

THE DEMOCRATIC STRUGGLE IN BALOCHISTAN AGAINST ONE UNIT SCHEME, 1955 AND THE ROLE OF MIR GHOUS BUKHSH BEZINJO

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ABSTRACT

One unit scheme was announced to unify the various units into one province to be known as west Pakistan. It was an important and highly controversial task perform by second constituent Assembly of Pakistan. The way in which one unit was established was not free from serious criticism. Mir Ghous bakhsh Bizanjo was, one the personality in Balochistan opposing one unit scheme of 1955 on all the plate forms. He always argued that Balochistan is the land ,full of Natural resources and in the shares of Balochistan ,there are natural ports ,thus the Balochistan has quite bright future .It just needs opportunity for the proper use of potentials .He further argued that induction and inflow in the services of Balochistan from other parts of west Pakistan was causing deprivation and frustration in the Local people ,here in Mir Bizanjo took a very serious view of it and he struggled for many years.His struggle became fruitful with resolution by Provincial Assembly for dissolution of one unit scheme. But soon he was sent to the Jail where he suffered a lot.

KEY WORDS: West Pakistan, one unit, opposition, Balochistan, Mir Bizanjo, Struggle.

INTRODUCTION

Even the eight years of existence, Pakistan was without Constitution. The main reason was believed to be the fact that there were two unequal wings of Pakistan separated from each other more than a thousand miles. To diminish the differences between the two regions. The Government of Pakistan decided that all the four provinces and the state of West Pakistan should be merged into one unit.

While the one unit scheme in the west Pakistan could be supported on the various grounds, the way in which it was established was not free from serious criticism. The original plan has been to introduced by the Executive decrees.

The decision of the Government introduced by the Prime minister, Mohammad Ali on 22 November, then it was followed by the Governor General order No.8 of 1954 setting up a council for the administration of the west Pakistan, and in March 1955, the Governor General assumed powers to constitute the new province of west Pakistan by an order.(Order,1955)

The Government's proposal were subsequently endorsed by the various provincial Assemblies and were generally welcomed through west Pakistan, although opposition was expressed in Sindh, Karachi and Balochistan. Resolution scheme were adopted by the legislative assemblies of NWFP and Punjab in November, by Sindh assembly in December and by the Shahi Jirgah of Balochistan on 29 November. The Khan of Kalat expressed his support and announced it on 3rd January 1955, that an agreement had been signed by the Khan and the other rulers of the

state forming the Balochistan states union for merger of all these states (kalat, Lasbella and Kharan) into unified west Pakistan (Feldman 1955: 84).

Mir Ghous Baksh Bizanjo and one unit scheme 1955

Mir Ghous Baksh Bizanjo was a prominent Baloch politician of Balochistan. He was one of the founding members of National Awami Party; he served as Governor of Balochistan from 1972 to 1973 and was a key signatory to Pakistan Third constitution of 1973.

But when in 1955 all of west Pakistan provinces and princely states were merged into one unit .This was not acceptable to the Baloch Nationalists and Mir Ghous Baksh Bizanjo was one of them had been opposing One unit scheme on all the platforms and his struggle became fruitful with the approval of the resolution by the Provincial Assembly for the dissolution One Unit scheme. This resolution proved to be a new battery for the politics of Mir Bezanjo in Balochistan. He always argued that Balochistan had sufficient resources required for development .Balochistan had plenty of Mineral and horticultural resources. It had sufficient potentials for agriculture .The shores of Balochistan were the natural Ports thus Balochistan had quite bright future, what all it needed was the opportunity for the proper use of the potentials.

But the opponents of Mir Bezanjo and the supporters of the One Unit Scheme has been stressing that the backwardness of Balochistan become visible only after the establishment of One Unit and it was felt that Balochistan was still in dark ages(the middle ages) and that the development in Balochistan with its own resources is neither feasible nor advisable as Balochistan does not have sufficient resources for the proposed developments and that the educational, cultural, industrial development is possible only through the arrangement of One Unit (Tahir 1998: 237).

