

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

Muhammad Azeem and Dr. Asif Salim

Abstract

In Pakistan, democracy has been facing multiple challenges since its creation as a newly born state. In these difficult circumstances, the struggle of different political leaders occupies a vital place; particularly to restore democracy. This study encapsulates Benazir Bhutto's political struggle to restore democracy in Pakistan. It also explores those hardships, problems and challenges that confronted her political acumen and she became victorious while showing dexterity and bravery towards opponent forces. For the restoration of democracy, even the forces of extremism, militancy and military, could not stop her, from her struggle and efforts during her life time. This paper tries to unfold those circumstances and political challenges which required a gigantic task and she equally responded with her courageous will power and fearless attitude for the cause of democracy. Therefore, this article incorporates her personal perceptions of democracy, her struggle in her imprisonment during her early days of political career, her confrontation with dictatorial regime and various campaigns to strengthen the PPP and to steer it for the revival of democracy in Pakistan. In spite of various hurdles and difficulties, the PPP was facing leadership crisis and it required Benazir Bhutto's efforts to transform it; in a more competent political organization. Therefore, the saga of Benazir Bhutto's political struggle to restore democracy in Pakistan contributed for the democratic norms and values in Pakistan.

Keywords: Struggle, Democracy, Movement, Military, Martial Law, Restoration, Election, Alliance

Introduction

In Pakistan, impotent democratic institutions, incompetent political leadership, persistent confrontation and imbalance of power among various political stakeholders have led towards the democratic impasse and disorder several times during the history of almost seven decades. In any country, consolidated democracy, uninterrupted democratic transition and successive terms of civilian rules always guarantee the most cherished dream of stable democracy and freedom for its civilians. In these circumstances, for female leadership, to counter the undemocratic forces and to steer relentless struggle for the restoration of democracy, in Pakistan, was a gigantic task which was undertaken by Benazir Bhutto's resilient and fearless personality. Benazir Bhutto, excessively driven by the sense of destiny, a sheer product of peculiar circumstances, managed to usher the era of her political thrust, contributed significantly, to push the ouster of challenging forces for democracy like Gen. Zia led

*Authors are PhD Scholar, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore and Visiting Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Peshawar, Peshawar.

military dictatorship, and became the symbol of democratic struggle for the restoration of democracy. Although, failure of democracy in Pakistan was caused by inherited colonial institutions and coercive methods were used to suppress the democratic structure of the country, yet the emergence of Benazir Bhutto to restore democracy and her political efforts to knock down military dictatorship is a topic of open debate among researchers and scholars Herald, January 2008.

In the political history of Pakistan, the political struggle of Benazir Bhutto is vital and transformative which ushered the era of strong democratic transition. Although, she was elected Prime Minister twice yet she upheld the struggle for the restoration of democracy and challenged those forces which put the democracy in shattering situation. She was born in a family which possessed a strong history of feudal-cum-tribal Sindhi roots and political participation in the affairs of Pakistan Dawn, 27th December 2017. Benazir Bhutto, in her political struggle; confronted dictatorial regime, hardships and faced many political challenges for strengthening and restoration of democracy in Pakistan. In Pakistani society, male chauvinistic politics, needless character assassination of female and resistance from religious Ulemas; for the arrival of female in Pakistan politics did not keep her away to uphold her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's political legacy Ahmad, 2005, p. 20-21; Suvorova, 2015, p. 9-10.

In these difficult circumstances, political acumen, willpower and leadership vision were challenged and she emerged as a victorious and brave flying colour which reshaped the politics to steer for strengthening democratic transition. Therefore, Benazir Bhutto was an ardent supporter of sovereign parliament, fundamental human rights, economic and social amelioration of female and wanted to protect the rights of common man. Throughout in her political career, she relentlessly continued to unleash her struggle for oppression, justice and to suppress prejudices. In spite of several tragedies and difficult circumstances, Benazir Bhutto choose the path of constant struggle, resisted arbitrary rulers and pushed the undemocratic forces for the restoration of democracy till her last breath Dawn 28th December 2010. During her early career, the saddest demise of Z.A. Bhutto left a leadership vacuum to make efforts to restore democracy in Pakistan. Moreover, Gen. Zia was in power (1977-1988) at that time and Benazir Bhutto's struggle to restore democracy till her oath; as an elected female Prime Minister; required constant struggle, endless efforts and strategic thinking from a political leader. In these circumstances, she worked hard and contributed through relentless efforts to restore democracy in Pakistan.

