

FINAL PHASE OF MIR BEZANJO'S POLITICAL STRUGGLE (FEDERALISM V/S REGIONALISM)

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The replacement of Bhutto Government by Zia's Martial Law brought many changes in the administrative and political system of Pakistan. Mir Bezanjo was released on bail from Hyderabad Conspiracy case, he applied on 6th December 1977. There was another breakthrough in the Hyderabad conspiracy case when on 1st January 1978 General Zia-ul-Haq, the chief Martial Law Administrator disabandoned the Hyderabad Tribunal and ordered to release all the accused. He also declared an amnesty for those who had left their homes during the disturbances in Balochistan. These developments were warmly appreciated in Balochistan. Bezanjo and his old colleagues Khair Bakhsh Marri was also released on 4th January, 1978 from Hyderabad Jail. He stayed for quit a some time in Quetta Balochistan and then on 11th November 1978 left for England. Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal also flew to England in the middle of 1979. Thus the Political scene of Balochistan was a bit changed, atleast Stagnation, if not peace, Could be seen in the politics of Balochistan.

AFGHAN REVOLUTION AND MIR BEZANJO'S STAND:

In the late seventies Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan Passed through many changes. In Pakistan the democratic government of Bhutto was replaced by the Martial law of General Zia, in Iran the Shah was deposed by the revolution of Khomein and in Afghanistan on 27th April, 1978, the Russian backed revolution against Daud declared, "the people's republic of Afghanistan". Daud was killed. Russians recognized the new Government. The government of Pakistan opposed the Russian interventions in Afghanistan and demanded the complete withdrawal of Russian forces and the restoration of non-aligned sovereign status of Afghanistan. America and the free world of Western Europe the demand of Pakistan and stressed upon Russia to withdraw her forces from Afghanistan. In Pakistan there was a mixed reaction on Afghan Revolution. The leftist parties and the leaders supported the Afghan cause

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and took it as their internal issue whereas the others opposed and declared it as the Russian intervention and occupation. Mir Bezanjo had very rational approach and he believed in the diplomatic negotiations to settle this international issue (1). In an interview he advised the government to remain careful and should see all the pros and cones of the issue before taking the political measures (2). He also showed his sensitivity and concern over the influx of Afghan Refugees. He was very much conscious over their social and economic mobility in Pakistani civic and economic structure and infrastructure. He advised the Government to take care of the national interest and should form all the policies in the pursuance of the national interests only. He did not support the governmental help to Afghan refugees and he believed that they should be restricted and that the Pakistan Government should take this issue quite intelligently and diligently. He wanted this issue to be resolved peacefully and through negotiations. He was the old ideological friend of Russia and had inclination towards socialism; therefore during the Afghan crises he was very cautious and always pleaded for the peaceful settlement of the issue.

POLITICS OF FEDERALISM V/S REGIONALISM:

Mir Bezanjo after being released from Hyderabad Conspiracy case reaffirmed his commitment to the cause of his Land and people and resumed his political struggle. He raised the voice that the nationalities may be grantede the autonomy, "this view pitted him against Abdul Wali Khan" (3). The differences in the leaders of N.A.P were widened particularly when they were establishing National Democratic Party. Here "Wali Khan objected to Bezanjo's proposed use of the Word "nationalities" to describe the Provinces of Pakistan.... The two delegations also differed on how hard to push their autonomy demands. Equally important Bezanjo was openly critical of the Zia regime's support for the anti communist rebels in Afghanistan while Wali Khan was more equivocal. Amid angry recriminations, the Baloch abruptly walked out, called a separate convention and formed the Pakistan National Party (P.N.P) (4) but here Sher Baz Mazari Joined hands with Wali Khan in the National Democratic Party.

MIR BEZANJO'S POLITICS AND P.N.P SIX POINTS MANIFESTO:

The leaders of P.N.P agreed upon a six points manifesto right from the very beginning. The significant points were:

1. Constitutional and Practical guaranties of equal internal autonomy to all the federating units. A positive and non-aligned foreign policy was demanded.
2. A national democratic resolution to establish economic independence.
3. An end of the remnants of the feudalism and monopoly capitalism (5).

