

## Pakistan People's Party's Contribution in the Political Setup of Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

*Pakistan has faced a very unstable political history. Time and again, military dictators have overthrown civilian governments and have derailed the democratic political setup in the country. A glimpse at the history shows that for more than three decades, Pakistan has been ruled under military dictatorship. Against this backdrop, there have been a very few democratic parties that have succeeded to complete their democratic tenures in the country. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) is one such party that has rendered its services to the political setup of Pakistan since the party's inception in 1967. As a matter of fact, it was only after the General Elections of 2008 that a democratically-elected government of the Pakistan People's Party successfully completed its five-year term for the first time in history of the country, which is a commendable achievement for any political party in Pakistan. In this paper, an overview and analysis of the contribution of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in the political set up of Pakistan is presented.*

### INTRODUCTION

Ever since its creation, Pakistan has had a tumultuous political history. Although the country was founded on democratic principles, over half of the 68 years of its existence, the country has remained under powerful military dictatorships, and democratic forces have struggled to complete their democratic tenures. As a matter of fact, it was only after the General Elections of 2008 that a democratically-elected government successfully completed its five-year term. Since the beginning, many big and small political parties emerged on the political scenario of Pakistan who struggled to uphold democracy in the country. This paper, however, analyzes the contributions of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in the political set up of Pakistan.

### THE CONCEPT OF A POLITICAL PARTY

Political divisions have always been a part of human societies. Not only this, but social conflict is intrinsic to every society in the world. The presence of a political party is essential for any country in order to organize and mobilize people's political will with regards to the electoral processes<sup>1</sup>. By definition, a political party is an organization or stable political association, which, based on a particular ideology supported by its members and followers, aims to eventually exercise power over a nation to impose and develop its political agenda. Basically, a political party is a key element in making and organizing the political life of a country because it is responsible for recruiting candidates in a timely fashion to occupy government positions or legislative seats, organizing legislative work, articulating and aggregating preferences and dissenting citizens. Each political party holds an ideology that gives conceptual clarity and

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acts as a sort of guide for its political action, as it is composed of the following elements: doctrine (set of beliefs that are taken as valid), theories (systematized, comprehensive and explanatory), platform (grouping of major political, social and economic problems), programs (the plans for addressing those problems identified in the platform) and slogans (those slogans or characteristic slogans of the party). Political parties are organizations that are characterized by their uniqueness, personnel base and constitutional significance<sup>2</sup>.

They are created with the aim of contributing to a democratic form for the determination of policy and national training, and orientation of the will of citizens. Moreover, they are responsible to promote their participation in the representative institutions by formulating programs, presentation and support of candidates in the respective elections, and making other necessary arrangements for the fulfillment of these purposes. Their main legitimate purpose, however, is to obtain power through popular support expressed at the polls.

Political parties play an essential part in facilitating the political participation of the masses. Their existence derives from the exercise of freedom of association. The party members are entitled to vote and are eligible for all positions through voting. The parties are entitled to getting financial help from the state, to use the means of public communication and build coalitions or electoral groupings.

Political parties are classified by the interests of the social class they serve in. Their other aspects are secondary. Therefore, there cannot be two parties to defend two social classes at the same time because their interests are antagonistic.

Some of the most important rights of a political party include the following:

- Participation in the development and monitoring of the electoral process;
- Enjoying the guarantees to freely pursue their activities;
- Enjoying the privileges and receiving public funding in accordance with the law;
- Participation in general elections;
- Participation in state and municipal elections<sup>3</sup>

## **THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY**

The word democracy is one of the most significant and relevant political lexicons today. It is a form of government in which the power is exercised by the people, through legitimate mechanisms of participation in political decision making<sup>4</sup>.

The head of citizens in a democracy is the one who exercises executive power, i.e. the prime minister. However, other executives at regional or local level, as

well as legislative positions, are also attributed democratically through voting. In this sense, democracy is the rule of the majority, but without neglecting the rights of individuals and minorities.