At the very outset of her political career, she received an enormous popularity and people associated great hopes and aspirations with her personality because of her youthful appearance, modernize ideas, well groomed and educated personality. Although, her father Z.A. Bhutto, former P.M. of Pakistan who is considered to be the victim of controversial judicial decision by the Apex Court of Pakistan, yet, during the arrest and trial of her father, she exhibited dexterity, relentless courage and refused

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

to bow before General Zia's autocratic and undemocratic style of governance in Pakistan Dawn, 27th December 2017. Her opponents made utmost efforts and inflicted a political harassment; to keep her away from the struggle of restoration of democracy. However, she did not bother and relied on her leadership skills as well as political capabilities. It is worth mentioning here that Z.A. Bhutto, in his life recognized her various capabilities, leadership qualities and political acumen and decided to groom Benazir Bhutto's personality for his strong political legacy. Hence, she visited, with her father, in different countries of the world and met international leaders as well as attended various international conferences. Her father recognized her that she possessed the qualities of head and heart to become her successor while following the true footprints of Z.A. Bhutto. Even, during Zia led regime, Benazir Bhutto did not bow or to smoothen political hurdles to prolong military rule. As a result, Zia imprisoned Benazir Bhutto with her mother and tortured her several times The News, 5th January 2019.

The political career of Benazir was started after the execution of Z.A. Bhutto when she assumed the responsibilities as a co-chairperson of Pakistan Peoples' Party. At that time, the political circumstances were not conducive enough for Benazir to fulfill her father's unfinished agenda. Infact, Zulfikar Bhutto captivated more nationalistic dispositions and this consciousness was inculcated in the people of Pakistan by him Ziring, 1991, p.179. The military regime demonstrated oppressive and revengeful approach towards the family of Z.A. Bhutto. However, the martyrdom of Z.A. Bhutto developed sympathy as well as enriched Benazir's political credential. Benazir Bhutto exhibited political dexterity and rendered hectic efforts to revitalize the PPP Observer, 27th December, 2017. Although, she, initially, spend most of the time in exile and authority in Islamabad, to some extent, got the feeling of relief. However, inspite of confronting dictatorial regime, political challenges and exile, she Bhutto remained fearless as well as undaunted in her determination to restore democracy in Pakistan.

Benazir Bhutto's perception regarding Democracy

As a political leader, Benazir Bhutto possessed her own vision and dedication for the uplift of democratic values in the country. She was also the true successor of political ideals and vision which was envisaged by Z.A. Bhutto at the platform of Pakistan Peoples' Party. Her political grooming under the dynamic and vibrant leadership of Z.A. Bhutto and as a strong inheritor of the political model of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto impacted the exuberance and inculcated resistant elements in her personality. On the other hand, she was well aware of the problems of deprived and marginalized Pakistani people and domination of elite class on economic system of Pakistan. She was also committed to realize that democracy can lead towards socio-economic amelioration, political uplift and can remove frustration of general public. During her political career, time and again, Benazir Bhutto was fearless and did not care about opponent forces. During the Zia regime, Benazir Bhutto was not only imprisoned

with her mother but she was pressurized and tortured through different tactics and house imprisonment to keep her away from the corridor of politics. Even, the controversial judicial decision that led to the unjustified death sentence of Z.A. Bhutto did not shatter the personality and commitment of Benazir Bhutto. The authoritarian capitalist always supported the rulers without their legitimate justification regarding their democratic association or validity. On the flipside of the coin, capitalist elite, feudal class, bureaucrats and undemocratic forces always tried to secure their monopoly, in the corridor of power, and, most of the times, resided with dictatorial regime in order to protect their own personal interests. Benazir Bhutto was the only female leader so far who advocated strong democratic institutions, favoured judicial independence and challenged the validity of autocratic rule of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. She always favoured elected government and opposed Gen. Zia's military rule Zain, 2009, p. 355-363.

