

Role of Punjab in the Movement for Restoration of Democracy

Abdul Qadir Mushtaq¹

Dr Farhat Mehmood²

Tohid Ahmad³

Anam Saleem⁴

Abstract

Punjab has the greatest importance in the politics, economy, social, religious aspects of the people of Pakistan. It has always been remained the main center of all political activities. Its people are considered industrious and hard working. It is divided into different parts like central Punjab, South Punjab etc. The culture and traits are different in different parts of the Punjab. The demands of the leaders of the various are also different. The people of Punjab always play role in every alliance which has either established against any kind of dictator. Without the support of its people, it is impossible for the alliances to achieve its targets. The blame is also given to the people of Punjab that they are always ready to cooperate with the dictators and do not raise protests against those who shake the roots of democracy. This paper presents the role of the people of Punjab in the movement for restoration of democracy which has been launched for challenging the rule of Zia Regime. The efforts have been made to highlight the efforts of the people of Punjab during movement.

Movement for Restoration of Democracy

MRD was an alliance of nine political parties. Most of those political parties⁵ who had launched movement against Bhutto were the part of the Movement for Restoration of Democracy against Zia. Muslim Fundamentalist opposition parties like JUI, Centrist opposition Parties like Muslim League, Nationalist Opposition parties like NAP, Leftist political Parties like Qoumi Mahaz Azadi, Mazdour Kassan Party, PPP. All kinds of parties had joined the alliance. Jamaat-i-Islami had also divided on the issue of the support of Zia regime. Though jamaat was not the part of the alliance but it was being considered that Jamaat was promoting the agenda of MRD due to the criticism of Prof. Ghafoor and Munawaar Hasan on Zia regime.

The movement has divided the scholars into two different sections, one adopts that the people of Punjab did not play role in the movement. The movement proved to be an important landmark in the politics of Sindh but its failure lay in its inability to provoke a response in Punjab. If the Punjab had participated in the movement Zia would not been able to stay. They give the following reasons

1. Al-Zulfikar Organization (AZO) accepted the responsibility of the hijacking. Mir Murtaza Bhutto, the elder son of Z. A. Bhutto was the leader of the organization. He himself issued the press statement and took all the responsibilities. After this incident many questions were raised about the leadership of the MRD. "Government propagated that it was the conspiracy of the PPP leadership against the army and Pakistan. The hijacking of the plane and specially, the murder of army Captain Tariq by the hijackers left the negative impression in Punjab" (Author's Interview with Aitazaz Ahsan). It lowered the tempo of the movement especially in Punjab.

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of History & Pakistan Studies, GC University, Faisalabad.

² Professor, Department of History, GC University, Lahore

³ Research Officer, Department of History & Pakistan Studies, GC University, Faisalabad

⁴ Research scholar, Department of History & Pakistan Studies, GC University, Faisalabad.

⁵ The political scientists declare the political party – a group of people organized for the purpose of winning government power. Political party displays some measures of ideological cohesion. The principal classification of political parties have distinguished between cadre and mass or, later, catch all parties, parties of representation and parties of integration, constitutional or main stream parties and revolutionary and anti system ones, and left wing parties and right wing parties. Andrew Heywood, *Politics*, P. 249.