Moreover, democracy can be understood as a political doctrine and a way of life in the society which upholds the values of respect for human rights, as enshrined by the United Nations Organization, the protection of civil liberties and individual rights, and equal opportunities in terms of participation in political, economic and cultural aspects of the society. Democracy has several types. For instance, direct democracy, which is also called a pure democracy. It exists when there are same citizens without intermediary representatives, who by voting directly, are involved in making political decisions. Direct democracy is the original model of democracy practiced by the Athenians in the past. Today, however, it is rare to find such type of democracy. Switzerland, for example, is a country that currently practices a direct democracy, though this coexists with a representative system. Next is representative democracy, also called indirect democracy, which is the one in which citizens exercise political power through their representatives, elected by voting in free and fair elections<sup>5</sup>. Thus, the exercise of state powers and decision making should express the political will that citizens have borne through their leaders. Probably the representative democracy system is most widely practiced in the world, including Pakistan.

The last type of democracy is called participatory democracy. It is a model of political organization that gives citizens a greater, more active and more direct intervention capacity and influence in making public decisions. In a participatory democracy, citizens are actively incorporated in the monitoring and enforcement of public policies, ensuring that citizens are organized and prepared to propose initiatives or to speak out for or against a measure and their role is not limited within the democratic system by voting. Democracy in Venezuela, for example, calls itself participatory<sup>6</sup>.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY**

Launched on November 30-December 01, 1967 during a founding convention held in Lahore, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) became the biggest Democratic Party in Pakistan. The chairmanship of the party was assumed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who became a very popular political leader due to his charismatic personality and unprecedented rhetoric. The party came into being with the goal of establishing an egalitarian democracy in Pakistan. However, what made it unique was the party's proposal of applying socialist ideas to realize economic and social justice. Moreover, the establishment of this Democratic Party was a welcoming change on the political scenario of Pakistan, which had been constantly struggling with strict military dictatorship<sup>7</sup>. PPP largely appealed to the peasant class because one of the aims of the party was to abolish the rampant feudal system from the country in order to emancipate the working class from exploitation at the hands of the feudal lords. Thus, the Party

promised to protect people's rights through the establishment of socialist principles<sup>8</sup>.

### **MILITARY DICTATORSHIP IN PAKISTAN**

Dictatorship is a form of government that is primarily characterized by the lack of democratic accountability in governance. In the last century, dictatorships have generally emerged in times of political and economic crises to deal with grassroots revolutionary movements that pose a threat to the interests of the privileged classes. It is the government that is exercised outside the constitutive laws of a country. Dictatorships are usually exercised by the military over civilians. By accessing the power, either by democratic means or through a coup, the dictator usually forms a de facto government where there is no separation of powers, and prevents the opposition to take over the government by institutional means (elections are suspended and political parties are banned, for example). Over time, dictatorships became predominantly military dictatorships where the dictator is sustained by military force that is responsible for the repression of dissidents and that imposes terror to prevent dissent. One can also speak of constitutional dictatorship when, under the apparent respect for the Constitution, a dictator violates the law to exercise power.

Across the globe, dictatorship is considered the most undesirable form of government. Sadly, Pakistan faced military dictatorships for several decades. For instance, military coups in Pakistan started in the year 1958 and continued till 1971. Thereafter, Pakistan faced its second military rule from 1977 to 1988 and then again from 1999 to 2008.<sup>9</sup>

### **THE NEED FOR DEMOCRACY IN PAKISTAN AND THE EMERGENCE OF PPP**

As mentioned above, Pakistan faced long periods of military rule in the country; hence the dire need for a strong democratic setup was felt by the masses. In 1966, after General Ayub Khan failed to negotiate during the Tashkent Declaration, differences took place between him and Z. A. Bhutto. As a result, Ayub Khan removed Bhutto from the government. It was due to this event that Z. A. Bhutto decided to form his very own democratic party and he became determined to oust the military rulers from the country. To achieve this, a political organization and political platform was necessary. Thus, after waiting for a year, he formed his own political party. In this way, the Pakistan People's Party came into being. Later on, it went on to become the largest and the most influential political party of Pakistan with various contributions towards the political setup of the country<sup>10</sup>.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PPP IN THE POLITICAL SETUP OF PAKISTAN**

As mentioned earlier, the PPP was launched at a time when the country was undergoing a political crisis, as the imposition of military rule was taking its toll

on the overall governance in the country. More importantly, there was no freedom of expression and the voice of the people was being suppressed. During this time, Z. A. Bhutto rose as a charismatic leader and introduced the true spirit of democracy in the nation. The basic principles of PPP were the following:

- Islam is our Faith
- Democracy is our politics
- Socialism is our Economy
- All Power to the People.