Benazir Bhutto also advised Pakistani people; living abroad to send a large portion of savings; to their home country for increasing foreign exchange of Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto, during her struggle for democracy, visualized such political system that can represent all classes of society and government should be responsible to people. Therefore, Benazir Bhutto's democratic vision was erected on assumption that democracy is the only way to check the status quo and to remove repressive orders. She was visionary enough to understand the demand of the time, Pakistani people and essence of democracy. Therefore, her democratic vision was totally based upon the requirements and needs of future generations Zain, 2009, p. 355-363.

Benazir's Role in Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD)

The Pakistan Peoples' Party, ushered a broad alliance strategy with, her former adversary; Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) in 1981 which gave birth to the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) Bhutto, 1989, p. 22. Historically, MRD was a popular political alliance; against Zia led military regime. At that time, it was hard for the leadership of PPP to go for alliance with those parties which were excessively active against Z.A. Bhutto and supported Zia led regime. However, for the restoration of democracy, and for the best interest of the country, PPP leadership was agreed to form such kind of alliance namely MRD. Therefore, the first meeting of the leaders of opposition parties was held at 70-Clifton, Karachi at the residence of Bhutto on 6th of February 1981 for establishing the alliance. The following mainstream political parties participated in this alliance:

1. Pakistan Peoples' Party
2. Pakistan Muslim League (PML) (Khawaja Khair Din Group)
3. Pakistan Democratic Party
4. Pakistan Mazdoor Kissan Party
5. Pakistan National Party

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

6. National Awami Party
7. Qaumi Mahaz-i-Azadi
8. Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Islam (JUI)
9. Tahrik-e-Istiqlal (TI)
10. National Democratic Party Zardari, 2001, p. 355.

At the conclusion of the meeting, all parties exhibited solidarity on the four points program; to restore democracy and the Constitution of 1973. Further, the political parties also stressed in this meeting for holding of parliamentary elections immediately as well as transferring the power to public elected representatives, resulted through the process of democratic general elections in the country Waseem, 1994, p. 393.

At the very outset of this movement, it expressed a peaceful posture for the revival of democracy in the country. However, military took oppressive action against MRD and it was turned into a militant struggle. At that juncture, people were anxiously ready to resist Zia regime and there was no leader to lead them against military regime. In these circumstances, Benazir Bhutto became the symbol of resistance against all brutalities which were carried out by Zia led regime. Benazir Bhutto also continued her struggle with resilience and determinism to restore democracy in Pakistan.

Different Tactics of Zia Led Regime to Suppress MRD

Initially, the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) was started with full fervor, devotion and purposefully. However, some political and regional events also transformed and effected negatively regarding the significance of the movement and its objectives. For example, in 1981, a plane of PIA hijacked which was taken to Afghanistan where the brothers of Benazir Bhutto were living in exile and their organization Al-Zulfikar emerged publically for the first time. Later on, at Kabul Airport, hijackers killed one of the passengers and also demanded the release of 54 prisoners who were jailed in different areas of Pakistan. The hijacked airplane was also taken to Damascus. This act of hijacking not only de-tracked the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy but also victimized PPP as well as its allies like Al-Zulfikar Amir Ali Chandio, 2011, p. 3-4.

On 24th of March 1981, President Zia promulgated a Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) in order to validate all acts related to Martial Law since its imposition in 1977. As a result of this PCO, Constitution of 1973 was set aside and articles related to the power of the President of Pakistan were kept alive. Further, the constitutional powers of the parliament were suspended. Hence, these powers of the constitution were appropriated by Gen. Zia. Further, judicial powers were curtailed and act of Martial Law, military court punishment as well as special tribunal decisions were allowed to