OPPOSITION TO ONE UNIT

Mir Bezanjo and his colleagues opposed the One Unit Scheme on the basis that the induction and inflow in the services of Balochistan from other parts of West Pakistan was causing deprivation and frustration in the local people. Their participation in the government was very marginal and they were ignored altogether. Government never provided opportunities to the people to be educated enough for the induction in the services. There had been never encouragement for induction in the armed services, the people were deprived altogether of the opportunities of development.

The discovery of natural gas commonly known as Sui Gas brought frustration to the people of Balochistan but prosperity to the rest of the areas of West Pakistan. The gas was transmitted and trafficked to Karachi and Punjab from Sui but the people of Balochistan were completely ignored and the gas was not provided neither for domestic nor industrial use. This situation further increased the sense of deprivation in Balochistan herein Mir Bezanjo took a very serious view of it and his hypothesis that one unit system was introduces to trap the resources of Balochistan was proving correct.(Tahir,1998,pp201-2)

ONE UNIT-ALLOCATION OF FUNDS ON POPULATION BASIS:

In one unit scheme on the basis of population, the areas of Punjab were better beneficiaries as the allocation of funds were on the population basis but the areas of Balochistan were the suffers as they were thinly populated. The developmental resources, funds and representation in the democratic institutions on all levels were to be

allocated on the population basis and not on the basis of area or the degree of poverty. This is why the people of Balochistan were very justly and rightly feeling deprived and frustrated. Mir Bezanjo took a very firm stance and stressed upon the allocation of resources on the basis of area and the poverty as Balochistan was having the biggest area and was extremely backward.

Mir Bezanjo and his colleagues had been very active in mobilizing the students as it could strengthen the movement for the rights of the people of Balochistan. He always stressed upon the youth for both qualitative and quantitative education. As it could be helpful in the furtherance of their rights. Consequently the student- politics at college level at Quetta started presenting a different picture. In the days of complete ban upon the political activities, the students played the spearhead role in the politics of Balochistan.

He mobilized the students and they responded positively and participated in the politics of Balochistan. The Baloch Students of Karachi also followed him and the Baloch students of Karachi University established Baloch Students Educational Society in 1960 as the events of the governmental atrocities and the military operations were an eye opener for the younger generation. He and other Baloch leaders like Mir Gul Khan Naseer and others were put in Qulli Camp in Quetta where they were tortured and humiliated.

Mir Gul Khan Naseer's poems became very popular and were being sung and recited at youth gathering. Mir Bezanjo did the political teaching and made the students conscious of the need for a constant struggle for a better political and cultural environment where the people could achieve their national rights.

The Warna Waninda Gali, the educational youth forum further increased the political consciousness and awareness in the Baloch youth which ultimately resulted in the establishment of Baloch Students Organization (B.S.O.) on 26th November, 1967 after a 3 days convention at Karachi. With B.S.O the politics became more alive. Mir Bezanjo had always been much positive about the role of youth in politics. He said that the youth were the successors of his politics further that he was proud to leave behind a generation of youth which could serve the people even in a better way. These words of Baba-Ustaman reflect his faith in the youth who had supported his hands against One Unit and for the furtherance of the rights of the people.

THE EFFECTS OF BEZANJO'S POLITICS ON THE POLICIES OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

Mir Bezanjo's struggle and strong opposition to One Unit was dully supported by the people of Balochistan it was further strengthened by the youth. His voice was heard in the power corridors and it started showing its effect from the very beginning and it started showing effects on the policies of Federal Government. Sikander Mirza, the president of Pakistan took a very serious view of the resolution of the provincial assembly on 23rd September 1957 declared in a statement that the approval of this resolution had disturbed the masses and the government machinery and that he had discussed it with the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and that both of them were agreed that the constitution could not be amended at this stage. Regarding the re-demarcation of the province of West Pakistan (Jan, 1989, ppp214-16) On the same evening Prime Minister Suhrawardy expressed his opinion in the favor of one unit in a radio message. He further said that to avoid any further delay in the

conduct of elections, the same system should continue, however, the newly elected assembly, if desires can make any such change in the system and the constitution , But this response and stand of the federal government could not satisfy Bezanjo and the colleague of N.A.P. and they further strengthened their struggle.(Tahir,1990,p110)

