

The Role of Bureaucracy in Pakistan during the Ayub Regime

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Abstract

The focus of this research is on the Pakistan's bureaucratic structure and its workings during the Ayub Khan's regime in Pakistan. Authors explore the political system during the Ayub Khan Regime and point out that this system was not really political but that was bureaucratic in its nature where people have least freedom of speech.

Keywords: Bureaucracy, Role, Regime

The federalism is a government by the people for the people themselves. This implies that the democracy is not just something enshrined in a paper constitution. All the trappings of democracy may be present. There must be freedom of speech. If the press and the media are controlled by a non democratic force it will not be genuine democracy. The successful federation is one which finds a way through mutual satisfaction and able to build up nation, When this has been done it will be virtually secure against internal disruption. But instead of democracy Ayub argued that system with a central focus of power is essential for national integration. Instead of creating power he concentrated power,¹ which meant that in spite of his efforts at a centralization process, the real capabilities of government did not increase such during the decade. By its nature undemocratic, the regime was intolerant of any criticism. The bureaucracy and Basic Democracies was a handle for the political exploitation of the masses to perpetuate General Ayub in power and he gave all the protection to the vested interest for their economic exploitation. It may be said that during Ayub period the political system of Pakistan was in many ways not political but bureaucratic. The state elite which came to rule Pakistan primarily came from the top echelons of the military and the bureaucracy with a collaborative relationship with a new industrial and commercial class and gradually with the landed gentry in West Pakistan. It was mainly composed of the Punjabis, the Muhajirs and the Pushtuns². The Sindhis, the Baluchis and the Bengalis were greatly under represented.

According to Herbert Feldman,

“Sixty percent of the army consisted of the Punjabis, 35 percent were Pushtuns and other constituted the remaining 5 percent.”³

Table No. 1

Ethnic Origins of the Top Military Elite

	Number	Percent
Punjabi	17	35.4
Pushtuns	19	39.4
Muhajirs	11	23.0
Sindhis	0	0
Baluchis	0	0
Bengalis	1	2.0
Total	48	100

Source: Tahir Amin (1988), Ethno National Movements of Pakistan, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad, P.82.

Table No. 2

East Pakistan's Representation in Different Branches of The Armed Forces

The Army		Percentage
I	Officers	5.0
Ii	Junior Commissioned Rank	7.4
Iii	Other ranks	7.5
The Air Force		
I	Officers	16.0
Ii	Warrant Officers	17.0
Iii	Other Ranks	30.0
The Nevy		
	Officers	10.0
	Branch Officers	5.0
	Chief Petty Officers	10.4
	Petty Officers	17.3
	Loading se men and below	28.8

Sources: Hassan Askari Rizavi, The Military and Politics in Pakistan, Progressive Publishers, Lahore ,1974, P. 177.

The Ayub regime did not adopt any special policy to make the military more nationally representative,⁴ though by 1958 Bengali demands for participation in the military had become both numerous and vociferous. Bengali demands ranged from shifting of the navel head quarters to East Pakistan to the raising of an autonomous Bengali paramilitary for East Pakistan's defense. No quota system was instituted to rectify the regional recruitment disparity The Army, Navy and Air Force commands were firmly convinced that the Bengalis could not meet the physical standards required of all entrants of the armed forces Bengalis were generally perceived by the Punjabis and the Pathans as too weak and too soft to survive military training. Accordin to a remark by a Punjabi general they were not meant to be soldiers, moreover it was asserted that their very nature made them unfit for war like activities.⁵ The change in elite structure brought about by the military regime served to lesson Bengali participation in policy making roles. On the whole military recruiters just ignored the Bengalis. Bengali membership in the military services led Mujibur Rahman during the 1970 election campaign to suggest that East Pakistan would contribute 6 % of its taxes to the maintenance of the Pakistan Military.”⁶

The Bengalis were greatly underrepresented in the Central Civilian Services (CSP). Apart from the disparity in Armed forces East Pakistanis demanded parity in the Civil Service It was due to the reason that East Pakistanis had now realized the importance and influence of the civil servants in the decision making process in Pakistan' Their representation in (CSP) was .less than West Pakistan as the following table indicates.

Table no. 3

East and West Pakistan's Representation in CSP

	Total No. of Officers	West Pakistan		East Pakistan	
		No	%of total	No	%of total
1959	24	12	50.0	12	50.0
1960	31	19	67.7	10	32.3
1961	27	17	63.0	10	37.0
1962	27	15	55.3	12	44.5
1963	31	18	58.1	13	41.9
1964	33	19	57.8	14	42.2
1965	30	15	50.	15	50.0
1966	30	16	53.4	14	46.6

1967	30	17	56.7	13	43.3
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Source: Raunaq Jehan, Pakistan Failure in National Integration, Columbia University Press, USA, 1972, P. 107.

Bengalis participation in the central policy making institutions, commissions of inquiry, the central secretariat and public cooperation was marginal. Out of 280 members of the commissions of inquiry, only 75 were from East Pakistan that is only 27 percent.⁷

Table No. 4

East and West Pakistan's Representation in Class 1 Officers in Some Divisions in 1969.

