

Islamization in Pakistan & Bangladesh: A Comparative Study of Zia ul Haq and Ziaur Rehman

By

Kashif Tanveer
Punjab College, Lodhran

Irram Tanveer
Punjab College, Lodhran

Abstract

The entirety of this chapter is dedicated to discussing the concepts, considerations, impacts, resolutions, needs, boundaries, and constraints that were faced by both the Generals of Pakistan and Bangladesh during the course of their respective tenures in office. When the countries broke away from each other in 1971, they were operating under a single constitution and had no need for constitutional change. The entire narrative is based on the detailed misconception that is prevalent in the nations where political and international applications are working hand in hand to prevent the impact and rise to power of Islamic governments with conservative worldviews. In this study, according to Islamic Ideology, the hypothesis that military regimes are inherently unstable because their leaders lack the necessary political abilities of persuasive communication, negotiating, public appeal, and the development of new political tactics for survival and legitimacy will be put to the test. This hypothesis states that military regimes are inherently unstable because their leaders lack the necessary political abilities of persuasive communication, negotiating, and the development of new political tactics for survival and legitimacy. According to the findings of this research, the military dictatorship that was commanded by General Zia ul Haq and General Zia ur Rahman was accountable for the genocide that was committed due to an extreme fear of Islamic culture.

Key Words

Islamization, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Zia ul Haq, Ziaur Rehman.

Information

All the civil and military leadership in Pakistan and Bangladesh have wrestled with the use of Islam in politics. The two military dictators Zia ul Haq and Ziaur Rehman were the most renowned among them. Seeking legitimacy, they embraced Islam by reopening the historical chapter of Islamic identity in Pakistan and Bangladesh, respectively. Both military dictators were aided in accomplishing their immediate political goals by the extensive use of Islam in politics, but as a result, it had long-lasting effects on both sides in terms of Islamic extremism and violence. Due to its strategic location, which made it more alluring too and sensitive to foreign forces than Bangladesh, Pakistan suffered more under military administration.

The Durand Line, Pakistan's longest porous border with Afghanistan, has long garnered the interest of global powers, especially the US, which has formed close links with Pakistan's military-led government. Zia-ul-Haq's military-led regime obtained a clean pass from Washington for its relentless suppression of the nation's liberal political forces by supporting the religious right in exchange for its cold war services. Similarly, some significant studies are only concerned with Pakistan. According to the findings of these studies, there is a relationship between hegemonic military power and religion. It asserts that Zia ul Haq's military-led dictatorship exploited religion in order to support his ulterior political purposes. Zia initiated a massive Islamization drive with the help of the United States and Saudi Arabia, which led to a sectarian crisis in Pakistan.

The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union was actually a blessing in disguise for Zia. When it comes to the formulation of a nation's domestic and international policies, the geo strategy of a state is often viewed as a deciding element. In the northwestern part of Pakistan, as a direct consequence of this, the Mujahideen were subjected to a stringent theological orientation within the framework of the Islamic faith, in addition to undergoing physical training to combat the Russian soldiers. Paul (2014) makes the valid point that Pakistan's geostrategic location has become a curse for the country in terms of the client-patron relationship it has with the United States. This is analogous to how crude oil has been a "resource curse" for the countries of the Gulf Region in terms of the absence of a robust democratic system in those countries. As a result, the primary objective of this piece of writing is to investigate and obtain an understanding of the reason why Islamic extremism under Zia ul Haq gained greater ground in Pakistan than it did in Bangladesh.

Islamization in Pakistan

Islamization in Pakistan refers to the process through which the country's legal, political, and social systems have been influenced by Islamic principles and practices. It gained significant momentum during the regime of General Zia ul Haq, who ruled Pakistan from 1977 to 1988. Here is a detailed overview of Islamization in Pakistan: Islamic Laws: One of the key aspects of Islamization was the introduction of Islamic laws. Zia ul Haq implemented the Hudood Ordinances in 1979, which aimed to incorporate elements of Islamic law into the legal system. These ordinances covered crimes such as theft, adultery, rape, and alcohol consumption. They prescribed punishments based on interpretations of Islamic jurisprudence, including amputations and public floggings.