be challenged in Apex judiciary only. At that time, the Supreme Court was also hearing some cases related to the constitutional validity of Martial Law regime. In the meanwhile, the promulgation of PCO was validated stamp regarding all Martial Law regimes' actions and it also invalidated those decisions of Apex Court which were taken previously regarding the question of constitutional validity of the military regime. As a result of the PCO, the judges asked for taking oath freshly under Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) inspite of their previous oaths which were conducted under the Constitution of 1973. On the other hand, Justice Patel, Fakhruddin G. Ibrahim as well as Mushtaq Hussain, the judges of Apex Court of Pakistan; alongwith some judges of High Court refused to take oath under Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO). Besides this, Zia was willing to draw maximum benefits from the plane hijacking episode. Zia was always willing to suppress MRD and PPP's political activities. Even Benazir Bhutto, from 1981 to 1983, faced confinement alongwith several other political leaders as well as workers of MRD parties. Even, the workers of other political parties were also arrested and were sent to jail inspite of their inactive political activities Waseem, 1994, p. 375-76

In 1983, MRD ushered a campaign, to restore the constitution of 1973; to hold elections under it and also to transfer the power to the public representatives. At that juncture, the military regime, not only oppressed the campaign ruthlessly but also created various contradictions among MRD and isolated the PPP Bhutto, 1989, p. 22.

In these days, Begum Nusrat Bhutto, the mother of Benazir Bhutto was still under shock of her husband's assassination and she also faced disease of lungs cancer. On medical grounds, she was released from detention and was permitted her to go abroad for the treatment of lungs cancer. However, Benazir Bhutto faced another detention for one year more. Gen. Zia ordered for her release as a trial case, for a short time, and she also worked against Zia led rule in collaboration with different political parties to restore democracy. Benazir Bhutto ushered a movement against Gen. Zia, on the platform of MRD, therefore, Benazir was again sent to jail. Infact, all these actions of Zia led regime against Benazir Bhutto were taken just two days before the independence day of the year of 1983. In the meanwhile, General Zia demonstrated his attention to hold non-party elections in 1985. Zia was aware of this fact, that party based elections can lead towards the PPP victory and he can face the revenge of Z.A. Bhutto's death. In these circumstances, political parties boycotted non-party elections except Jamat-i-Islami. Further Jamat-i-Islami opposed MRD and remained the supporter of Gen. Zia's stance. Even, on 14th August 1983, the MRD expressed its new momentum. In these difficult times, Benazir Bhutto contributed from jail and she appealed to the people of Pakistan to come up with vigorous campaign against the dictatorship of Gen. Zia. On Benazir Bhutto's request, people rose to a political consciousness to restore democracy. Moreover, for the first time in the Pakistan's political history, people from rural areas and big cities participated in the campaign against Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. Pakistani people were demonstrating their concerns for democracy and Zia was equally active to oppress any agitation or movement for the

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

restoration of democracy. Even, the government itself admitted that during the first week of the movement, thousands of people were arrested and almost 189 were killed and other 126 were injured. In spite of these incidents, MRD gained momentum and created fear in the mind of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq, therefore, he used his all cards in order to suppress MRD Chaudhry, 2009, p.162-63.

In 1984, Benazir Bhutto was released from jail because of excessive international pressure and she straight away departed for UK. Begum Nusrat Bhutto was willing to reside in Geneva with Benazir Bhutto. However, Benazir refused to go Geneva and expressed her determination to reside in London in order to make it a base camp for political activities and resistance against Zia led military dictatorship. For this purpose, many people who were living in London, joined hands with Benazir Bhutto against Zia led military regime. In December 1984, Gen. Zia floated the card of Islamization and held referendum; for the longevity of his rule and was successful to grip Pakistan politics. At that juncture, the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy extended pressure on Zia regime and boycotted the referendum. As a result of this extended pressure, Zia again announced the elections on non-party basis in 1984. However, political parties reacted to non-party based elections and decided to boycott Chaudhry, 2009, p.162-63

