

The Journey to Disillusionment

Sherbaz Khan Mazari says

Jigar thām ke beitho ke ab mēri bāri aī hai

Page 330 - Bhutto's fixation with Hitler was manifested in a similarity of coincidences. The concentration camp at 'Dalai' and the FSF 'storm troopers' were clearly products of Bhutto's Hitler fixated mind. Aping Hitler, Bhutto chose to use a policy of systemic terror to brutalize his opponents.

Page 331 - By 1974 four political activists were victims of political assassination. The fifth was a botched attempt at killing a man Bhutto had grown to hate: Dr Nazir Ahmed, Jamaat-i-Islami MNA - shot dead at his clinic at Dera Ghazi Khan on 8 June 1972; Khawaja Muhammad Rafiq, leader of Itehad Party - shot dead by a sniper during an anti-government demonstration in Lahore on 20 December 1972; Abdus Samad Achakzai, leader of NAP Pakhoonkhwa of Balochistan - killed in his house in Quetta by a grenade attack on 2 December 1973; Maulvi Shamsuddin, JUI MPA and Deputy Speaker of the Balochistan assembly - shot in his car on his way to Fort Suleman on 13 March 1974; Muhammad Ahmed Kasuri, father of Ahmed Raza - killed mistakenly, during a bungled attempt to assassinate his son, who was present in the car along with him, in Lahore on 10 November 1974.

(Bhutto was lucky he got hanged for only one of these murders).

Page 331 - Others were killed as well. On 28 September a serious attempt was made on Wali Khan's

life as he was driving to Swat. Both his driver and guard were killed but Wali Khan luckily emerged unscathed.

Page 331 - On 5 October Ali Buksh Junejo - a former Khalifa of Pir Pagaro, who had joined the PPP, was murdered in Sanghar in broad daylight. The next day Six supporters of Pir Pagaro, who were attending a court hearing against them, were taken by the police to a deserted location and murdered in cold blood.

Page 332 - Apart from the killings during this period, thousands of people were detained from all over the country. There were those like Kaswar Gardezi, secretary general of NAP, who was sadistically tortured by the police while in detention. In a voice breaking with emotion Gardezi later related his horrifying experience to me (details of the torture not included here).

Page 333 - In September 1972 Khawaja Mana Rahman, of the Dawn group, was shot at the Karachi Boat Club by hired assassins who made their escape. A few months later an attempt was made to shoot his daughter while she was driving her car.

Given the circumstances I was disappointed , but not surprised, when Mana Rahman called on me to tell me that both he and his brother-in-law, Mahmood Haroon, has sought and received forgiveness from Bhutto. They had done so because they "lacked the courage to continue to oppose him". The people who stood firm against Bhutto's autocracy were getting smaller in number and in time would shrink further.

Page 334 - If any of his subordinates showed even a modicum of independence, he would be swiftly punished. In December 1973 he dismissed Mumtaz Bhutto as chief minister of Sindh. In March 1973 Khar was sacked as chief minister of Punjab.

Bhutto's obsession with maintaining a aura of invincibility was so strong that he would spare no one, not even those who had done him valuable and devoted service over the years.

Page 335 - On the evening of 2 July 1974 J A Rahim was invited, along with the senior hierarchy of the PPP, to a dinner at the prime minister's house. The invitation was for 8 pm but the host had failed to show up. By midnight the seventy-plus-year-old Rahim lost his patience and left uttering some harsh words.

In the early hours of the morning as Rahim lay sleeping he was informed by his servant that a posse of men were demanding to be let in. Rahim went to the front door to discover that it was Saied Ahmed Khan, the chief of prime minister's security, who told him he had come to deliver a personal message from the prime minister. When he opened the door the security chief began by pummeling Rahim's face and body with his fists until Rahim fell to the ground. Then one of his men hit Rahim with his rifle butt while he lay prostrate. Rahim's son, Sikander who rushed to intervene, was soon beaten unconscious by the FSF troopers. Having delivered Bhutto's message Rahim was dragged by his feet and flung into a jeep, along with his son, and taken to a police station. Rafi Raza arrived at the police station a couple of hours later and rescued him.

Even Bhutto's close associates and cabinet ministers now lived in dread and fear of the unpredictability of their master's temper. Bhutto would not brook any criticism. Rafi Raza revealed that Dr Mubashir Hasan told him that when he wished to speak to the prime minister he would do so only privately to avoid ugly consequences. Rafi Raza also mentioned that Bhutto forbade him to speak openly at cabinet meetings to prevent others from becoming 'too independent and contrary.