The most appealing principle that invoked the masses was the party promise to give all the power to the people. In addition, the party promised the masses to eliminate the system of feudalism in Pakistan which had exploited the peasant class for decades. PPP introduced the concept of a socialist economy in Pakistan<sup>11</sup>. This was different from the original political and philosophical concept of socialism as developed by Karl Marx because as against the original socialist system, the one introduced by Z A Bhutto was to be called “Islamic Socialism.” This was designed in accordance with the religio-cultural traditions of the Pakistani society. Although the philosophy of the party appealed particularly to the peasant class, the masses enthusiastically welcomed the party at large as everyone was fed up of the concept of dictatorship. As a result, a mass uprising broke out in Pakistan in opposition to the dictatorship of Ayub Khan. PPP played a major role in mobilizing people to meet democratic goals in the country and bring back all the power to the people. After receiving vehement pressure from the masses, Gen. Ayub resigned from his post in March 1969, paving way for an interim government which announced general elections to take place in the month of December, 1970.<sup>12</sup>

This was, indeed, a turning point in the history of Pakistan, as after years of one-man rule there was hope for democracy to revive in Pakistan. Hence, the Pakistan People's Party contested in the elections of 1970 with full fervor. Together with the principle of “all power to the people”, what is noteworthy here is the slogan which the party chose for its electioneering campaign, which said, “Roti, KapraaurMakan” (bread, clothing and shelter). An electioneering campaign of this scale was unprecedented in the political history of Pakistan. PPP's dynamic leadership and strong message resulted in the party's victory in the polls where, out of a total of 300 seats allocated for both East and West Pakistan, it won 81 out of 138 seats of West Pakistan in the National Assembly and got a majority in the legislative assemblies of Sindh and Punjab. Thus, after the Awami League that won majority of the seats in the Eastern wing of the country, the people's party emerged as the second largest party of Pakistan as a result of these elections,<sup>13</sup>.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS OF THE PPP'S GOVERNMENTS**

Despite some shortcomings in its governance throughout its different tenures, the PPP had many achievements also that significantly contributed to the overall political progress in the country. Pakistan People's Party also has the credit of being the only and the very first political party to have successfully completed its five-year tenure, i.e. from 2008 to 2013. Presented below are some of the achievements of the Pakistan People's Party during different tenures in which it served the country.

1971 to 1977:

After coming to power on December 20, 1971 and staying in power till July 5, 1977, the government of Pakistan People's Party significantly contributed to the socio-economic development of the country. The most significant of its contributions towards the political progress of the country was to introduce a new Constitution to Pakistan. Moreover, as mentioned before, the PPP introduced some important economic reforms to boost the economy of Pakistan. It was, indeed, Z. A. Bhutto's efforts and progressive thinking that led to the creation of Pakistan's first Steel Mill, together with the construction of the first ever hydro-electric dam built on the Indus River at Tarbela. Furthermore, it was PPP's efforts that made the Pakistan's industrial sector, particularly sugar, fertilizer and cement industry, self sufficient<sup>14</sup>.

In addition, Z. A. Bhutto introduced the system of nationalization of banks and life insurance companies. By following his policy of nationalization, the country was benefitted in many ways. However, the policy also posed problems for the country. As for the advantages, after the introduction of this policy, the government ensured that wealth was equitably distributed. This was because prior to nationalization, the industries were controlled by a few families who had control over a major portion of national wealth. Moreover, this brought an end to the monopoly of a few capitalists who had dominated market supply in Pakistan. Through the policy of nationalization of banks, the government was also able to keep a check on smuggling and hoarding<sup>15</sup>. Also, a fair distribution of credit was enabled and SMEs were given credit facilities by banks, which was not possible before. Although the policy of nationalization introduced by PPP was advantageous for Pakistan's economy in many ways, it also had certain disadvantages. For instance, there was an increase in corruption as the nationalized industrial units were controlled by government officials. As a result, the efficiency of these units was considerably reduced. Also, the nationalization policy of the PPP caused a fall in production, because people showed negligence in managing those production units.