2. “A large number of leaders and workers of PPP and MRD were arrested. But policy towards the public was different in Sindh and Punjab. This was the reason that the roads and streets of Punjab were not closed during the MRD movement. But in Sindh people were fighting with the army. They even did not allow Zia to land in Dadu.” (Author’s Interview with Aitazaz Ahsan)
3. No doubt PPP Punjab participated in the MRD movement and their leaders and workers were also arrested, but they could not succeed to mobilize the common man against the government. It was a well laid plot and vigorous campaign of Zia junta to create a division between the Sindhis and the Punjabis and to crush Punjab and Sindh based PPP”(Interview with Professor Aziz Uddin Ahmed). By such division between the people of the country military junta wanted to prolong its rule. They gave more privileges to the people of the Punjab as compared to Sindh. And behaviour of the officers as well as the army *Jawans* towards the Sindhis was humiliating and insulting. It was due to the reason that the majority in the army belonged to Punjab and Zia was afraid of the rebellion from this province. The Punjab was silent at the time when movement was at its peak in Sindh. It was propagated by the Martial Law authority that people of Sindh were fighting for the freedom, not for democracy. To strengthen this impression Zia regime penetrated his men in the movement. They chanted a slogan against Pakistan in the rallies and the procession of MRD (Interview with Hussain Bakhsh Narejo).
4. “If the Punjab had participated in the movement Zia would not been able to stay” (Authors Interview with Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi).
5. The movement proved to be an important landmark in the politics of Sindh but its failure lay in its inability to provoke a response in Punjab (Noman 1988).
6. It left many impacts on the country and specially on the politics of Sindh. The people of Sindh considered Pakistan as *Punjabistan*.
7. Jahan Dad Khan (1999, p. 172) accepted this very fact in these words, “The Pakistan army and Martial Law were considered to be synonymous with the Punjab. The majority of Sindhis felt that their interests were no longer safe in the hands of Martial Law and the army dominated Punjab.”
8. As Akbar Zaidi, said, “The 1983 and 1986 movements of the MRD due to lack of support in other provinces was labeled a “Sindhi Rebellion” (Zaidi, 1992, p. 131).
9. SayedMushahid Hussain (1991, p. 118) also took that point:

“During the autumn of 1983, when the agitation in Sindh seemed to have the potential to overflow into the Punjab, Mrs. Indira Gandhi came out with a public statement of sympathy with those against the regime. This maneuvers of late Indian Prime Minister back-fired and the regime able to exploit quite skillfully the situation in a way that, many observers posed a certain linkage between the agitation in that province and India.”⁶

10. It was chance that if the people of Punjab participated in the movement as Sindh, Zia might have held the elections and left the power. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi said, “If the Punjab had supported the movement of MRD, Zia would have left the power and army gone back to the barracks” (Interview with Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi).
11. Ayesha Jalal has also of the opinion that MRD failed to ignite the majority province of Punjab. The government had exerted influence over the local politics. She has the idea that

“The regime’s policies of differential patronage and selective mobilization had won over substantial segments of Punjab’s dominant socio-economic strata, landlords and industrialists and, most promisingly, emergent commercial groups.”⁷

These are the blames which are given to the people of Punjab by the writers as well as the politicians. It is said that the people of other provinces did not show so much interest as the people of Sindh had showed. They used to be viewed as a Sindhi movement which had been launched for the redressal of Sindhi grievances and removal of their sense of deprivation. Due to Sindhi tag on the movement, it lost its national appeal.⁸ It is fact that the landlords and the industrialists did not play role in igniting the people of Punjab but the real power of PPP has always been middle and lower middle class.

⁶SayedMushahid Hussain , *Pakistan’s Politics The Zia Years*, P. 118.

⁷ Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, p. 106.

⁸ Roedad Khan, *Pakistan – A Dream Gone Sour*, P. 89.

The workers and the trade unions of Punjab resented against the rule of dictator. In the major cities of Punjab, Lahore, Faisalabad and Multan, MRD was very successful in gathering the people. The Punjabis faced the cases and remained in jails due to their support of MRD. It was fact that the movement was not as popular as was in Sindh but the people of Punjab rendered valuable services for the restoration of democracy during Zia regime. The efforts can be analysed as under;