Sharia Courts:

Zia ul Haq established Sharia courts to handle cases related to Islamic law. These courts had the authority to interpret laws in accordance with Islamic principles and bypass the regular legal system. The Sharia courts were empowered to handle family matters, such as divorce, inheritance, and child custody, based on Islamic law. (Haqqani, 2005)

Islamic Education:

Zia ul Haq sought to promote Islamic education in Pakistan. He made Quranic studies compulsory in schools and introduced Islamic studies as a mandatory

subject in the curriculum. The government also revised textbooks to incorporate a more Islamic perspective and established Islamic universities and research centers.

Promotion of Islamic Culture:

Zia ul Haq encouraged the public display of Islamic symbols and religious practices. He emphasized mosque attendance, supported the construction of new mosques, and promoted religious observances, such as Friday prayers and Ramadan fasting. Islamic festivals and celebrations gained more prominence during his regime. (Riaz, 2008)

Islamization of Economy:

Zia ul Haq introduced measures to align the economy with Islamic principles. He encouraged the establishment of Islamic banks and financial institutions that operated according to Islamic finance principles, which prohibit the charging or receiving of interest (riba). Zia ul Haq aimed to eliminate interest-based transactions and promote Islamic modes of finance.

Blasphemy Laws:

During Zia ul Haq's rule, amendments were made to the blasphemy laws in Pakistan. These laws criminalized acts of blasphemy against Islam and made them punishable by severe penalties, including death. These laws have been controversial and have been criticized for their misuse, leading to human rights concerns and religious tensions. (Khan, 2007)

Islamization in Bangladesh

Islamization in Bangladesh refers to the process by which the country's social, political, and legal systems have been influenced by Islamic principles and practices. Bangladesh, with a predominantly Muslim population, has seen various efforts to promote Islam as a prominent aspect of national identity. Here is a detailed overview of Islamization in Bangladesh:

Islam as the State Religion:

In 1988, the constitution of Bangladesh was amended to declare Islam as the state religion. This amendment aimed to reflect the religious composition of the majority of the population and provide a legal framework for the protection and promotion of Islamic principles. However, the constitution also guarantees the rights of religious minorities and upholds the principles of secularism. (Haider, 2001)

Madrassa Education:

Madrasas, Islamic religious schools, play a significant role in the education system of Bangladesh. The government has taken steps to recognize and regulate madrasas to ensure their standardization and integration with the mainstream education system. Efforts have been made to introduce a more comprehensive curriculum in madrasas, encompassing secular subjects alongside religious studies.

Islamic Banking and Finance:

Bangladesh has witnessed the growth of Islamic banking and finance institutions. Islamic banking follows principles derived from Islamic law (Sharia) that prohibit the charging or receiving of interest (riba). The government has supported the

establishment of Islamic banks and financial institutions, offering Sharia-compliant financial products and services. (Roy, 1994)

Sharia Law in Personal Matters:

Bangladesh has a dual legal system, with separate laws for personal matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance for Muslims. Sharia law, as interpreted by Islamic scholars, is applied to these matters through the family courts. This allows Muslims to seek resolution of personal issues based on Islamic principles.

Islamic Cultural Practices:

Islamic cultural practices are widely observed in Bangladesh. Muslims in the country celebrate Islamic festivals such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha with great enthusiasm. Mosques play a central role in the community, serving as places of worship, education, and social gatherings. Islamic attire and modesty are often emphasized, especially among practicing Muslims.

Influences on Legal and Political Discourse:

Islamic principles have had an impact on legal and political discourse in Bangladesh. Debates often arise regarding the compatibility of proposed laws with Islamic teachings, and politicians sometimes make appeals to Islamic values to gain public support. However, the country's legal framework and political system remain predominantly secular in nature. (Kabir, 1997) While the majority of Bangladeshis identify as Muslims, the country also respects the rights of other religious communities. Bangladesh has a history of religious coexistence and has made efforts to protect the rights of religious minorities through legal safeguards and inclusive policies.