Bezanjo at this point got an indirect support from the Khan in a way that when Bezanjo was fighting on all fronts against the scheme of one unit and for the rights of the people of Balochistan, Khan showed a change in his responses and became active. .He lead a delegation of the tribal chiefs of Balochistan to see the President of Pakistan on 8th October 1957 and pleaded the case for the honor of the traditional system of the Balochs and an end for the one unit system. (Noor,1992,p283) Here Khan was obviously supporting the cause for which Bezanjo had been fighting for quite a longtime .Khan on 26th August 1958 once again stressed upon the breakup of one unit and re-demarcation of the province on linguistic basis. He repeated it next day at Mastung as well.

ONLY BEZANJO, A RAY OF HOPE

The Government of Pakistan did not like this attitude of Khan and during midnight of 5th October 1958,the Deputy Commissioner Kalat ,accompanied by the police and army left Mastung for Kalat to effect the arrest of the Khan under the orders of the Central Government (Ahmed yar,1975,pp173-75) Khan always remembered this time as a nightmare .But the bold struggle of Bezanjo continued here he emerged as a ray of hope for the people, though the political situation in Balochistan was worsened after the arrest of Khan.

BEZANJO DETAINED:

Gen Ayub Khan imposed Martial Law on midnight of the 8th October 1958, Bezanjo and his colleagues was arrested immediately

after the imposition of Martial Law and was kept at Quli Camp Quetta(Awan,1985,p222)Sardar Dinar Khan kurd,Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai and Mohammad Hussain Unqa were also arrested. Generally public in Balochistan was very much annoyed and the first hostile act against the government was the firing on a moving train on the 13th October 1958 but there were no casualties (Quli camp,stories) The mass resentment due to the detention of Bezanjo was increasing day by day.

DETENTION OF NAUROZ KHAN:

The detention of Bezanjo increased unrest and resentment in Balochistan.Sardar Nauroz Khan Zarakzai an old man of 90 years but a very staunch nationalist started his armed struggle and he with his men sat on the top of a hill feature called Mir Ghat. His struggle could not last long and came to an end midnight the 19th and 20th May 1959. He was sentenced for life imprisonment while his son Mir Battay Khan and his companions were hanged(Awan,1985,pp226-28) Mir Nauroz Khan died in Jail after about five years but he left behind the legend of a Baloch hero.(Naseer,1979,pp352-53)This incident was also the outcome of the political unrest and resentment in Balochistan Bezanjo was more a man on of politics and believed in the democratic methods of struggle.His constant contact and continuous consultations also made the Khan realize that his ideas and the targets of politics were correct, so he started supporting the nationalist movement

,whereupon he was arrested. His arrest further created unrest among the Balochs. The reflections of Bezanjo's political struggles were evident but the political problems were not handled politically ,rather the use of force was further deteriorating the situation .The arrest and hanging of Zehris further widened the gap between the federal and the regional politics of Balochistan.(Awan,1985,p228)

ELECTIONS OF 1962 AND THE STRUGGLE OF BEZANJO

Ayub Khan introduced the constitution of 1962 to formalize and rationalize his rule. The general elections for the provincial and national assemblies were also announced. (Kazmi,2012,p156) Bezanjo became very active in these elections and he played a very significant role in the politics of Balochistan. He reorganized his political party and mobilized his colleagues. He and his colleagues held public gatherings. His speeches were very much controlled, rational; well worded and organized. He was bringing a new life to the democratic politics in the province by enhancing the political consciousness in the people. The general public gatherings wept when he narrated the poor conditions of the people. On 5 and 7 August 1962 in the general public meeting he and other Baloch leaders spoke and narrated how the people were suffering at the hands of the prevailing system. His speeches brought political mobilization in the Balochs. In these elections his tireless efforts brought the fruit of success to Sardar Atta Ullah Mengal from Kalat Division (National Assembly), Mir Abdul Baqi Baloch from Makran (Provincial Assembly), Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri from Quetta Division (National Assembly), Ahmad Nawaz Bugti from Sibi (Provincial Assembly). This was a big achievement for Bezanjo and his party.