The Era of Decisive Resistance against Zia led Dictatorship

On 10th of April 1986, Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan, and PPP workers as well as Pakistan people presented her a cordial welcome through massive disposition of crowd; and gave her historic reception. After remaining in exile for more than two years, Benazir Bhutto, the Co-chairperson of PPP returned Pakistan and landed in Lahore. On the other hand, a political tussle was going on between Gen. Zia and the then Prime Minister, Muhammad Khan Junejo at that time. Benazir Bhutto, before her departure from London, expressed her intentions and stated through Times of London; that she did not believe any kind of revengeful politics and was returning to Pakistan to restore democracy. After receiving a historic welcome, Benazir Bhutto travelled to different areas of Punjab and addressed to gatherings and extended her clear message for Zia led regime. On the other hand, the tussle between Zia and Junejo became intensive which created difficult circumstances, for military led regime. Moreover, the arrival of Benazir Bhutto in Pakistan, in 1986, injected a new spirit and accelerated its momentum to restore democracy in Pakistan and also extended political pressure on Gen. Zia-ul-Haq for holding party based general elections Dawn 4th October 2015.

It is pertinent to mention here that the immense crowd that greeted her was inspired more by the memory of her father than by Benazir herself. It was observed from the campaign that the slogan which was most heard as well as hailed was in respect of Z.A. Bhutto. The campaign processions, in spite of the huge crowd, were initially, quite peaceful. Benazir Bhutto was careful in her speech and attitude so as not to create violent situations. Her main demand in her speech was holding of party based

elections, restoration of the 1973 constitution and consequently peaceful transfer of power to the public elected representatives. Bhutto's dilemma was how to translate broad popular support into a political movement; powerful enough to force new elections and how to do so without triggering violence, thereby risking the re-imposition of martial law Asian Survey, 1987, p.146.

Benazir Bhutto continued her campaign in various areas of Pakistan and kindled the era of new street politics. She was focusing to peaceful transfer of power from military dictatorship to democratically elected government. For this purpose, she led various processions, in Pakistan, and anti-government marches proved a severe blow to weaken the roots of military dictatorship. Benazir massive rallies, speeches and processions catalyzed the movement for restoration of democracy and its momentum compelled Zia to announce the date of election on party based. On 14th August 1986, the Zia led regime came down on the opposition when Pakistan People's Party alongwith MRD parties carried out huge rally despite issuing warning from the government. The government had also arranged a rally whereas Prime Minister Junejo cancelled this rally and warned PPP and other opposition not to do the same. Benazir Bhutto alongwith other MRD parties refused to comply with the orders of government and carried out public gathering. As a result, the government made crackdown and arrested thousands of political workers alongwith prominent opposition leaders including Benazir Bhutto herself Viewpoint, 1987, p.15.

Benazir Bhutto not only launched her campaign for the revival of democracy with dedication, zeal and strength but also organized her party against the dictatorship of Zia. Before the crackdown, she honestly felt that all she had to do was to say the word and the same crowd that greeted her would come out on the streets and die for her. She realized that attracting huge crowd was one thing and transforming her personal popularity into strong political power was another. Although her arrest lasted just over three weeks, the whole incident raised doubts about her ability to effectively challenge the powerful government and forced her to renounce the policy of direct confrontation and instead adopt a slower and more moderate course of action Newsweek, 1986, p.31.

The presence of Benazir Bhutto after 1986 in Pakistan, added to her leadership qualities and political maturity which not only groomed her politics to resist against powerful military regime but also inculcated in her personality a management postures; to organize her political party PPP and to vibrate it actively for the restoration of democracy.

Injecting a New Spirit in Pakistan Peoples' Party

After the death of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, exile of Benazir Bhutto and atrocities of Zia led regime, to some extent, instilled a lull of disappointment in PPP workers and Jiyallas. However, the return of Benazir Bhutto and patronization of country wide processions injected a new spirit in Pakistan Peoples' Party. With the passage of time,

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

the gained political maturity of Benazir Bhutto led to the re-organization of Pakistan Peoples' Party. This re-organization assumed the shape of emerging political power which conveyed a clear message to dictatorship of Zia; for the revival of democratic culture in Pakistan. It was also argued that Benazir Bhutto finally came to realize that she had to win the confidence of the vested interests which had controlled the government if she truly wanted to govern the country. She renounced socialism as the party principle, claiming herself a social democrat on the left of center of political spectrum. All these measures added to the stature of Pakistan Peoples' Party's political objectives and it led towards the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. Benazir Bhutto extended her vision and dream for a better democratic society like her father late Z.A Bhutto Viewpoint, 1987, p.9.