Some of the industries also suffered great losses and were declared sick industries. In addition, Pakistan People's Party government's decision of nationalizing various industries discouraged private sector which led to a

decreased investment in the country. Even in the 8<sup>th</sup> five-year plan of the government to boost economy in which the government decided to increase private investment, the target could not be met due to the fear of nationalization<sup>16</sup>.

Z. A. Bhutto also initiated Pakistan's Nuclear Program. This program was advantageous in many ways as it provided the power of deterrence to the state of Pakistan against its enemies. The potential onslaught of India on Pakistan was a great threat to the country; hence it was necessary to acquire nuclear power to provide security to the country. It also projected Pakistan on the international political scenario as a powerful country, as a country with nuclear power is feared and respected in the international circle. It also gives security to the country as no one wants to wage war with a nuclear power for the fear of nuclear onslaught, as it happened in the case of Hiroshima.

Being a nuclear power also provided Pakistan with a better position to negotiate in the international circle. It was the PPP that first introduced the TheKahuta Project for making Nuclear Bomb. Thus, it can be said that this initiative, taken by the Pakistan People's Party, was a big achievement for Pakistan. However, Pakistan's nuclear program also posed various serious problems. Apart from the problems inherent to nuclear technology, such as radioactive waste and nuclear accidents, the extremely high cost of acquiring nuclear weapons was a big problem. For a country like Pakistan, where more than half of the population lives in sheer poverty, investing too much of capital on nuclear weaponry was a move not appreciated by many. Therefore, on one hand, PPP contributed towards this important development in the country, at the same time it led to unnecessary investment of capital in maintaining the technology in a country which was already inflicted with poverty and had been deeply indebted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).<sup>17</sup>

In 1972, PPP also introduced Land Reforms after which individual holding was slashed to 150 acres of irrigated land or 300 acres of un-irrigated land. The PPP regime further reduced the holding in 1977 to 200 acres of un-irrigated land and 100 acres of irrigated land. Additionally, PPP government also took Pakistan to a new position in the Islamic world by arranging the Islamic Summit in Lahore that projected Pakistan as the biggest Islamic country of the world. In addition, the PPP regime made considerable improvements in various other areas. For instance, it was under its regime that education was made free of cost up to secondary level; the government provided free books to students; the unemployed graduates were given allowances and the science graduates were given two increments in their salaries. Moreover, many government employees, who had not been made permanent and were serving on contracts for over 5 to 15 years, were made permanent employees of their respective institutions. Also, part-time government employees were made full-time employees. Respecting the labor laws widely practiced across the globe, the PPP government made First

May a public holiday. These were some of the significant developmental works that the PPP government performed during its first time in office<sup>18</sup>.

1977 was the last year of PPP in the parliament as on July 4, 1977, the Pakistani military once again launched a coup and overthrew the democratic setup. An operation codenamed Fair Play was executed by the then Chief of Army Staff, General Zia-ul-Haq along with the support of Chairman Joint chiefs, Admiral Muhammad Sharif. In a coup d'état, Z A Bhutto's regime was toppled, the assemblies were dissolved, the Constitution of Pakistan was suspended and a Martial Law was imposed once again, thus derailed democracy in the country. As a result, a modern, yet strict form of conservatism was introduced by Gen. Zia, which promoted religious and nationalistic programs in the country. In 1979, following a controversial death sentence given to Z. A. Bhutto, his daughter Benazir Bhutto was elected as the chairperson of the People's Party in 1982. Afterwards, a campaign to restore democracy in Pakistan was initiated by the PPP, which is known as one of the greatest non-violent democratic movements in history against the ruthless one-man rule imposed by Gen. Zia-ul-Haq<sup>19</sup>.

The party fought for democracy in the country for twelve long years, facing various hurdles from the unpopular military regime. After constantly striving for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan, the PPP once again came to power by winning the 1988 parliamentary elections and Benazir Bhutto, aged 35 at that time, became the youngest Prime Minister of Pakistan<sup>20</sup>.