1. In Punjab, On 26 March 1981, the parties of MRD met at Lahore and passed a resolution against amendments in the constitution of 1973. The leaders issued the statement that Ziaul Haq had abrogated the constitution of 1973 and was therefore a traitor. Same the statement came from Baluchistan. These meetings also congratulated those judges who had refused to take oath.⁹
2. The middle and lower middle classes in Punjab showed the solidarity with PPP and tried to achieve the results at the platform of MRD.
3. In Faisalabad, the lawyers fully agitated against Zia regime at the platform of MRD. The prominent personalities from Faisalabad were, Ch Talib Hussain, Zaman Khan, Badruddin Ch., Ch. Umer Draz, Shams Ul Islam Naz, Ahmed Saeed Awan, Fazal Hussain Rahi, Ghias uddin Janbaz. The people of Multan also strengthened the movement like Ch Arshad, Mukhtar Ahmed Awan. From Lahore, Atzaz ahsin, Mahmood Butt were the prominent personalities.¹⁰
On 19 Oct. 1983, the lawyers organized “a protest day against the martial law regime”. In Lahore, they tried to take out a procession but police created hurdles through throwing stones and bricks. A clash took place in the premises of Lahore High Court. The role of Talat Yaqub (Lawyer) was very remarkable in Lahore Bar Association. She used to shout at the male dominated Lahore Bar Association, throwing off her glass bangles and waving the Pakistani flag. She raised the slogans of democracy and challenged the clutches of the police. Few lawyers were injured and few were arrested by police.
4. The students disturbances were started in Dargai, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Multan and Quetta. One student was injured and some were arrested by the police. The students also contributed in the movements through the strikes in the institutions, especially in universities. The students in the Frontier province were the first to take to the streets. The protests also broke out in the institutions of Multan, Sheikupura, Bahawalpur and Quetta.¹¹
5. The doctors of Rawalpindi started to join the movement and arranged discussions on the demand of MRD on 27 Feb 1981. Near about twenty doctors were arrested by the government. On this action of government, the doctors all over the country decided to go on strike and demanded the release of the arrested doctors. They threatened that the strike would go on until their demand was not met.¹²
6. In Feb. 1983, the leaders of the MRD met in Lahore under the tight security from the government side. It was a violation of martial law regulations. The leaders decided to observe a “Political Prisoner’s day”. That meeting was dispersed by the police by force.
7. Movement for Restoration for Democracy enlisted the services of labour unions. It was an effort to active the labor class against the autocratic rule of Gen. Muhammad Zia. Due to labor reforms of ZAB and the slogan of socialism of PPP had created soft corner in the hearts of labor unions.¹³ The Pakistan Railway worker’s union decided to oppose to the government of Gen Muhammad Zia and support the slogans of MRD. On 26th Oct. 1983, factory and railway workers took out the procession in Lahore and shouted anti-martial law slogans. In the procession, near about ten thousand workers took part. Police tried to handle them but the leader of workers, Bashir Zafar, was injured. Police tried to confine them to the railway premises. The workers became aggressive and burnt buses, cars and petrol pumps. They also burnt the portraits of Martial Law dictator.¹⁴

⁹ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 257.

¹⁰ Interview with Amina Zaman, dated 1st August 2011.

¹¹ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 146.

¹² Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, PP. 247, 249. 260.

¹³ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan At The Crosscurrent Of History*, P. 183

¹⁴ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 322.

