Awami League under Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rahman started propagating his rule as pro West Pakistan and claimed that his policies had snatched away the Bengali's rights. The rest of the political parties formed an alliance, the Democratic Action Committee, with a one-point agenda, i.e. the removal of Ayub Khan's government.

In addition, Ayub's policies of concentrating political power in his own hands, his control over the press and media, imposing state of emergency in the country, and his interference in religion were also responsible for his downfall. Adding insult to injury, Ayub Khan decided to celebrate a decade of his rule in 1968 and made exaggerated claims about the development in the country.

By the end of 1968, the public resentment against the Ayub's regime touched a boiling point and an anti-Ayub movement was launched by the urban-middle class; including students, teachers, lawyers, doctors, and engineers. The Joint Labor Council called for a labor strike. Demonstrations and agitation swept the whole country. Law and order broke down and Ayub was left with no other option but to step down.

On March 25, 1969, he resigned and handed over the power to the Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan Army, General Muhammad Yahya Khan.