This was yet another major contribution from PPP to the political setup of Pakistan as for the very first time, a female was chosen as the Head of the State of an Islamic country. Like her father, Benazir Bhutto also turned out to be a charismatic leader. During Benazir Bhutto's tenure of two years, she introduced a number of significant policies, including, human rights, particularly women's and children's rights, protection of the weak from the strong, focusing on women, children and minorities, she worked on female literacy and encouraged non-governmental organizations to promote and work for women's and child rights. Her government also significantly worked towards the improvement of education. However, there were some problem areas in her government too; therefore, in 1990 the government of PPP was dismissed by the then President of the State, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, under the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment due to economic downturn and issues regarding nationalization and national security. When reelelections took place, the PPP for the first time in its political history boycotted the elections and served as the leading opposition party. Listed below are some of the significant achievements of the PPP government during the tenure of Benazir<sup>21</sup>.



1988-1990:

Benazir Bhutto introduced some important Land Reforms during her tenure. These included the following<sup>22</sup>:

- The government distributed 35000 acres of land among peasants who did not own any lands. Under the new policy, 12.5 acres of land was allocated to each farmer. This enraged landlords and they filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the reforms due to which the newly introduced reforms were stopped for a temporary period of time.
- Under Zia's ruthless regime, more than 500 political workers had to bear severe economic crisis. After the restoration of democracy, these political workers were allotted small residential plots on official rates.
- The government also took measures to provide housing facilities to homeless people in all big cities. Under this policy, the government announced to build some 2000 small houses. In Karachi, the economic hub of Pakistan where people from all corners of the country come for employment, the government of PPP built one thousand homes for homeless people at a very nominal price (Rs.30, 000) which was to be paid over easy instalments.
- The PPP government also introduced some labour reforms. Under these reforms, trade union activities, which were banned by the military setup, were revived. Moreover, some 40,000 sacked workers, earlier working in the industrial sector, were reinstated. The government also increased labour wages and labourers were also given a share in the income of their organizations. Furthermore, the government decided to build labour colonies in each industrial city and pension rights were also introduced for labourers after their retirement.
- In the area of health, the government of PPP decided to introduce government dispensaries in every Union Council. Moreover, the government also abolished admission and bed fee in hospitals which Zia-ul-Haq had introduced under his regime.
- In the educational sector, the PPP government increased the education budget for the first time in Pakistan's history. The budget was increased both in 1989-90's and then again in 1990-91's budget. Additionally, in order to improve the standard of education in Pakistan, some 50,000 teachers were employed by the government and education up to the 8th standard was made compulsory.
- The government also worked significantly towards improving the youth policy. To this end, the government of PPP lifted the ban on the formation of student unions. A ministry of youth affairs was established to look after the problems of youth in Pakistan. This was the first time it happened in Pakistan. Besides, some 80,000 literacy centres were established throughout the country.
- In terms of Women Affairs, the government of PPP established A Ministry of Women Affairs for the very first time in the political history of Pakistan.

The government also established a Women Bank and thousands of females were given the opportunity to set up their own businesses.

- The PPP government worked for the enhancement of power and water sector of the country and towards this end, the government achieved the goal of supplying electricity to some four thousand villages in Pakistan, thus, setting up a record. The government also encouraged the private sector to invest in the electricity generation industry. Moreover, it was during PPP's second regime that the Ghazi Brotha and Neelum Jhelum projects, which were to produce 1 thousand Mega Watts of power, were started. Finally, in order to overcome energy crisis in the country, the PPP government signed an agreement with China to establish a 300-Mega Watt nuclear Power Plant in Pakistan.
- In the defence sector, the PPP government also made considerable progress. For instance, the government ordered to hand over two Frigates to the Pakistan Navy and production of indigenous aircraft was also started in Pakistan. Moreover, some sixty F-16 planes were acquired by the Pakistan Air Force and new, high-tech radar systems were installed.
- The PPP regime worked towards the freedom of expression and freedom of press. After facing a very tough time under military rule where the press was not allowed to speak against the military regime and freedom of expression was curbed, the democratic government introduced laws to lift censorship imposed on media. Under the military rule, many outspoken journalists were terminated from their jobs. After the restoration of democracy and working in accordance with democratic principles, all such journalists were reinstated. Moreover, earlier, journalists were required to obtain a no objection certificate (NoC) from the government if they were to travel abroad. However, PPP abolished this rule after assuming office.
- In terms of religious services, the PPP introduced a new *Hajj* Policy and increased the number of pilgrims who could perform *Hajj*.