Division of CSP	East Pakistan (Number)	(Percentage)	West Pakistan (Number)	(Percent)
Economic Affairs	20	44.0	29	56.0
Commerce	20	33.0	41	67.0
Finance	12	30.	30	70.0
Agriculture	6	17.	28	83.0
Industries	10	32.0	21	68.0
Cabinet division	4	16.0	22	84.0
Establishment Division	11	30.0	25	70.0
Planning, information & Broad casting	6	26.0	17	74.0
Labour and social welfare	5	33.0	10	67.0
Defence	5	13.0	31	87.0

Source: Dr. Khawaja Alqama, Bengali Elites Perception of Pakistan, The Road to Disillusionment, Uneven Development or Ethnicity? 1995, P. 190.

This table clearly indicates that the East Pakistanis were under represented in some of the key divisions associated with economic policy making. Particularly at the secretary level, all, the officers until 1969 were from West Pakistan. The civil services play a decisive role in determining economic policies and the military monopolized the formulation of defense policies.⁸ The location of administrative authorities in West Pakistan meant a relief to the investors, as they would need less time for approaching the government and could also manipulate more pressures as compared to their counter part in East Pakistan.

Legally Pakistan remained a federal state, but in reality decision making was an exclusive function of the President and his chosen advisors. Provincial autonomy, for all intents and purposes, was non existent. No efforts were made to curtail the informal but extremely influential roles of the military and the civilian bureaucracy.⁹ Infact, the coup led by Ayub Khan expanded the role of military.¹⁰

The people of East Pakistan demanded parity in the Civil Service. They were convinced that economic disparity could not be corrected unless a greater number of East Pakistanis were placed in senior positions in Secretariat.¹¹ The Bengali position in the civil service even in 1964 was that there were only two Bengali officers who held the rank of acting secretaries,¹² West Pakistan not only hosted the central government but also held nearly 90 percent of it position.¹³

East Pakistanis openly expressed their bitterness by saying that West Pakistan was ruling East Pakistan. Ayub regime made some efforts to increase East Pakistani participation in the civil bureaucracy.¹¹ Administrative autonomy and quota system in the selection of civil servants was revised to benefit East Pakistan. Twenty percent of the vacancies were filled on the basis of merit, while the remaining eighty percent were divided equally between East and West Pakistan.¹⁴ The government started to correct the disparities in the administrative services by posting East Pakistan's civil servants in their province and by increasing their number in the civil service of Pakistan. In 1969 for the first time most of the key positions in the province were given to the East Pakistanis, so that the Bengalis might have a sense of self-government. It may be said that the Bengali demand was not merely for more representation at the center but for a greater decentralization of power to make the East wing administratively autonomous. By 1966 provincial secretariat and district and sub divisional offices were monopolized by Bengalis.

The top positions including those of the Finance Ministry which were important for the allocation of resources were occupied exclusively by West Pakistani civil servants.¹⁵ Bengalis were marginally represented in the entrepreneurial class, policy making and political support groups during the Ayub period. The number of college and university students increased fivefold between 1947-1966.¹⁶ It was generally felt by Bengali Intelligentsia that their province was deprived of the advantages which it could have gained under a parliamentary form by virtue of its population majority. This bitterness helped in intensifying the Awami League's struggle for maximum autonomy.

The bureaucracy held a place of higher consideration. Bureaucracy dealt with the public in an arrogant and whimsical manner, the higher ranking bureaucrats had awarded undeserved

advantages to the family of the President and other businessmen, many of them had become rich at the cost of the public that had undermined the electoral process and had satisfied Ayub's political advisors.¹⁷

It is also important to note that regional parties became dominant in the Easter wing although Awami League, National Awami Party and Nizam-e-Islam tried to form national alliance.¹⁸ The growing inability to form a national party or a national coalition was an indicator of the problems in the federation of Pakistan. So in the absence of effective political articulation by the regional counter elite, the bureaucracy seized defacto political power. Civil bureaucracy had played a decisive role in the policy formulation and execution.¹⁹ It readily filled the vacuum created by the lack of strong non parochial leadership and in the process politicised itself and discarded the politicians as superfluous and as hindrances to modernization.²⁰ It is in this context the importance of the civil- military bureaucracy must be assessed, Bureaucracy not only served as the primary executive branch of government, but in the absence of countervailing institution as the primary legislative branch as well. The Ayub regime also utilized civil servants for winning elections of the provincial and National Assemblies. In this way, the CSP had developed into a ruling institution and opposition wanted it disbanded.²¹ It had little patience with the opponents of the system. The military-bureaucratic elite frequently used extreme authoritarian measures to quell any opposition to its policies.²² They ruled Pakistan for a decade through a highly centralized administration in which they were the powerful actors

The federal government has a natural tendency to attract business and commerce, banking and industry. In Pakistan there had been much influx of refugee entrepreneurship and capital from India to West than to East Pakistan. The advantage of hosting the federal government was great in Pakistan in view of the wide control exercised by the government over the economic life of the country. Particularly important were the control on industrial enterprise and the exchange control system which permeated the economy of this export oriented country, heavily dependent on imports for consumer needs and for the raw materials and capital goods required by most procedures. Tax concessions had been granted to those businesses which met federal specifications of desirable economic activities. Resources collected, internally by means of taxes, loans and exchange control and externally by foreign aid agencies, had been given out as long or said at prices much below their scarcity value to domestic entrepreneurs. The procedure for the operation of most of these functions had been clumsy and bureaucratic.

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