(this policy was continued by Benazir Bhutto. No one could speak until spoken to. Not even Aitzaz Ahsan, Raza Rabbani, Khurshid Shah or even the benign Iqbal Haider, not to mention the small fry Sherry Rahman, Farzana Raja and Fauzia Wahhab. A US official told of a meeting with Benazir Bhutto -- she spoke 90 percent of the time).

Part II

Page 344 - Bhutto did not trust even the closest of his associates and kept them in check by pitting one against the other. In Sindh he had controlled his cousin Mumtaz through his rival Jatoi. Jatoi in turn, as chief minister, had no control over Jam Sadiq Ali, who reported directly to the prime minister. Jam Sadiq Ali, his hit man had total control of Sanghar, Pagaro's vote bank. Larkana was made into a division and Khalid Kharral became its first commissioner, reporting directly to Bhutto. Rather than trying to bring his warring subordinates together, Bhutto encouraged them to squabble even further, all the while enjoying the complaints of one colleague about the other.

Page 345 - Creating rivalries between his subordinate gave Bhutto a sense of security. As his confidant Rafi Raza admitted: "By nature suspicious, he sought to have 'dirt' available against his ministers and leading party members, and in early 1976, assigned to his intelligence chiefs the task of preparing secret dossiers about them, to be used against them in case of need".

Page 342 - NAP/JUI government in Balochistan was dismissed illegally and unethically and in spite of sending Baloch leaders to jail, the federal government had not been able to form a majority government there. People were shot like dogs, the army had blockaded sizeable populations, air force had been used to strafe people, Iranian ammunition was being used against the locals and thousands of political workers had been jailed.

Page 350 - On 25 June while I was at Karachi I read in the evening papers that over nine hundred people had been slain by the armed forces in the Mari tribal area. The newspapers mentioned the use of the Pakistan air force in aerial bombing of the hapless civilians.

Page 352 - A 'mohtabar' informed us: "On a recent visit to Harnai I met with an army Subedar at a local 'chaikhana' who told me that he was a paratrooper who had participated in the action against the Marri. The Subedar said many members of his section had been dropped by parachute at night near identified Marri settlements. At dawn they surrounded the settlements and attacked them killing all those who resisted, After burning down their homes, they arrested all the able bodied men and took away all their livestock. When I asked the Subedar about the Marri women, he told me that they took with them only the pretty ones for obvious reasons and left the others to fend for themselves. The 'mohtabar' then confirmed that in his presence alone he saw the army auctioning off over 15,000 head of captured cattle".

Page 353 - On our return to Islamabad a number of us in the opposition including Wali Khan, Pir Pagaro and I sent separate similarly worded telegrams to Chaudry Fazal Elahi, the president:

"The action committee of UDF hereby bring to your notice that the actions taken by the federal government in Balochistan are unconstitutional and unlawful. In compliance with such orders the Pakistan army and air force are indiscriminately shelling, strafing and killing innocent inhabitants, including women and children. Their properties are being destroyed and their livestock looted. Concentration camps have been established where innocent and patriotic people of Balochistan are being kept and maltreated. Their women are dishonoured and innocent children tortured. Implementation of such orders of the federal government by the Pakistan army and air force is damaging the unity of the country and may lead to further disintegration, thus a reign of terror is prevailing in the whole province for the simple reason that the people of Balochistan did not vote for the People's Party in the last general elections".

Page 354 - only two days later I received a report from Mukhtar Hasan, a newspaper correspondent who had just returned from Balochistan. He told me that while he was there two Marri women were raped near Balpat station by soldiers. The culprits were later caught and given only extra drill as punishment. In another incident, one Lal Han Marri's wife was abducted in Kohlu and raped by several soldiers. Rape in any society is a most reprehensible crime, but when a country's army, whose sworn and only duty is to defend the borders of a country, indulges in criminal raping of its own hapless citizens, it is nothing less than an act of treason. What disgusted me most was the fact that only token punishment was being awarded by the army for the perpetrators of this most monstrous of crimes. The Pakistan army was behaving as if it had occupied a foreign country, and an iniquitous occupation at that. It reminded me of the atrocities committed by the army in East Pakistan.

Page 356 - in late August I was asked by Bhutto to meet with him in Karachi. I took the opportunity of remonstrating with him about the continuing military action against the tribesmen, especially the use of aircraft against them. It was then, in my presence, that Bhutto finally, openly admitted that military aircraft had been used in Balochistan, but he insisted that no bombing had taken place, the aerial attacks, according to him, had been restricted to strafing and rockets.