Apart from the above mentioned services that the PPP regime rendered during its second tenure, there were other miscellaneous services that the government performed. For instance, under PPP's second regime, Pakistan joined the Common Wealth again. In terms of foreign relations, Pakistan's relations with India, which remained hostile in the past, were normalized and an agreement was signed between the two countries regarding no attack on nuclear installations. The government also extended the Karachi Steel Mills after getting a \$ 1 billion loan approved from Russian, amidst many other services<sup>23</sup>.

Following the elections of 1993, the PPP returned to power by plurality. However, this time, some internal factions had developed within the party. There were three factions within the party, the Bhuttoists, the Parliamentarians, and the Sherpaoists. The most influential of them was the Bhuttoists faction. An internal rift was created within the party when Benazir's policies were being criticized by her brother, Murtaza Bhutto. After the mysterious death of Murtaza Bhutto in

1996, the party's own elected president, Farooq Leghari dismissed the PPP government. Some of the policies that the third PPP regime introduced are as follows<sup>24</sup>:

1993-96:

- In the development sector, the third regime of PPP constructed some 21,000 primary schools; the government provided electricity to some 18,000 villages across Pakistan and some 700,000 new telephone connections were allotted. The government also built an Airport at Gwadar as well as Sehwan Sharif, and in order to provide clean drinking water to the residents of Mehran –a coastal region – Akra Dam was constructed. The government also started work on the port of Ketti Bandar.
- In terms of Pakistan's foreign policy, the PPP government adopted a unanimous resolution to resolve the issue of Kashmir at the OIC Summit at Casablanca, as per UN resolutions. The government also adopted the Brown Amendment under which military equipment and hardware stuck up in the US due to Pressler Law were partially released.
- In the defence sector, the PPP bought Agosta submarines for the Pakistan Navy and also bought tanks for the Army.
- In the energy sector, the government vowed to bring an end to electricity load shedding by involving the private sector in the generation of power through a uniform policy. Under the government, HUBCO power plant was completed as the first private-sector power plant in Pakistan.
- In terms of communication, the government made considerable achievements as well. For instance, optic fiber was laid alongside river Indus' right bank. Moreover, satellite dish, FM radio, digital paper and cellular-phone technology were promoted.
- The PPP also extensively worked towards the eradication of polio from Pakistan by introducing a countrywide Polio Vaccination Programme. During PPP's three-year regime, almost cent percent children under five years of age were vaccinated against Polio.
- Under PPP's regime, electoral reforms bill was adopted in the northern areas for the first time and people in those areas were given right to vote. Thus, the party upheld its democratic principles.
- PPP government established Women Police Stations and appointed women judges in the superior judiciary.
- Complete Press Freedom was ensured and sixth Wage Board award for print journalists was announced by the government.
- In the financial sector, cabinet members were forbidden to take loans from Pakistani banks for the first time in history. The PPP government also gave complete autonomy to the State Bank of Pakistan and a one billion dollar debt retired under the regime for the first time. The Tax revenue was raised from 7.2 per cent to 14. 1 per cent as of 1995-96 and economic growth was raised to 5.2 % in 1995- 96.

- The PPP government also introduced Anti-Narcotics policy under which major drug barons were banished. Moreover, capital punishment and property confiscation introduced in the law to punish drug pushers.

2008 to 2013:

After the ousting of the Nawaz Sharif government in 1999 by the military under General Pervez Musharraf, a long period of one-man rule was yet again imposed in Pakistan. In the backdrop of political crisis, the PPP had to undergo yet another big tragedy for the sake of democracy in Pakistan<sup>25</sup>. On 27 December 2007, Benazir Bhutto was assassinated. After the tragic incident, the PPP clean swept the 2008 parliamentary elections and gained a momentum of 121 general seats from all provinces. This time around, the responsibility to lead party fell on the shoulders of husband of Benazir Bhutto, and Mr. Asif Ali Zardari became the co-chairperson of PPP. The move was not appreciated by many. However, he formed a coalition government with the PML-N. The title of the coalition agreement was PPP-PML summit declaration. Under this agreement, all the judges who were deposed during the emergency imposed by General Pervez Musharraf in 2007 were reinstated. The PPP successfully completed its five-year tenure and peacefully passed the baton to PML-N in the General Elections of 2013. This was, yet another, significant achievement of the PPP as it emerged as a successful democratic force in the overall tumultuous political history of Pakistan. However, one setback was that the PPP violated the treaty later on, and as a result, the PML-N withdrew its coalition from the government. During the presidential elections of 2008, the PPP appointed Asif Zardari, who became the President of Pakistan by securing 481 out of 700 votes. In the April of 2010, President Zardari voluntarily surrendered his president powers and handed the charge over to the then PM, Yousuf Raza Gillani of the PPP under the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution. In 2012, Raja Pervez Ashraf was elected as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan through PPP's nomination<sup>26</sup>.

