

## Scenario 10

### **Demolishing the Civil Services Structure:**

In 1950, when the Civil Service of Pakistan (CSP) was re-established as it was in the India before partition, the cabinet secretariat had decided that 10 per cent of its strength would be raised from the armed forces but the decision was never implemented. After Gen Ayub Khan seized power in 1958, he desired to revive the 1950's decision and made a list of perspective army officers to be sent to civil services. It was agreed that the said induction would be done through the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) from among the list sent by the GHQ.

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's administrative reforms of 1973 introduced the concepts of lateral entry and horizontal mobility into the civil service. Bypassing the FPSC, selections were largely made on the basis of nepotism and political affiliations. In his tenure (1972-1977) the PM Bhutto appointed 83 army officers to the secretariat, foreign affairs, tribal areas and district management groups whereas between 1960 and 1963, only 14 officers were appointed by Gen Ayub, then the scheme was discontinued.

In July 1977, Bhutto was ousted in a military coup by army chief Gen Ziaul Haq and executed in 1979. The military regime, which lasted until his crash in 1988, forcibly suppressed political opposition and launched a far-reaching *Islamisation* drive to achieve domestic legitimacy with support from the religious right. A traditionally secular civil bureaucracy was then compelled to reframe 'the ideological orientation of the civil servant' through measures such as a uniform dress code and enforced prayer breaks during office hours. There was a 'minimal emphasis on professional work' as long as officials were deemed 'good' Muslims.

Gen Ziaul Haq had made a commission on civil service reforms, which proposed a number of radical departures from Bhutto's system such as abolishing all occupational groups; creating several technical services to accommodate specialists in fields such as agriculture, education, engineering and medicine; revamping district administration; and creating numerous in-service training institutions. However, Gen Ziaul Haq largely retained the old system.

Referring to the daily ***Dawn of 4th September 2011*** ['*Military in Civil Service*' by Aminullah Chaudhry], Gen Faiz Ali Chishti, Gen Zia's right-hand man, said that Mr Bhutto had destroyed the institution of the civil service by recruiting his own party men and Gen Zia did more. If the PPP was Mr Bhutto's party, then the armed forces were Gen Ziaul Haq's party.

During both Gen Ayub and PM Bhutto's regimes, induction of few retired or released military officers into the civil services was made, but the practice was never institutionalized. Gen Ziaul Haq not only recruited many more officers and placed them in higher ranks of the bureaucracy, but also institutionalized the practice by making sure of 10% military quota at lucrative posts in the civilian bureaucracy for serving and retired military officers.

The practice, however, remained confined to the induction [of the commissioned officers from Army, PAF & Navy] into the District Management Group (DMG), Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP), and Police Service of Pakistan (PSP). Usually officers of captain rank were short listed by MS Branch of GHQ and selected against this quota after the permission and direct approval of the Chief of Army Staff before an eye-wash interview process. The interviews were though conducted by a committee headed by the Chairman FPSC, apparently same as in the case of regular candidates but the wish of the COAS mostly prevailed.

When the barriers lifted by Gen Zia the ADCs of the serving Generals, staff officers of corps commanders, sons and brothers of senior army officers and even doctors availed the blessings. The successive political governments did nothing to reverse the trend. Chief Minister Punjab Nawaz Sharif had 'relaxed' the relevant rules and appointed two principal staff officers (a colonel and a major) his chief pilot and two majors to the provincial services. During Gen Musharraf's rule the large-scale influx of army officers into the civil service was masterminded by Lt Gen Tanwir Naqvi of the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB).

In an interview with Ayesha Siddiqi in 2002, Maj Gen Rashid Qureshi had said that *'the average military officer is better qualified and more intelligent than the average civil bureaucrat'*. Till 2011, out of roughly 650 DMG officers, around 100 are from the army, air force and navy.

Alleged that Bhutto's 1973 Constitution and his Civil Service Ordinance carrying 'Lateral Entry' & 'Horizontal Mobility' had destroyed the whole structure of the civil service. The main challenge was that the politicians and military officers who wanted to bring about this change preferred to have a weak and subservient civil service rather than a strong and independent one. PM Bhutto removed the civil services protection by taking it out of the 1973 Constitution to make sure the bureaucracy became completely docile and malleable.

In the late 70s and early 80s Gen Ziaul Haq initially wanted to restore some of the guarantees to the civil bureaucracy but then went silent. Certain politicians had suggested to Gen Musharraf to restore constitutional protection to the civil service but he had avoided too. Contrarily he himself wanted the powers to remove civil servants without any reasons given.

***Asia Report No; 185 dated 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010*** compiled by International Crisis Group mentions that Gen Ziaul Haq had institutionalised military induction into the civil service, a practice that had been conducted on an ad hoc basis by earlier regimes, permanently entrenching the military's presence in the bureaucracy. In 1962, Ayub Khan had once thought a 50 per cent reservation for ex-servicemen in bureaucracy but only appointed eight army captains to the elite CSP. Bhutto's lateral entry scheme had resulted in as many as 83 military officers appointed to senior public service positions.