Page 356/357 - within weeks of the dismissal of the NAP government in Balochistan in February 1973 a disparate group of Baloch guerillas had sprung up largely in the Marri and Mengel areas. These guerrilla groups, despite their meager numbers, constantly harassed army convoys. Adopting the classical guerrilla approach of avoiding any large scale encounters with the armed forces. Between the period of 1973 and 1975, there were 178 major recorded army encounters with the guerrillas. Despite the army's enormous 80,000 man force it would find itself increasingly frustrated with its inability to deal with small groups who attacked at unexpected moments and then swiftly melted away into the mountainside. The army's heavy handed approach of avenging itself on the innocent, ordinary tribal folk only worsened the situation.

Page 361 - the army now decided to take advantage of the presence of a large concentration of Marri families in one particular locality and launched Operation Chamalang on 3 September 1974. By attacking the tent villages of their families the army hoped to lure the fighting tribesmen down from the hills. The strategy worked and thousands of armed Marris poured down from the hills to defend their wives and children. It is said they fought for three

consecutive days and nights before running out of ammunition and being forced to retreat to the hills.

Page 364 - News of the Chamalang Operation reached me late. I had spent a week in Sonmiani and found myself - as was the case in those days without telephones, newspapers or even electricity - completely cut off from all but urgent telegrams, which would take a couple of days to reach. It was only when I reached Karachi on 18 September that I was informed by Ahmed Raza Kasuri that the army had occupied Chamalang. He told me that about 800 Maris and over 200 soldiers had been killed in the fighting. I was shattered by the enormity of the event.

Part III

Page 371 - on 8 February my eldest son Sherazam informed me that he had just heard on the radio that Hayat Muhammad Sherpao, the PPP senior minister of NWFP had been killed in a bomb explosion at Peshawar university.

There are many theories about who arranged his assassination. One theory that cannot easily be dismissed was that it had been carried out on the direct orders of Sherpao's own leader - Bhutto himself. It is a known fact that before his death Sherpao had become very disenchanted with the leader he had once hero-worshipped. Bhutto had noticed Sherpao's growing popularity and had come to resent it and had begun politically sidelining him at every available opportunity. Even one of their close PPP colleague commented:

" A few months before his death, Sherpao seriously considered leaving the Party altogether. He only changed his mind on the persuasion of myself and

other friends from the Frontier ----- . Of all those around Bhutto, sherpao's personal devotion had been the greatest, and his subsequent disillusionment was consequently the most profound".

Page 372 - The death of Sherpao provided Bhutto with an excuse to clamp down on Wali Khan and his NAP. It was eerily reminiscent of the dismissal of the Balochistan government on trumped up charges of being responsible for the arms found in the Iraq Embassy in February 1973, two years previously. The day following Sherpao's assassination, Wali Khan and all the national and provincial leaders of NAP were either under detention or being urgently sought out by the authorities. The next day it was announced that NAP had been banned and all its assets confiscated. The First Amendment to the 1973 Constitution allowed the Federal Government to ban political parties formed or those 'operating in a manner prejudicial to the sovereignty of Pakistan'.

On the evening of 10 February I got a call from Jennifer Musa from Balochistan, who had been a NAP MNA, from Islamabad. She told me that over 800 of the NAP party members had been arrested. She also informed me that an ordinance had been passed in the Assembly which allowed for the arrest of MNAs while the Assembly was in session. It had become obvious that the government had begun an intensified assault to destroy all vestige of NAP. A brutal campaign had begun to pin Sherpao's death on NAP party members. A number of them including, Asfandiyar were very brutally tortured in an attempt to extract 'confessions'. A few days later NWP Governor Aslam Khattak and the Gandapur Government was also sacked and the federal Government imposed its direct rule in the province.

Page 372/373 - On 18 February at 1 a.m. I was woken up by a telephone call from a very distraught Mrs

Azizullah Shaikh. Her home was being stoned by hooligans. Her husband had gone into hiding to evade arrest, and she was alone at home with her three young daughters. I took my son Sherazam and a couple of our servants and rushed over to her house. We saw a dozen or so thugs fleeing into the surrounding darkness when they saw our car approaching. Inside we discovered Mrs shaikh and her three daughters cowering in the corner o a room. The idea that a government could stoop so low as to threaten a defenseless woman and her young daughters sickened me. My son and I kept an all night vigil and left only after sunrise.