8. The successful boycott of the 1984 referendum caused the MRD to miscalculate their next step. Being confident of public opinion, MRD boycotted the non-party based 1985 elections.¹⁵ From 14 to 16 Sept 1984, the meeting of the leaders of MRD held in Lahore and they decided to boycott any elections which were not free, fair and in accordance with the constitution of 1973. They also pledged to form an electoral alliance in any future elections in which the MRD would take part and after the election to stay together in the government. Later on, the central council of MRD was met from 18 to 19 Jan 1985.¹⁶ Their main demand was that the elections should not be held under Zia regime and that the 1973 constitution had to be restored before elections could take place. They also demanded that martial law should be lifted before elections and political prisoners should be released. It was also their suggestion that elections should be held on party bases. The leaders agreed that if these conditions were not met, they would not accept any election under martial law. All the political parties that had joined Movement for Restoration of Democracy not only refused to participate in the elections which were going to be held under the supervision of military government but also denied to accept the results of the elections
9. But Asghar Khan has an opinion about turn out in the elections of 1985. He mentions the names of those districts in his book "My Political struggle" where the turnout was very low in Punjab. Among those districts were Lahore, Rawalpindi, Sahiwal, Faisalabad, Vehari, Multan and Sargodha. The turnout in these areas was near about 30 percent but the election commission announced that 52.9 percent votes had been cast in the National Assembly polls.¹⁷
10. The female section of MRD was also very active. In Faisalabad, Lahore, Gujranwala, female workers of MRD distributed fruits in the jails to the workers. Amina, Zia, Shahida Nafis, Ameena Zaman, Nasreen, Ruksana Zahoor, Nafis Siddiqui, Mrs Tahira Mazhar Ali Khan, Mumtaz Noorani, were the prominent personalities. Women's Action Forum led by Mahnaz Rafi arranged a demonstration in Lahore on 12 Feb. 1983 and 200 women took part. The police used tear gas and button charges for dispersing the women. Aitzaz Ahsan's mother and wife were put under house arrest in Lahore. On 24 Sept. 1983, the workers women took out a procession against the martial dictator in Lahore. During this procession, the police arrested fourteen women including Asma Jilani.¹⁸ even the literary women also contributed in the movement against Zia regime. Atiya Dawood wrote the poetry against the oppression of opposition.¹⁹ Fahmida Riaz showed concern about the atrocities of Zia regime and the military courts in her poetry. Actually Zia government tried to reduce the social status of women their his policies. All the organisations of women protested against dictator and his policies. In these organizations, APWA, Democratic Women Association were remarkable.²⁰
11. On 14th August 1988, MRD organized a public meeting in Rawalpindi against the rule of Zia. The gathering used to chant against dictator, while the leaders also challenged the dictator and his policies. They were informing the people that the time of the departure of dictator had come. Malik Qasim mentioned the departure of Zia in his speech and Tikka Khan, general secretary of PPP, spoke against the "Jalandhri Group". They also made it clear that they were not against the institution of army but against those who were defaming the institution through wrong policies.²¹
12. In Punjab, the jails of Lahore, Faisalabad, Sahiwal and Multan were used for keeping the leaders of MRD. The government kept detain the leaders for at least two to four months. In these months, they were sent from one jail to other jail. B.B. had been brought to Karachi jail from Sukkur. Rafi Butt and Fazaly Bhatti were sent to Gujranwala jail from Rawalpindi. Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri had been shifted from Kot Lakhpat to Sahiwal jail. Aitzaz Ahsan from Multan to Lahore and Qayyum Pahat from Lahore to Multan. Asaf Vardag had been sent to Bahawalpur jail from Faisalabad. Omer Kasuri and Khurshid Kasuri was moved to Kot Lakhpat from camp jail Lahore. Mahnaz Rafi was moved to Kot Lakhpat jail from Lahore. In Faisalabad, Few leaders of PPP were law abiding gentlemen who went into custody of the police with grace while few went to underground.

¹⁵ Nadeem Qasir, *An Investigation into the Political Economy 1948-1988*, P. 122.

¹⁶ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 340.

¹⁷ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 356.

¹⁸ Asghar Khan, *My Political struggle*, P. 254, 299.

¹⁹ Ian Talbot, *Pakistan-A Modern History*, P. 253.

²⁰ Nisar Hussain (ed), *Zameer Ka Qaidi*, P. 127.

²¹ Azhar sohail, *From Sindhri to Ojhri Camp*, P. 147.

In Faisalabad district, the workers were arrested by Police. Ch. Umer Daraz, syed Zulifkar Bukhari, Zaman Khan went into the police custody and faced the jails. In those days, Major Arif was DIG (Prison) and he was the friend of Zaman Khan (Due to this relation, the wife of Zaman Khan could easily manage the breakfast, lunch and dinner in the jail. She appreciates the system of jails of those days). Dr Saleemi (he remained the elected secretary of Chenab Club) was a doctor in jail (Fsd) and provided the treatment to the prisoners in a proper way. Due to the fear of the govt, few leaders of MRD disappeared from the scene for time being so that the police could not arrest them. Ch Talib Hussain, Cap. Nisar Akbar, Ahmed Saeed Awan, Faisal Saleh Hyat, Badar ud Din, Rana Aftab Ahmed Khan and ch. Zaheer Ud Din were among those leaders who disappeared from the scene and went to underground.²² Ghulam Mustafa Khar²³ was also arrested and sent to the central jail of Faisalabad where he remained for four months. The directions of the home secretary regarding khar were very strict and orders were passed to remain him in isolation. The agents of the special branches were deputed in the jails for vigilance of the visitors who came to see the detainees. In spite of all these measures, the divisional administration adopted a mild attitude towards him because the divisional commissioner had been a secretary of Mustafa Khar when he was governor of Punjab.²⁴ In Lahore, Kaswar Gardezi, Malik Qasim, and to sons of Mohammad Ali Qasuri were arrested by the Lahore police. Mian Mahmood Ali Qasuri was also and sent to Kot Lakhpat jail. Khurshid and Omar Kasuir were in camp jail in Lahore. The police of Sindh also captured the political workers. Over fifty persons had been arrested in Karachi. While Mardan was also the city where the workers were not safe from the atrocities of police department. Kaneez Fatima, a labour leader was also arrested in Mardan on 23 March 1981.²⁵ Fazil Rahu, MRD leader, was axed to death in his home village. Bashir Riaz, former editor of Amal in London, received the threatening calls.²⁶