Under this tenure, the PPP once again made considerable achievements. For instance, the National Command Authority Ordinance was amended in order to implement the Charter of Democracy (CoD). Other key achievements of the government included the appointment of the first ever female Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Hina Rabbani Khar. The PPP also introduced the reconciliatory and consultative form of governments in Pakistan under which all the elected representatives are invited on board to take major decisions. The government also launched the famous Benazir Income Support Program, worth Rs70 billion, to help needy people earn a living. Moreover, the government introduced the Benazir Employees Stock Option Scheme which was successfully implemented in about 80 organizations owned by the state. More achievements including the Benazir Green Tractors Scheme for small farmers, Utility Store subsidy, increase in the minimum wages, and trade union revival through IRA 2009, among others. The PPP government also introduced many policies in different field, including power, petroleum, education, natural resources, and textiles, etc.

Besides, the PPP government introduced the Aghaz-e-Huqooq-e-Balochistan policy for the people of Balochistan who had been neglected by previous regimes<sup>27</sup>. There were many more achievements that the PPP government had during its tenure, however, the biggest achievement was the successful completion of its office.

### **COMPARISON WITH PML-N**

Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) has been the major political party since the inception of Pakistan in 1947. Apart from the PPP, PML-N has been the only party which has consistently struggled for democracy in Pakistan. It is the only party after PPP which has contributed to the democratic setup of Pakistan<sup>28</sup>. Like PPP, the party struggled for democracy in the face of military dictatorship. The first time PML-N took office was in 1990, making a coalition with IslamiJamhooriIttehad (IJI). Before coming to power in 1988, when PPP emerged as the single largest party in Pakistan and formed the government, the PML-N of Mian Nawaz Sharif emerged as the second largest party. The emergence of PML-N with strong vote bank strengthened the democratic setup of Pakistan as there was a power shift from feudal aristocracy to that of modern entrepreneurs. Like PPP, his government also made significant contributions to the political setup of Pakistan. The PML-N assumed power four times i.e. in 1990, in 1993, in 1997 and in 2013. During all its tenures, PML-N's achievements can be compared with that of the PPP's<sup>29</sup>.

After assuming office in 1990, the Nawaz Sharif government announced a comprehensive national reconstruction plan for the country and promised to ensure smooth implementation of the plan<sup>30</sup>. His government also worked towards making Pakistan a self-reliant country, work towards denationalization and deregulation, introduce taxation reform, introduce reforms related to foreign exchange and payment, introduce reforms related to administration and law and work towards increasing exports and agricultural productivity<sup>31</sup>.

The PML-N government also started an economic strategy that worked towards industrialization and to extensively promote the private sector. As against the policies of the PPP, the PML-N government worked towards rapid industrialization because the government saw it as the only means to create more jobs for the masses<sup>32</sup>.

Moreover, the PML-N focused on the implementation of Islamic legislations against the secular agenda of the PPP. This was particularly in terms of creating sharia courts and transforming the educational system of Pakistan on the basis of Islamic teaching. Moreover, the government imposed controls on the print and electronic media designed to ensure Islamic moral value and worked towards the establishment of Islamic banking through 'total abolition of interest'<sup>33</sup>. These measures were wholeheartedly welcomed by the masses as religion has always been a very effective trump card that both the civilian and

military governments had played from time to time. Hence, this turned out to be successful for the Nawaz Government too.

