

Book Review

Review of Himayatullah Yaqubi's *National Awami Party Nature and Direction of Politics 1957-1975: An Account of the Left and Progressive Politics in Pakistan*

Book Details: Vanguard Books, 2021, paperback, 340 pages, ISBN 9789694026312, PKR 2295

In this book, the author discusses leftist and progressive politics in Pakistan, both pre-partition and post-partition. He explores the evolution and organizational structure of political movements in different regions and eras, focusing on leftist ideas and political organizations in Sindh, Balochistan, North West Frontier Province (NWFP), and other major areas of the country. Further, he explores how the leftist and progressive political organizations and parties were established in the aforesaid areas and eras. He also elaborates on the role of different progressive leaders such as Abdul Majid Sindhi and the establishment of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement (KKM) in North-West Frontier Province by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, also known as Bacha Khan, a well-known personality in the history of the Indian Subcontinent. The author, however, has also included a discussion in this manuscript about the "Young Baloch" in Balochistan and its emergence and evolution to the Kalat State National Party (KSNP).

The author describes the All-India Muslim League (AIML) induction into leftist and progressive politics and how they joined hands with progressive leaders such as G.M Syed and many others. The Communist Party of India (CPI) has been discussed in detail, such as how it was established, how the AIML and CPI remained united against the Unionist Party of Punjab, and what their stance was towards the leftist and progressive people. Initially, AIML and CPI were small groups, but with time they became well-organized, established the party, and played a great role during pre-partition and post-partition politics.

The Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) has also been discussed including how the party came into being, with a description of the initial problems, political crises, and post-partition times and how the political parties were organized. The CPP was established under the shadow of the CPI and it worked for a common stance. The author has also described many other parties that sometimes would meet over an issue and thus founded the United Front (Jagato Front). The relations between the Progressive and Communist Party of India and Pakistan have also been described.

The author has also explained the Sindh Awami Mahaz (SAM) and described how it was established, along with a discussion about the Gantantari Dal (Democratic Party) party and how it was established in East Pakistan and was influenced by leftist ideas. The author has also discussed the establishment of the United Front and its changing stance towards the capitalist block and how they joined the SEATO and CENTO. Moreover, he has described many progressive and leftist people who parted their ways from the United Front which ultimately led to the collapse of the United Front. After its collapse, a new constituent assembly of eighty members was instituted in 1955 to establish the party in both East and West Pakistan. So, the result of this event came in the form of the creation of the Pakistan National Party (PNP), and in this regard, a convention was

organized by the Punjab wing of the Azad Pakistan Party in Lahore in 1956. Leaders of all the parties joined that convention except two famous figures: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abdus Samad Achakzai because they were in prison at that time.

The author explains that the PNP was launched in 1956, and its members were tasked with organizing their respective areas, particularly in West Pakistan. He highlights major developments such as various conventions. Subsequently, a new party was formed, which included Moulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani and other Bengali political leaders. This new party was named the National Awami Party (NAP). The strength of the book lies in the critical analysis of the establishment of the NAP, and discussion about the circumstances under which it was founded. Yaqubi discusses several reasons for its formation, including the fundamental differences among the leadership of the Awami League (AL), the shift of Suhrawardy towards the capitalist bloc, and the disagreements between the Bhashani and Suhrawardy factions. The author also explains the resignation of the Bhashani group and Ali Ahad, Bhashani's strengthening ties with the AL, and the dissolution of the Gantantari Dal at the convention held in Dhaka in 1957. He then discusses the formation of NAP, noting that different groups merged into NAP for various reasons, primarily to achieve democratic rights.

The author also describes the ideology and political program of the NAP. The core principles of NAP were based on democracy and autonomy for both wings of Pakistan, along with the implementation of a socialist order. The party's agenda included restructuring the state, ensuring basic fundamental rights, resolving the Kashmir issue, and abolishing the feudal system. Additionally, the author discusses NAP's goals of building a strong industrial sector, strengthening the defense system, and developing a robust foreign policy with a non-aligned stance. Other political developments in Pakistan are also critically examined.

The author argues that NAP was anti-West and anti-US which the US could not tolerate. The party allied with socialist countries like China and the Soviet Union, equating anti-imperialism with anti-Americanism. The organizational structure of the party relied on popular support—financially, politically, socially, and ideologically. The author elaborates that there were no bankers, industrialists, or landlords to support the party's expenses. Instead, the financial strategy was revolutionary as members could not afford election expenses. It was decided that each member would pay monthly or annual subscriptions to fund campaign expenses. The author explains the organizational structure of NAP, mentioning its hierarchical positions such as President, Vice President, General Secretary, and *Salar-i-Aala*. Additionally, the party had a National Council and Working Committee. The author also analyzes NAP's political activities during Ayub Khan's military regime.

Key political developments in Pakistan's history are also discussed in the book. After the deaths of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan, many party members conspired against each other, leading to a lack of popular leadership in the country. When martial law was imposed, Ayub Khan took control, and within a week, Sikandar Mirza was forced to resign and warned politicians of severe punishment for their behavior. The author also references the political situation in East Pakistan from March 23 to June 24, 1958. General Ayub Khan, in his political

autobiography, wrote that the Muslim League initially allied with the NAP, followed by the Republicans. The Muslim League aimed to overthrow the Republican government, and the Republicans sought to topple the Muslim League government. NAP joined these alliances to undo the One Unit policy. Ayub Khan asserted that the destruction of Pakistan's democracy cannot be solely blamed on the politicians.

The author articulates that the political victimization of NAP began under Ayub Khan and his political framework. NAP suffered significantly from these political situations. Within NAP, political differences emerged regarding the revival of the party. This led to the formation of two factions: the pro-revival group led by Abdul Wali Khan in West Pakistan and the anti-revival group led by Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani in East Pakistan. The author describes the division within NAP in 1968, leading to its split into two separate factions: one led by Bhashani and the other by Abdul Wali Khan, known as NAP Wali. Bhashani's faction accused NAP Wali of being pro-Moscow, while NAP Wali accused Bhashani's faction of being pro-Beijing, with both sides harboring grievances against each other. The author critically analyzes the reasons and major developments in which the NAP (Bhashani group) played a role in the dismemberment of East Pakistan. He highlights how the NAP (Bhashani group) struggled for East Pakistan's cause and mobilized the public, leading to the eventual ban on this political group. The author also discusses the NAP (Wali group) in detail and examines major political developments related to the NAP (Wali group), including the 1970 elections, their results, and the group's position. He further explores the 1971 East Pakistan Crisis, and the Balochistan Crisis, and concludes with the 1975 ban imposed on NAP (Wali group).

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