Page 375/377 - the banning of nap found UDF Opposition alliance in a weakened position. Having banned NAP the government was required under law to refer it's dissolution of the Party to the Supreme Court. Exercising a leap in convoluted logic, CJ Hamoodur Rahman chose to construe NAP's long held demand for greater provincial autonomy to be nothing more than a claim for a provincial 'right of self-determination with the right to accede'. The Supreme Court had fallen prey to playing its historical role - since the days of Justice Munir - of acceding deferentially, yet again, to the wishes of the government of the day. The sum of the supreme court's long judgment ----- was to endorse the Prime Minister's contempt for political opposition.

Page 391 - in the meantime yet another government-opposition crisis had taken place. On 14 November the Opposition created an uproar in the Assembly over the Government's introduction of the proposed Fourth Amendment to the 1973 Constitution, to further curtail the writ jurisdiction of the High Courts in cases of preventive detention. It thwarted the Court's ability to prohibit such detentions or even grant bail to people so detained. It was clearly directed towards disabling the Courts from

intervening in cases of blatant political victimization.

In the ensuing parliamentary commotion the serjeant-at-arms was ordered to evict the Opposition MNAs from the Chamber. Failing to do so, FSF troopers were called in. These government hired ruffians bodily lifted eight struggling MNAs and dumped them unceremoniously in the National Assembly car park. Among the victims was the acting leader of the Opposition, Mufti Mahmood. It was a scandalous display of unwarranted aggression and only helped in furthering the growing bitter divide between members of the Opposition and Bhutto.

Page 393 - After having been forcibly ejected from parliament Mufti Mahmood refused Bhutto's offer of a dialogue to sort matters out. This offer of Bhutto was a typical Bhutto gesture. He would now hold himself out as a man of reason offering to settle the dispute in a calm and sensible manner - completely ignoring the fact that it was he who had shoved the aggressive Fourth Amendment down the throats of the Opposition, as well as had them manhandled and ejected from the Assembly Chamber. When his 'judicious' offer would meet with rejection, he would get the theatrical opportunity of twisting his hands in dismay and then announce that he was faced with such an 'obstructive' and hostile opposition, that he had little choice but to 'crush them' for the sake of good governance.

Part IV

Page 394/395 - 19 December 1975 had been nominated a 'Black Flag Day' and a rally had to be held at

Karachi's Katrak Hall, near the Empress Market. On the way to the hall we were forced to disembark from our vehicles as FSF and armed police had taken charge of all routes leading to the Hall. Asghar Khan, Maulana Noorani and I forced our way through the blockade on foot helped by a crowd of several thousand already assembled there. When we walked through a narrow alley and entered the gate a large body of police made their sudden appearance and a DSP took the three of us into police custody. The police contingent charged the crowd with their steel tipped 'lathis'. The narrowness of the alley made their task much easier as they had only to contend with those in the front. Later I was told they brutally cleared the alley all the way to the main road. Besides the police, only my three sons, Mir Ali Buksh Talpur and my driver remained in the alley refusing to budge until they discovered what had happened to me. But they too were charged, Talpur's wrist was broken and my sons injured. We were taken to the Soldier Bazaar police station and detained there. After a while an angry crowd swelled outside and the police decided to release us before the situation got out of hand.

All over Pakistan similar rallies had been disrupted by the local police and FSF. Having muzzled the press and despite having achieved near complete control of all media, Bhutto's government was determined not to allow the Opposition any opportunity of communicating with the public in any form whatsoever. The government's open and adversely hostile attitude towards the Opposition was now impelling even the less belligerent Opposition parties into adopting a firmer stance.

Page 397/398 - On 6 February 1976 tragedy struck. Asadullah, the twenty year old son of Attaullah Mengal was gunned down outside my brother Mir Balakh Sher's house at Karachi, along with his friend Ahmed Shah Kurd. I later learnt that Asadullah who was

constantly being followed by local intelligence agencies, sought to evade them earlier that day, by swapping cars at a friend's house. In the friend's car he, accompanied by Ahmed Shah, arrived at my brother's house in the Muhammad Ali Housing Society a few minutes before 8 p.m. He informed the servant that he was expecting to receive a phone call there. At about 8 p.m. as the telephone rang, the servant heard loud bursts of gunfire. Outside the gate he saw Saadullah's car crashed against the wall and a number of armed people surrounding it. It was then that he noticed that both ends of the street had been blocked by black vehicles. He witnessed the men carrying two prone bodies from the crashed car to one of their vehicles before driving away.

My initial shock at this horrible event quickly changed to sorrow when my thoughts turned towards Attaullah Mengal. Almost a month after the incident ominous rumours began to circulate that after being critically wounded, instead of being taken to a hospital, Asadullah was taken to Malir where he was tortured to extract information about his dealings in Balochistan. He died during the torture and to this day, apart from the perpetrators themselves, no one knows the whereabouts of his remains.