Another area where the PML-N government worked was in the area of crime and terrorism and the illegal trade of arms in the country. In 1991, the PML-N government passed the Twelfth Amendment in the Constitution which enhanced the jurisdictional authority of Speedy Trial Courts to dispense summary justice. The PML-N government also introduced a number of significant industries in sectors like electricity generation, shipping, airlines; highway construction and telecommunications were opened up to the private sector unlike the nationalization policy of the previous regime of PPP<sup>34</sup>. When the Nawaz government stressed upon privatization and liberalization of the economy, there was considerable criticism from certain elements who tried to derail the economic reforms introduced by the new government and brought up conspiracy theories. Nonetheless, the government worked on its set goals. The government also extensively worked towards infrastructure development as against the previous regime and to this end, a US\$1 billion superhighway (Motorway) project under the National Highway Authority was started. Under this regime, the Ghazi Brotha and Gawadar mini port projects were also initiated and the government also worked towards its foreign policy. In April 1993, the PML-N government was dismissed by the president<sup>35</sup>.

The PML-N government again came to power in 1997 in a sweeping victory. Once again, the government introduced a landmark to the Constitution of Pakistan by repealing the Eighth Amendment which was considered a controversial one. Under this amendment, the president could dismiss the Prime Minister and dissolve the assembly. PML-N also added the anti-defection Fourteenth Amendment Bill. The government's most important contribution was to derive Pakistan towards economic progress despite US sanctions on Pakistan through the Pressler Amendment. Another credit that goes to the PML-N Government which PPP could not do was to strengthen Pakistan's atomic power as the government carried out at Chagai (Balochistan) three nuclear tests on May 28, 1998, in response to the Indian detonation of its five nuclear devices<sup>36</sup>. This is something for which the government of PML-N must be given some credit to.

Assuming power in 2013 by winning 186 seats in the National Assembly, the PML-N formed its government in Pakistan after the PPP government smoothly passed on the baton after completing a historical five years in office. In 2014, the government of PML-N has faced vehement opposition from the Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan AwamiTehrik (PAT) which alleged the PML-N government to have rigged the elections of 2013. According to people, ever since the government assumed power, no changes have been found to occur in terms of poverty alleviation, price hike, unemployment, electricity load shedding, and terrorism<sup>37</sup>. However, under the present PML-N government, there has been a considerable decrease in the value of dollar and foreign

currency stores have been increased. However, the dollar depreciation didn't have any positive impact on the common man as the prices of everyday items of use have not been reduced<sup>38</sup>.

However, according to April 2014 Gallup Annual Pulse Report, which was released after eleven months of May 2013 General Elections, the performance of PML-N Government outshone against the preceding achievements of the government of PPP. According to the survey conducted, a high number of people had been more satisfied with the policies and performance of the PML-N government as compared to the preceding government<sup>39</sup>.

In terms of net rating of performance which was set for political leaders, the report revealed that Mian Nawaz Sharif of the PML-N was on the top of the list. His popularity rate was 18 percent. On the contrary, the popularity rate of Asif Ali Zardari was -28 percent. After assuming power, the PML-N government controlled inflation by 20 percent, curbed corruption by 36 percent and terrorism by 31 percent. At the time of the PPP rule, the survey revealed that only 27 percent of people considered PPP government unfavorable and 71 percent gave it a negative rating<sup>40</sup>.

From the above, we can see that before the present day regime, although the Nawaz government made a considerable number of contributions during its tenure, the PPP government's contributions were still greater in certain sectors. However, Nawaz government's contributions towards economic reforms and industrialization were greater as compared to the PPP government's contributions.

## CONCLUSION

The Pakistan Peoples Party holds the honour of being the first party which has served as the elected party in Pakistan for 16 years altogether. The first tenure started in 1971 and last till 1977; then the party assumed office in 1988 and served till 1990, after which, the party came to power in 1993 to 1996 and finally served the country from 2008 to 2013.

All in all, it can be said that the PPP is one of the biggest political party in Pakistan which has, despite deficiencies and setbacks, fought for the restoration of democracy for so many years and thus, it has played a very significant role in the political setup of Pakistan. Had the party not been there to struggle for democracy, Pakistan would have suffered more at the hands of dictators. The party has always strived for democracy and vows to continue its struggle towards democratic goals for years to come.

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