While Gen Ziaul Haq initially re-employed only retired military officers on a contract basis, in 1980, he decreed that 10 per cent of vacancies in the federal bureaucracy at Basic Pay Scale (BPS) 17 & 18 would be reserved for retired or released military officers. These officers were not selected by the FPSC but by a High Powered Selection Committee headed by Gen Ziaul Haq himself being the *Ameerul Momineen or Khalifa e Waqt*.

The committee was also tasked to fill 10 per cent of senior vacancies (BPS 19-22) in the Secretariat Group, Foreign Affairs Group, Accounts Group and Information Group. Former military officers were mostly employed on three to five year contracts. Many officers of the rank of brigadier and above were thus inducted as federal and provincial secretaries. In 1982, eighteen out of 42 ambassadors were retired military officers. In 1985, a serving major general was chosen to head the Intelligence Bureau, the country's main civilian intelligence agency, for the first time in Pakistan's history.

By 1985, 98 former military officers were permanently inducted in BPS 17 & 18 posts, while 111 held senior appointments on contract. The civil bureaucracy was thus *'reduced to a wholly subordinate role by the regime's policy of grafting military officers to key jobs in the central and provincial administrations, public sector industries as well as other semi-government and autonomous organisations'*.

Like the previous army ruler Gen Ayub Khan, Gen Ziaul Haq also used local bodies to cover a highly centralised, authoritarian system of government under the garb of decentralisation, through non-party elections in 1979, 1983 and 1987. Civil bureaucrats, commissioners and deputy commissioners, were reduced to ex-officio, non-voting members of the City & District Councils. It is alleged that Gen Ziaul Haq had further eroded the neutrality of civil officers through large-scale postings and transfers, both at the district and policy-making levels in the federal and provincial secretariats, with calculated intervals.

The fact remains that during 1990s, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Nawaz Sharif's PML(N) both had their own 'teams' of civil servants who were patronised and promoted not on merit but on their perceived loyalty to their respective political masters. Appointing senior civil officers known for their political affiliations rather than their professionalism, Benazir Bhutto and the two Sharifs created "*an atmosphere where the corrupt could get away with their schemes – be they politicians, tax-evading businessmen, or self-serving civil servants*". Names of numerous Saeed Mehdis and Salman Farooquis would be remembered in the history for spoiling the Pakistan's political structure, inviting army to take over and nullify their 'precious advices' to their political masters.

The military exploited this perception of rampant corruption advised by some known civil bureaucrats to justify its political interventions, masking the actual goal, to retain control over foreign and domestic policies. On the basis of ill intentioned suggestions of these corps of political bureaucrats the post Zia governments gradually dissolved local bodies in the NWFP in 1991, in Sindh in 1992, and in Punjab in 1993. The primary motivations were political, rather than the desire to improve governance and curb corruption.

Getting scared of the electoral influence of local officials, who had served as willing clients of the military regime, the PPP and the PML(N) opted to appoint administrators to run local councils sending the actually competent civil bureaucracy on '*Khudday Line postings*' in secretariats while keeping their numbered loyalists in the cabinet corridors to make out pseudo-national policies for respective political parties.

In fact Gen Musharraf's military regime, like Gen Zia's, took the practice of appointing serving and retired military officers into the civilian cadets to 'unprecedented' levels. During much of his rule, all the major civil service institutions were headed by retired military officers. The Federal Public Service Commission responsible for overseeing recruitment, main civil service training institutions like NIPA and Administrative Staff College, National & Provincial Accountability Bureaux and even the Civil Service Reform Unit, all were placed under the militarized control.

Quite naturally this practice, especially in the Foreign Service, was seen as a cause of growing disgruntlement amongst civil servants who saw their promotion prospects blocked by military appointees. In earlier years, the civil service had viewed the military as their natural allies and politicians as the major threat to their influence but the large-scale inductions of military officers into senior positions of the civil services gradually reversed that perception. Facts told by an ex-bureaucrat are that:

*'Twenty years ago the Army was a state within a state. Today the Army is the state—everything else is appendages. The Army controls all state institutions—civil service, foreign policy, economic policy, intelligence agencies, judiciary and the legislature. They've monopolized policymaking. At the same time; the civilian bureaucracy is suffering from institutional decay and moving in the opposite direction. This has changed the power balance from the colonial era and the first two decades after independence when the civilian bureaucracy was the strongest institution.'*

Pakistan's political scenario brings frustration no doubt; democratic traditions have been ruined collectively through 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment introducing a culture of civil dictatorship, but the military cannot ignore the general civil society altogether. It had to accommodate the growing domestic and international pressures to govern the populace. This was vividly demonstrated by the lawyers' movement of 2007 and 2008, which helped force Gen Musharraf to hold general elections in February 2008 and to resign as president six months later.

The ***Arab News of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2010*** opined that the majority of Pakistanis view the country's 2.4 million civil servants as inefficient, unresponsive and corrupt. *'Military rule has left behind a demoralized and inefficient bureaucracy that was used to ensure regime's survival. Low salaries, insecure tenure, obsolete accountability mechanisms and political interference have spawned widespread corruption and impunity. Thus rising public resentment could be used by the military to justify another spell of authoritarian rule.'*