These Points very clearly reflect that Mir Bezanjo is still raising the voice for the rights of the land and the people but with the changed circumstances he has changed the strategy. Zia banned all the Political activities, hence, the Party and Mir Bezanjo were silenced. But as his old colleague Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal explains his personality by saying, "that man cannot live without politics. I can do without it, but he has to have it all the time or he will perish" (6) for his political efforts, continuous struggle and commitment to the Baloch Cause he is Known as Baba-e-Balochistan. Harison pays tribute to Mir Bezanjo, he very aptly and rightly says, In my view, he is one of the ablest politicians in Pakistan and could have Played a major role in Islamabad but for his Baloch identity and his commitment to the Baloch cause" (7).

Mir Bezanjo stressed upon Provincial autonomy and emphasized upon the adoption of a new Pakistani Constiutions giving each national unit much wider Powers than those accorded in any of the Constitution that existed before Zia's Martial law regime (8). Here he declares his belief in the provincial autonomy and the loose federation. Hein Lahore addressing the intellectuals said, "Pakistan, actually" is a country of four nationalities but the Constitution, the rules framed does not match the needs of the society and the communities; the phenomena requires a federation based upon the loose federations principles, where all the four nationalities i.e. Punjabis, Pathans, Balochs and Sindhis should be knitted so beautifully that the Pakistani nation may come into existence" (9). Nevertheless, he differentiated loose federation rom Confederation and he opposed Confederation as demanded by some extremists. He believed in a "Reasonable Centre" not a week Centre (10). Discussing the distribution of powers in the federal government and the federating units, he explained

it by saying, "A type of federation not a confederation in which the Central Government of Pakistan would continue to control defense, foreign affairs (including foreign trade), currency and communications and would have the power to tax the constituent units to the extent necessary to fulfil these responsibilities....the federation would be loose one because only those rights which are necessary for the common interests and for actual survival would be surrendered voluntarily to the centre and in all remaining matters the federating units would retain full power in their own hands.... The four national units would have full control and sovereignty over their own natural resources and preference would be given to local residents in jobs, contracts and other aspects of economic development (11). Despite all the difficulties he continued his political struggle by supporting Movement for the Restoration of Democracy in 1983. he did not support the presidential referendum and the non party based general elections of 1985.

With the passage of time, the gulf of differences was widening in Bezanjo and his old colleagues. Mir Bezanjo was stressing on diplomacy and negotiations even more than his other colleagues. They were not very happy with him. Here Pakistan National Party became closer to the Federal Government of Pakistan, hence, when General Zia replaced jonejo Government on 29th May 1988 by a caretaker government, some representation to P.N.P was also granted.

His old colleagues were now standing against him and worked out Balochistan National Alliance for the elections of 1988. In these elections Baba-e-Balochistan took part but could not succeed against Manzoor Gichki a candidate nominated by Balochistan National Alliance (B.N.A) (12). On his election results Dr. Masuma Hassan wrote in dawn, "Principled and proud, humane and affectionate, he had a big heart and a big vision. Those who defeated him at the last election, deprived the country of wisdom of his counsel. Bezanjo, a warrior all his life "(13).

Although it was astonishing and amazing but there had always been much ups and downs in his life and it was one of them. He took it as a part of democratic system; as the wind of power had gone against him. He as a hard and strong political fighter once again geared up the political struggle by re-organizing Pakistan National party. He knew that his roots were in the masses and the sole mission to save the cause of the land and the people could best be attained through democratic process. This was his

believe and faith in the justice and democracy that in 1985 after a meeting of M.R.D., he said, that it was by an historical compulsion that he sat down at the same table with General Tikka Khan to talk (14). The people of Balochistan cannot forget that General Tikka Khan commanded the troops against Mir Nauroz Khan in 1958 and he also had been Bhutto's Commander in Chief during the initial years of Balochistan insurgency (1973 – 77). The only weakness was then then his health, which was going down gradually and he was not feeling well but still he was active in politics as he could not live without politics.