MIR BEZANJO WAS AGAIN ARRESTED

The speeches of Bezanjo annoyed government. Bezanjo and Khuda Bakhsh Marri had flown to the East Pakistan on a political tour, Karachi police was waiting for his plain when he was returning from East Pakistan. On his return he was arrested right from the airport. Suherworthy was also present on the event, he criticized these actions of the government and said, " he is a big personality of the politics of Pakistan.

He takes the Jail as his house. He is a Baloch, Alas had he been a leader of Bengal or Punjab"(Gul-e-aaeedat, pp182-83) these words of Suherworthy are a big tribute to Bezanjo.

He took an active part in the elections of 1964 and on the persistent pressure and demand of the people he decided to contest the elections. His supporters alleged that the government machinery worked against him and created all the conditions to keep him away from success. His polling agents were detained and eventually he was kept away from success but it did not discourage him and he continued his democratic struggle.

MIR BEZANJO AND THE ELECTIONS OF 1965

Mir Bezanjo had firm belief in democracy and the struggle for justice and fair play. The difficulties never discouraged him. He contested the bi-elections which were held on 22" May 1965 at Karachi wherein he defeated Hafiz Habib Ullah Piracha. This election's success enhanced the courage of the democratic forces.

.Mahinood UI Haq Usmani gave a very warm reception to Bezanjo wherein he said, "People are the real fountain of sovereignty. The negation of the right of self-determination to the masses kills the democratic spirit and soul .No matter it is Presidential system or Parliamentary System; what is important is the superiority of the masses. The Baloch nation is determined for the rights, later or sooner the Baloch will get their rights"(Daily jang,15/10/1987) These words of Bezanjo very clearly reflect the love he had not only for the Balochs but for democracy justice and fair play.

MIR BEZANJO IN THE PARLIAMENT

Bezanjo had deep sense of law and justice. He wanted the rule of law, social, economic and political justice in the country. His education at Aligarh and his strong belief in democracy had made him a mature

politician .The experiences of the jails and the Quli camp further strengthened his faith in the democratic struggle.(Aqeedat,p184) After winning the elections of 1965 and reaching in the parliament,he worked very hard and made efforts to raise the voice for rights in the national assembly. He in his address in the National Assembly of Pakistan said," Federal government is spending millions daily over the bombardment in Balochistan, even then you (the finance minister) are talking about the construction and development. Karachi is the biggest city of Pakistan but every tenth man sleeps on the foot path .I cannot understand which type of development in the country is going on". These words of Bezanjo were very hard for the government and it was very difficult for them to bear such language.

DETENTION OF BEZANJO

Bezanjo in 1968 was once again arrested. This time on the allegation that he was propagating against One Unit. Some currency notes bearing the slogans of "Breaking of One Unit" and "Return the rights of the Balochs' were recovered from him and this recovery was declared as a big crime. He was prosecuted and the imprisonment of 14 years was inflicted. He was sent to Jail which had become his second house. He suffered but never surrendered, as he was a democratic in the real sense but misunderstood.(Tahir,1998,pp230-31)

CONCLUSION

Mir Bezanjo was a democratic politician. He believed in the democratic and peaceful struggle for the socio-economic and political justice .He believed in the sovereignty of the people. .He was frustrated by the deprivation of the people of Balochistan.. He felt the pain of the miseries of the people .He believed that the people of Balochistan also

deserved the same civic life as it was in the developed areas of Pakistan. Balochistan had sufficient development potentials and if tapped Balochistan could become a rich province.

He did not like the One Unit Scheme and considered it against the interest of the land and the people. He struggled democratically to replace it with the arrangement where Balochistan could have the status of a complete province. His views were not rightly perceived by the decision makers and he was made a jail bird., he suffered but tolerated it all with patience. He believed in the principles of liberty, equality, fraternity justice and fair play. He was not a feudal, rather a commoner and the lover of commoner.

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