On the other hand, the PPP, in its internal structure, did not possess any democratic culture. Such kind of personalization of politics in PPP raised eye brows in the eyes of several people who criticized the dictatorial style of decision making in party. Some party leaders did not like her autocratic decision making in party and demanded intra party elections. For this purpose, discussions were made for holding of intra-party elections. It was hoped that such elections would activate the party members, give them a sense of satisfaction and hopefully bring the in-fighting to an end. However, such elections never materialized. The PPP remained an organization in which all major decisions were made by Benazir Bhutto and the rift between her and elder party leaders kept growing. Further, the prominent leaders of PPP resigned from their leadership positions in Sindh by protesting against the personalized style of decision-making at the top which were carried out without consultation with other party leaders Newsweek, 1986, p.34.

In these circumstances, the dictatorship within peoples' party and autocratic leadership of Benazir Bhutto did not add to cohesive, uniform and vibrant approach of PPP leadership. The disgruntled senior leadership in PPP was more prone towards their role within the party rather than exhibiting a collective approach; followed by vigorous efforts to restore democracy.

Revival of Democracy in Pakistan

After a long struggle, Zia announced the elections and also made a positive step to appoint Muhammad Khan Junejo as Prime Minister. At that time, various developments in internal and external fronts paved the way to hold elections. On flipside, the relations between Zia and Junejo were not cordial. On May, 29, 1988, Zia removed Junejo's government by dissolving the National Assembly of Pakistan when Junejo was on foreign official tour and also announced the election schedule i.e. on 16th of November 1988 on non-party basis. Zia, tactfully, announced the election date in view of expected pregnancy of Benazir Bhutto so that she may not carry out the election campaign enthusiastically. The announcement of elections on non-party basis resented the public as well as politicians. Further the dismissal of Junejo

government created political crisis and uncertainty in the country. At that critical juncture, the opposition parties threatened to launch a campaign for conducting the elections on party basis. On 17th of August 1988, Benazir filed a petition in Apex Court for holding the elections on party basis. However, on 17th August, 1988, the Zia's rule ended when he alongwith American Ambassador and military officers died in a plane crash The Guardian, 7th August, 1990.

After the death of Zia, various political changes were occurred in Pakistan, the office of President as well as Chief of Army Staff separated. Further, the military showed unwillingness to intervene in the political affairs and the new Army Chief issued statement during the months of August to November 1988 in support of transferring the power to the elected representatives Askari, 1991, p.7. The military was willing to restore democracy for a number of reasons; to demonstrate a sense of discipline, professionalism and to make sure the elections that were announced by Gen. Zia. Moreover, the supporters of Constitution and political parties were strongly wishing for smooth as well as peaceful transfer of the power to the public elected representatives.

After the demise of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the then Chairman, Senate was appointed as the Acting President as well as head of the Care Taker government. He announced the same date i.e. 16th of November 1988 which was fixed by Gen. Zia for holding the general elections and did not clear whether the elections would be held on party or non-party basis. In response to the writ Petition filed by the Benazir Bhutto in Supreme Court of Pakistan, the court announced to hold the elections on party basis. In these elections, Benazir Bhutto emerged; a political leader, who resisted dictatorship and worked for the restoration of democracy. However, the announcement of elections on party basis was welcomed by masses, political parties as well as intelligentsia of Pakistan. PPP emerged as a majority party which got 93 seats out of 207 in these elections. Moreover, it was also observed that military, interim government and controlled media rendered every effort to keep PPP aloof from victory Sheikh, Muhammad Ali, 2000, p. 116-117.

Benazir Bhutto assumed as Prime Minister of Pakistan on December, 2, 1988, the first women head of government in Muslim world as well as youngest Prime Minister in the world. The appointment of Benazir Bhutto as a Prime Minister was a historical moment, the turn of democracy in Pakistan after a decade of one man rule offered hope to the millions who voted for Benazir Bhutto. She is considered a symbol of struggle and sacrifice. She rendered hectic concentration as well as laborious efforts for strengthening democracy in Pakistan and was murdered by suicide terrorists on 27th December 2007 while returning from Liaquat Bagh, Rawalpindi after addressing a public gathering.