LAST DAYS OF MIR BEZANJO:

Mir Bezanjo, a well determined, man of strong will never laid down arms before any power. During April and May 1989 he felt some unusual developments and pain in his body. On check up in Agha Khan Hospital Karachi there were some indications of liver cancer. Royal Institute of Cancer, London and Royal Medicine Adembra were also consulted but it was the unanimous advise to him that the disease was incurable, hence, he might stay at Pakistan so he remained under medical care at Mid-Eeast Hospital Karachi for about two months.

He came back from London after medical consultations on 15th July 1989 at about 11.00 A.M. at Karachi and was received by his friends and followers very warmly. He stayed at Masti Lodge, where he usually used to stay. Although the doctors at London had shown their disappointment yet he was well determined and showing no weakness against disease. On 16th July he was interviewed by couple of newspapers; where he reaffirmed his determination for the attainment and promotior of the rights of the people. He also declared that he was very mucl satisfied with what he had been doing for his people. On 17th July, he was shifted to Agha Khan Hospital for medical aid. The old politician G.M. Syed and Raees Ghulam Mustafa Bargari visited Mir Bezanjo. On 18th July Nawab Akbar Bugti and Sher Baz Khan Mazari visited Mir Bezanjo and showed their concern over his health. At about 3.00 P.M. Mit Bezanjo was shifted from Agha Khan Hospital to Masti Lodge back. He in an interview to a newspaper expressed his dissatisfaction over national and international policies of Pakistan Peoples. On 19th July addressing a group of Baloch Youth, he emphasized that they should continue his mission of the furtherance of their national interest.

On 20th July talking to his visitors, he very strongly remarked that the Geneva Accord should be practiced in true letter and spirit. On 22nd July Mir Bezanjo was shifted from Masti Lodge to an apartment at Clifton beach, here at about 7.00 P.M. he walked along the sea-shore. On 23rd July he was interviewed by Jan Mohammad Dashti. On 24th July he was again shifted to Agha Khan Hospital for Chemotherapy. He talking to his visitors, stressed upon the government for the normalization of relations with the neighboring States and also the adoption of neutral and non-aligned foreign policy. On 25th July Mehmood Khan Achakzai visited him. On 26th July 1989, he was again shifted to the Clifton apartment, here while addressing his visitors and Baloch Youth, he opposed the extremism and adventurism and emphasized upon the positive democratic struggle.

On 27th July along with other colleagues Razaq Baloch Ex-Chairman B.S.O visited him. Mir Bezanjo stressed upon the responsibilities of the youth in the furtherance of Baloch national interest and the Pakistan National Party should remain active in this process. On 28th July Mir Bezanjo while addressing a large number of visitors said that his Politics had been for the deprived people and everybody should push it ahead. On 29th July Nawab Akbar Bugti visited him again and on 30th July Mrs. Nusrat Bhutto visited him and exchanged views of mutual interest. On 31st July Mir Bezanjo's old friend, Malik Mairaj Khalid visited him, discussed the political conditions and Mir Bezanjo declared that he could prefer P.P.P's Government over Martial Law though he differs with it on many points. On 1st and 2nd August Mir Bezanjo was taken to Agha Khan Hospital for necessary medical tests. On 3rd August, he received a telephone call of Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal from London where he expressed his deep concern over his health. At 3.00 P.M. the Chief Minister Sindh visited him while at about 7.00 P.M. he was admitted in Mid East Hospital where Dr. Ghaffar Jatoi received him at the main gate of the Hospital and drove his wheel chairs to V.I.P Room No. 7. He had still very high courage and determination against disease. On 4th and 5th August, he was on Glucose drip and could not take any food orally. On the advice of the Doctor, the general Public was not allowed to visit this great leader.

On 6th August Mir Bezanjo was not happy on the decision of keeping the public away and he asked that his people may see him freely. His desire was appreciated. On 7th August he took a little soup. On 8th

August, he asked for paper and pen, which was provided but he could not write any thing. On 9th August Mir Bezanjo's health went down very fastly, his liver, kidneys and other vital organs had failed, hence, the doctors whispered that any thing could happen at any time so the family should remain mentally prepared. Mir Bezanjo was fainted and on 11th August at 3:25 A.M. he left for heaven (16).