13. The arrested workers faced the military courts which were established by Zia regime. The military courts awarded lashes and imprisonment to citizens for participation in the protest rallies against the military regime. The most of the workers of PPP bore the lashes and imprisonment which was announced by military courts. The example of Hala Town can be quoted here. In 1983, more than fifty persons were awarded lashes and imprisonment by the military courts in the Hala town.²⁷ Eighteen political prisoners were about to be tried by a military court in Rawalpindi.²⁸
14. Punjab government tackled the movement very carefully and therefore it petered out sooner than expected.²⁹ The chief minister of Punjab, Mian Nawaz Sharif, adopted a very strict poster towards the bureaucracy and warned them that if the Movement became succeeded, the existing officers would be replaced with competent officers who were waiting for their postings. He even convened the meeting of the commissioners and suggested them to eliminate the movement at every cost. The chief minister called the meeting of his cabinet on the issue of MRD. The ministers and the MPAs, like Ghulam Haider Wyne, Sardarzada Zafar Abbas from Chiniot suggested that the movement be crushed with an iron hand. A decision was taken to pick up all leaders of the opposition.³⁰
15. The workers were tortured by the Zia regime. In the torture cells, they were given very tough time through severe punishments. Baldia Centre, Division 555 in Karachi (555 was notorious, the headquarters of the central Intelligence Agency in Karachi), Lahore Fort, Birdwood Barracks in Lahore, Mach jail and Khalli camp were the renowned torture centers where the supporters of MRD and PPP were kept.³¹ PPP lawyer of Peshawar, Kanwar Abbas, was tortured by the police and he had to admitted in hospital for treatment. Sherbaz Mazari was arrested in forest rest house in Multan district and during his arrest, he met heart attack. Haji Yusuf Laceywala died in Karachi jail on 5th sept 1983.

²² Interview with Amina Zaman, dated 1st August 2011.

²³ G.M.Khar had left Pakistan in Oct. 1977 by promising to return from London in a month with documents which incriminated Bhutto. But it is said that he plotted with the Indian authorities in Britain to overthrow the Zia regime. For this purpose, he made frequent visits to India and met with Indira Gandhi. Tehmina Durrani, *My feudal Lord*, PP. 94, 135, 139, 161.

²⁴ Aminullah Chaudry, *Political Administrators*, P. 206.

²⁵ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 250, 255.

²⁶ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 297.

²⁷ V.F.Ageef, *Sindh Tareekh Ke Aaine mein*, P. 99.

²⁸ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 221.

²⁹ Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Political Roots & Developmeny 1947-99*, P. 379.

³⁰ Aminullah Chaudry, *Political Administrators*, P. 204.

³¹ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 158.

Imdad Chandio had been beaten in Larkana police station.³² Few even met their death in the torture cells, like Nazir Abbasi, Hameed Baloch, Annayat Maseh, Gul sher Khan, Lala Asad, whose dead body had been taken from military torture cell.³³