The Saga of Candid Political Struggle of Benazir Bhutto to Restore Democracy in Pakistan

Conclusion

Gen. Zia dominated the corridor of power for almost a decade through his authoritarian rule. He used various tactics for the longevity of his rule, put the constitution of 1973 aside, issued provisional Constitutional orders and vehemently damaged democratic fabric in Pakistan. His era is generally considered the era of partial democracy, military dictatorship and maintenance of a status quo. In these circumstances, Benazir Bhutto kept her resolve alive and contributed through a relentless struggle while confronting with the forces of dictatorial regime. Although, failure of democracy in Pakistan has been caused through several factors, yet, coercive methods, too, have been used to suppress the democratic structure of the country. In these challenges, the emergence of Benazir Bhutto for the restoration of democracy and her efforts to knock down military dictatorship is a recognizable contribution for the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. In difficult situation, will power and leadership qualities of Benazir Bhutto added a flying colour to reshape the democratic struggle in Pakistan. She always stood for the sovereign parliament, superiority of the constitution, to ensure the fundamentals human rights and to work for the removal of economic disparity and social amelioration of the people. She was as a leader to fight for oppression, to ensure justice and to remove prejudices for the best interest of her country. Benazir Bhutto, during very early days of her career, chooses the path of relentless struggle and exhibited her resistance against arbitrary rulers. She always pushed the undemocratic forces aside and stood for the restoration of democracy while refusing to bow in front of dictator, autocratic and undemocratic style of governance. Although, she possessed some weaknesses like arrogance and favouring of personalized politics in PPP, yet, her personality and political capabilities remained a symbol of resistance for the Zia led regime. Gen. Zia-ul-Haq imprisoned Benazir Bhutto tortured her with her mother but she was the brave character who responded with utmost courage to fulfill the unfinished agenda of her father Z.A Bhutto to revive the democracy in its true letters and spirit. As a result of this relentless struggle of Benazir Bhutto, general elections of 1988 were held and she appeared on the sky of democratic set up and took oath as a democratically elected Prime Minister of Pakistan.

References

- Herald*, January 2008.
Dawn, 27th December 2017
Suvorova, Anna. (2015). *Benazir Bhutto: A Multidimensional Portrait*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.
Dawn, 28th December 2010
Dawn, 27th December 2017
The News, 5th January 2019.
Ziring, Lawrence. (1991), "Pakistan in 1990: The Fall of Benazir Bhutto" *Asian Survey* 31 (2).
Pakistan Observer, 27th December, 2017.
Bhutto, Benazir. (1989). *Daughter of the East*. London: Hamish Hamilton.
Zain, Omer Farooq. (2009). Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto: A Hagiography. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* (PJSS) Vol. 29, No. 2.
Zardari, Mohammad Laiq (2001) Nawab Shah KeeTareekh, Nawab Shah: *Sindh Historical and Cultural Society*.
Bhutto, Benazir. (1989). *Daughter of the East*. London: Hamish Hamilton.
Waseem, Mohammad (1994) Politics and the State in Pakistan, Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and cultural Research.
Amir Ali Chandio, (2011). Struggle for Democracy in Sindh: A Case Study of Movement for Restoration of Democracy (1983). *Berkeley Journal of Social Sciences* Vol.1, No.1.
Waseem, Mohammad (1994) Politics and the State in Pakistan, Islamabad: *National Institute of Historical and cultural Research*.
Dawn, 4th October 2015.
Asian Survey, February, 1987, p.146.
Viewpoint, January 1, 1987, p.9.
Newsweek, September, 1, 1986, p.31.
Viewpoint, June, 4, 1987, p. 9.
Newsweek, July, 7, 1986, p. 34.
The Guardian, 7th August, 1990.
Askari, Hassan. (1991), Civil Military Relations Under General Baig. Defence Journal.
Sheikh, Muhammad Ali. (2000). *Benazir Bhutto: A Political Biography*. Karachi: Orient Books Publishing House.