Although this Champion of the cause of deprivation in general and Balochs in particular left this mortal world physically but he is still alive, as his teachings and messages are still with his followers. He was buried at Nal, his native place amongst thousands of his lovers and followers. All the leading politicians including the Chief Minister Balochistan Nawab Akbar Bugti , Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal, Governor Balochistan General (Rtd.) Mohammad Musa, Khan of Kalat Mir Daud Jan, Nawab Mohammad Aslam Raisani, Prince Mohi-uddin Baloch Sardar Mohammad Arif Jan Mohammad Hassni, Sardar Mohammad Khan Barozai, Sardar Yousaf Khan Sasoli, Sardar Sanaullah Khan Zehri, Sardar Zaman Mohammad Shahi, Sardar Fateh Mohammad Mohammad Hasni, Mir Gohar Khan Zarakzai, Sardar Ahmed Khan Surpira, Senator Nawabzada Jehangir Khan Jomezai, Justice Amir-ul-Malik Mengal, Mir Amanullah Gichki, Mir Maqbool Ahmed Lehri, Malik Faiz Mohammad Yousafzai, Mairaj Mohammad Khan, Fateh Yab Ali Khan, Mir Abdul Hamid Jatoi, Aijaz Jatoi, Mir Aijaz Ali Khan Talpur, Syed Imdad Mohammad Shah (son of G.M.Syed), Agha Zafarullah Shaheen, Qamaruz-Zaman Shah, Mir Yousaf Masti Khan, Shah Mohammad Shah, Gul Mohammad Hoat, tribal elders and notables and thousands of his followers attended the burial ceremonies(17).

Next day almost all the regional and national newspapers paid tribute to him in very high esteem; and the news was placed in the front Page. Many international leaders sent messages to condole his death and the political parties passed the condolence resolution. His soul may rest in peace in heaven.

CONCLUSION:

The name of Mir Bezanjo stands very high among the trendsetters of the modern politics in Balochistan. He is generally portrayed among the democratic and vocal but regional politicians of the contemporary Balochistan but the unbiased study of his life, social and political perceptions depicts very clearly that he was a national leader and belonged to that global school of thought which always stressed upon the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity. He, if in one instance advocated the Baloch national honour, then simultaneously, for the liberty and freedom of the "motherland" on the other. He believed in the supremacy of the public with and sovereignty. Therefore, his political struggle annoyed the dictatorial governments and absolute authoritarians. He suffered but resisted this annoyance and continued his struggle.

NOTES/REFERENCES:

1. The statement of Mir Bezanjo was published in the national and international newspapers repeatedly wherein he touched the fragile and sensitive points of this issue which the others might be ignoring.
2. Brailvay, Mujahid, Jamhoriyat Ka Safar (Urdu), Karachi, Pakistani Adab Publications, 1987, P.33.
3. Harrison, Selig S., In Afghanistan,s shadow, New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1981, P.89.
4. Ibid, P.89.
5. View point, "What P.N.P stands for" 19th August Lahore 1979, P.7, more details are also given in view point, "A National Party is Born", 10th June, Lahore, 1979 P.10.
6. Harrison, Selig S., Opcit., P.52.
7. Ibid., P.52.
8. Bazanjo believed in the Quranic Version that the Almighty God recognized tribes clans and nationalities and a universal brotherhood of all the believers. See imroze,Lahore, 29th August, 1978, P.1. Please see also Pakistan Times, Bezanjo and Nationalities", 28th August, 1978, Lahore, P.1.
9. Brailvay, Mujahid, Opcit., P.83.
10. Ibid., P.P. 90-91.
11. Harrison, Selig S., Opcit., P.P.55-56.
12. Election Results, 1988.
13. DAWN Karachi , August 21 , 1989 .
14. Mashriq Quetta , 8th July, 1985 .
15. Jan Mohammad, Essays on Baloch National struggle in Pakistan, Quetta , Gosha-e-Adab , 1989 ,P . 417 .
16. The description of last days of Mir Bezanjo is taken from Tahir Bezanjo, Baba-e-Ustaman Opcit., P.P.40-55. Tahir Bezanjo stayed with him in his last days so he observed him quite closely. His description is not only factual but full of love and sincerity.
17. Jang Karachi, 12th August 1989.