16. Students had also participated in the movement very forcefully. They even launched protests in the universities and colleges. The Zia government closed down all universities of Pakistan for few days so that the pressure of MRD might be maximized. The cases were registered against the students of universities.³⁴ Student unions were banned by the government.³⁵
17. The incident of the highjacking of a plane of Pakistan International Airline opened a new chapter of oppressive activities against the MRD and PPP workers. In different cities, police arrested the people and sent them to jail. In Kot Lakhpat jail, fifty four persons were charged with criminal conspiracy and sedition for their alleged involvement with Al-Zulfikar. All of them were sentenced to life imprisonment along with forty others in absentia, including Mir Murtaza and Shah Nawaz. Jehangir Badar (Additional secretary general of the PPP Punjab), Shaukat Mahmood (General Secretary), Nazim Shah (Finance Secretary), Mukhtar Awan (a former minister) and Faisal Hayat (Landowner) were arrested by the police and tried to establish their links with the incident.³⁶ In Multan, the warrants were issued of the few persons like Dr. Anwar Hussain³⁷, Anees Advocate, Rauf sb. The police arrested most of the Anwars of Multan in a suspicion. The workers went underground due to the fear of arrest. Anwar Hussain took shelter in the house of his pupil, Mehdi Abbasi Khan. Mohsin Naqvi also remained in that house for many days.³⁸ In Sindh, Lala Assad (Later on, he was shot dead by police), the vice president of the student's wing in Sindh, and Naseer Baloach³⁹ who was the representative of Pakistan People's Party in the gigantic Karachi steels Mills, was also arrested by the police. Lala Assad was being sought as a leader of Al-Zulfikar. Pervaz Ali Shah, a leading member of Sindh PPP was also arrested at that time when he was playing cricket with his son. Qazi Sultan Mahmood, general secretary of the PPP in Rawalpindi city, was arrested again and taken first to Rawalpindi jail, then Gujranwala jail and then to the Lahore Fort. The government agencies even did not spare the women and arrested them. Nasira Rana (her husband was the member of MRD and the police wanted to arrest him who was in Karachi at that time. She was arrested from Lahore and kept in Lahore fort), Begum Arif Bhutti (her husband had been a provincial minister as well as revenue minister for the Punjab. The police wanted to arrest her husband but he was not at home at that time. That's why police arrested and interrogated her), Farkhanda Bukhari and Mrs Safooran became the political prisoners and spent few days of their lives in torture cells due to their loyalties with MRD and PPP.⁴⁰

³² Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, PP. 259,260, 265.

³³ Nisar Hussain (ed), *Zameer Ka Qaidi*, P. 9, 145.

³⁴ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 146.

³⁵ Mushahid Hussain, *Pakistan's Politics: The Zia Years*, P. 113.

³⁶ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 151.

³⁷ Dr. Anwar Hussain was born in 11 July 1947. His family settled in Multan and he got his early education from the institutions of Multan. He passed Matric from Muslim High School. He did master in Urdu from Punjab University Lahore and PhD from the same institution. In 1971, Anwar Hussain started his career as a lecturer from government college Quetta. In 1984, he came in BZU Multan and retired from his service on 10th June 2007. After his retirement, he engaged himself in GC University Faisalabad and brought changes in the Urdu department. He launched PhD program in Urdu. He had a close liasion with then vice chancellor, Dr Arif Ali Zaidi. On the resignation of the vice chancellor, he also decided to leave Faisalabad. The writer contested the election of General secretary in the elections of Academic staff Association. Dr Anwar Hussain played the role in the success of myself and my group. He left Faisalabad in 2009 and went to Osaka university Japan. He is the writer of six books. Now a days, he is serving as a chairman Maqadra Qoumi Zaban, Islamabad. *Daily Express*, August 17, 2011.

³⁸ *Daily Express*, August 17, 2011.

³⁹ Nasser Baloach was being tried in the military court for charges for complicity in the hijacking. It was charge which could result in a sentence of death. After his arrest, he remained in jail for two years but the military regime could not bring before a military court within two years. When he was presented in the military court, it was being expected that death penalty would be awarded to him as the time proved. The magazine "Amal" issued the articles about Baloach's unfair and cruel treatment. But on 5 November, 1984, the military court, in its final verdict, announced the death penalty for him. Nasser Baloach was sentenced to 'hang by the neck until dead. on 5th March, he was hanged. Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 229.

⁴⁰ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 158, 165.

Actually, the issue of high jacking was planned by Zia regime for gaining multiple purposes. One, he tried to divide the members of MRD on the issue of high jacking and secondly he put the responsibility on the shoulders of Murtaza Bhutto. Thirdly, he used to crush the political leaders.⁴¹

So it was not Punjab which played role in the failure of the Movement but a lot of other factors also contributed it which exposed the mentality of Sindhi people.