Islamization in Bangladesh

Ershad took numerous actions to become more Islamic. Arabic is now a required subject in primary school thanks to the new educational policy issued by the Ershad government. He included Islamic studies and the Arabic language in the curriculum. A policy statement said that this had been done with consideration for Bangladesh's international needs as well as the religious and cultural components of people's lives. In Tongi, Dhaka, an Islamic university was established where students had to be proficient in Islamic subjects. Also, Ershad conducted a number of other actions that are referred to as Islamization. He began to show favoritism for mosque imams and piers (also known as Holy Men).

He generously donated toward organizations meant for preservations, renovation, and prettification, and unfluctuating departed so far as to exempt mosques from paying their water and power bills. He frequented various mosques and temples. He decided to speak at Friday's Juma prayers and asked people to follow Islam's core principles. He also participated in mosque congregational prayers and engaged in more street conversations with people than he did in office management. General Ershad started wearing the headgear (wearing it during prayer times) and on weekly helicopter trips to Atrashi6 in the Faridpur district, ushering in a new wave of religiosity. He is said to have received spiritual guidance from the local god known as Pir Saheb, who claimed the President of Bangladesh was his follower and son. About fifty senior army leaders, including the army chief of general staff, the commander of the 9th Division, the head of the DPI, and numerous other divisional and brigade commanders, joined the 20,000

soldiers who were also learning the pir.

The Ershad government also declared February 21 to be a religious holiday known as Shahid Dibbhash (Martyrs Day) and held Quran Khani (recitations from the Holy Quran) at Shahid Minar in memory of the martyrs of the Language Movement. He questioned and criticized the "Bengali style" of decorating floors known as Alpana as being incompatible with Islamic culture. However, "progressive" forces, especially secular ones, opposed it vehemently. Although Quran Khani was not a part of the tradition, the head of State used to lay wreaths at the Shaheed Minar. Some academics thought that Ershad and the "collaborators" had formed an alliance as evidenced by the activities outlined above (Islamic forces who opposed the independence movement in 1971 by collaborating with Pakistan), The most influential Islamic party, Jam'mat-e-Islami Bangladesh (BJI), initiated an anti-Ershad movement alongside other significant political groups as soon as Ershad came to power, hence, in reality, it was not an alliance of Islamic forces.

Conclusion

Throughout history, there have been many attempts to legitimize Islam. Rulers like Zia used the popular support they gained in the name of Islamic order to consolidate their rule. After examining previous efforts to Islamize the legal system, we found that there is a lack of researchers and knowledgeable jurists who can interpret Islamic law in a manner appropriate to the context. . This expression was used by rulers for political purposes and to protect their empire.

The current government-sponsored activities involve militias and are seen as an attempt to impose Islam by force, which has been applauded by the people and the international community.

Islamic philosophy was never intended to be a closed, immutable, politically useful code for the ruling elite. Islam was viewed by the Ulema as a political weapon, and the country was undoubtedly embroiled in serious consequences. Unfortunately, Pakistan's civilian and military governments continue to ignore the will of the people they are supposed to serve and use Islam as a political tool. The year that Islam Zia was put on trial is considered a turning point in Pakistan's history. During this period, Islam played an important role in many fields such as law, education, banking, and finance. However, these efforts were characterized by the adoption of secular ideas and failed in implementation.

The idea that Islam was used during this military era to achieve practical goals such as American support for Afghanistan, terrorism, and a divided Russia is now widely accepted. This particular interpretation of Islam gained support in the Islamic world.

Pakistan was founded on the principles of Islamic teachings and was established to protect the Muslim people and religious rights. The memorandum clearly states that no law can contradict the Quran and Sunnah. The Islamic provisions of the Constitution that existed before 1973 became the basis of Islam. Over time, numerous institutions such as the Council of Islamic Ideology and the Supreme Sharia Court came into existence. The purpose of this study is to find out whether the Islamic legal approach is fully consistent with the basic ideas of the country.

The entirety of this chapter is dedicated to discussing the concepts, considerations, impacts, resolutions, needs, boundaries, and constraints that were faced by both the Generals of Pakistan and Bangladesh during the course of their respective

tenures in office. When the countries broke away from each other in 1971, they were operating under a single constitution and had no need for constitutional change. The entire narrative is based on the detailed misconception that is prevalent in nations where political and international applications are working hand in hand to prevent the impact and rise to power of Islamic governments with conservative worldviews.

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