1. *“The attraction of gaining access to state power and patronage were far more tempting than the magnetism of individuals and parties.”*⁴²

The government used to give rewards to the politicians for collaboration with the state and this strategy weakened the disciplines of the political parties. Even the workers of PPP welcomed Zia in Sindh during his first tour to Sindh after the assassination of Z.A.Bhutto. Few councilors of PPP who had been elected in the elections of local bodies in 1979 met Zia in Sindh. Even the son of Sindh PPP chief was also one of them. Benazir Bhutto who was house arrest at that time tried to convey message to the leadership of PPP that they should issue the direction to the councilors that they should not meet Zia but all her efforts went into dustbin. The rewards of the government compelled the councilors to violate the principles of party.⁴³

2. The landlords of Sindh adopted a mild attitude towards the Zia government due to his policies regarding land reforms. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Abid Zuberi used to stress on the negotiations with government. Abid Zuberi wrote a letter to Malik Qasim who was the acting secretary general of MRD. In his letter, he stated that

*“ a continuance of the movement would endanger the feudal socio-economic order and the present social order should maintained.”*⁴⁴

3. B.B. who was Sindhi, after her arrival in Pakistan, had become synical about Pakistan’s politicians. Her autocratic style in party decisions and with the party workers annoyed those people who had struggled against Zia regime under MRD. In the coming elections, she was eager for her party not campaign on MRD tickets. She wanted to contest elections without the support of MRD. She wanted to convince the leaders of MRD that they were nothing without Pakistan People’s Party and on the other hand she assured the party leaders that they owed their political existence to her. While the leaders of MRD wanted the ensurance that each component of MRD would get a share in the spoils of victory.

On the other hand, she did not have faith on those party leaders who were associates of her father and were secretly hobnobbing with the generals. She had convinced that she was the only inheritor of the charisma of Z.A.Bhutto and could easily manage the masses and party singlehandedly. It was also remarkable that petty rivalries had also developed among the PPP leaders.⁴⁵

4. The opposition parties showed lack of unity due to ideological differences, mutual jealousies, and clash of leadership. Maulana Fazlur Rehman (Not Punjabi) who was arrested on 24 Feb. 1981 passed the statement that he joined the movement and signed its declaration in his individual capacity and as the representative of JUI. It was the reason that the workers of JUI were not arrested. Even the role of Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi (Sindhi) was being taken with doubts. He was not arrested by the government during the whole scenario. He was also known for his pro-government leanings. He was ready to accept Zia as the head of state. In his meeting with Pagara, Ch. Arshad and Maulana Noorani on 2 March 1982, it was decided that Zia should form a national government with himself as the head and this national government should hold election. The leaders of MRD did not like such kind of his meetings with pro-Zia political parties.⁴⁶ Few member parties of MRD were afraid of Pakistan People’s Party’s electoral strength. Even the workers of PPP were hesitating in joining the movement due to Jatoi’s meetings with American officiels and army officers.

⁴¹ Sardar Shoukat Ali, *Pakistan Issues of Government And Politics*, P. 91.

⁴² Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia*, p. 106.

⁴³ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 205.

⁴⁴ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, P. 329.

⁴⁵ Prof. Khalid Mahmud, *Pakistan’s Political Scene*, P. 58.

⁴⁶ Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle*, PP. 250, 262, 268, 274, 280, 360.

But with the intervention of Benazir Bhutto, they decided to unite against Zia regime.⁴⁷ JUI chief objected to Benazir's candidature for MRD convenership on the plea that she was a woman. But on the interference of Wali Khan, he was convinced.⁴⁸

Conclusion

There is no blinking the fact that MRD got momentum in rural Sindh and the military dictator fully tried to crush it but the people of Punjab who were committed with PPP and democracy also made sacrifices and faced the atrocities of the martial law regime. The bogus cases were registered against them, they were detained in torture cells and jails, they faced the military courts, some even went underground and left their houses. No doubt, the literacy rate in Punjab was far better than the people of Sindh, that's why they had occupied the key posts in army and it was very difficult for Sindhis to tolerate it. There is no option for the government officers to obey the orders of the immediate boss. The Wadera of Sindh as usual played a negative role when the Movement had got momentum. The landlords always protect the rights of dictators through direct or indirect ways.

⁴⁷ Benazir Bhutto, *Daughter of the East*, P. 210.

⁴⁸ Prof. Khalid Mahmood, *Pakistan's Political Scene 1984-1992*, P. 90.