Page 409 - My last meeting with Bhutto took place on 4 June 1976. Sardar Shaukat Hayat met me as I was leaving the Assembly building and insisted that I accompany him to the prime minister's Chambers to meet Bhutto. We spoke for about fifteen minutes, once again receiving assurances from Bhutto that he was all in favour of settling his disputes with NAP leaders amicably. By now Bhutto's declarations held little value and I wondered at the real meaning behind our meeting. Only a short while later it dawned on me that I had become party to yet another stunt. Bhutto was off very shortly to Afghanistan, probably also to tell Sirdar Daud that NDP and he

were working closely to resolve the dispute between the government and the jailed leaders.

Page 412 - In the middle of the night I received a disturbing call from my family. Five masked men had invaded the ground of my residence and, after knocking a sleeping servant unconscious, they tried to smash entry into the house. Unable to gain entry they then attempted to seize my cars. They managed to push one about ten feet towards the gate before the servants became alerted and rang the alarm. Members of my family then opened fire upon the intruders. Unfortunately in the dark all five intruders managed to flee unhurt.

I would learn some years later from an unimpeachable senior PPP source that the attack had been arranged by Jam Sadiq Ali under specific instructions of Bhutto, who probably wished to remind me of the vulnerability of my family.

Page 416/420 - On January 1977 Bhutto, who had dithered over the issue, announced suddenly that the elections would be held, two months later, on 7 March.

The first sign of the government's electoral intentions became publicly apparent when Maulana Jan Muhammad Abbasi, the PNA candidate contesting Bhutto's Larkana seat, was abducted by the police to prevent him from filing his papers against the PPP leader. Taking cue from the leader, a host of other PPP leaders opted to follow a similar electoral route to victory. This illustrious company included Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, Liaquat Ali Jatoi, Mehran Khan Bijarani, Atta Muhammad Marri, Malik Sikander Khan, Sultan Ahmned Chandio, Yusuf Chandio and some others.

All four provincial Chief Ministers also ensured they would not be 'disgraced' by the presence of any rival candidate in their constituencies.

Rafi Raza stated : I met Bhutto on his return from Larkana ----- I said his unopposed election was astonishing, no one could accept that the PNA candidate had simply failed to show up. The error was further compounded by the publicity given to the 'Undisputed leader', as if it were a presidential election. Bhutto tetchily asked why, if I was surprised at his unopposed election, I did not enquire how my friend Mumtaz was similarly elected from Larkana.

Kausar Niazi stated : One of Mr Bhutto's intense desire was well known to me, he had expressed that more than once in my presence. And that was - he wanted a victory with two thirds majority. Bhutto needed a two thirds majority in the National assembly to amend the Constitution to obtain his cherished goal of a presidential form of government. With him, of course, as the president.

Part V Concusion

Page 431 - the NWFP was a prime example of election misdeeds. Bhutto assigned Muhammad Hayat Taman, his political advisor, the task of making election preparations in NWFP. Gen Imtiaz, Bhutto's military secretary was sent there for three weeks to assist Taman.

The deputy commissioner (and returning officer) of Kohistan district, who was earlier asked to keep the results of his constituency a secret, was then summoned by the troika. He was threatened with dire

consequences if he did not accede to the chief secretary's request to make up the deficiency in the PPP candidates votes and reverse the results. "On my hesitation the DIG took me aside and said my dismissal would not take days but hours, and many charges could be levelled against me"

US ambassador, Henry Byroade, who was with Bhutto as the election results came in, said, "the results we coming in at about 70%. He was losing Karachi. He was losing Peshawar. Then the Punjabi numbers started coming in and guys who were absolute thugs won by 99%. Bhutto became absolutely quiet and started drinking heavily, calling Lahore, he said, what are you people doing.

With our general consensus, Mufti Mahmood in a lengthy reply rejected Bhutto's offer of talks: "I regret to say you have again avoided to clarify your stand regarding countrywide pre-planned rigging of general elections. On 7th march, the country was subjected to a farce in the name of general elections. The administration made every endeavour to subvert the national will and to ensure a new lease of life for a leader and a government which had been overwhelmingly rejected by the electorate -

Much publicity was given internationally to the joint resignations of Gen Gul Hasan and Air Marshal Rahim Khan as ambassadors to Greece and Spain respectively. They were soon to give an extremely hostile press conference in London against the Bhutto regime. They sent a letter to Gen Zia demanding that he decline from accepting illegal and undemocratic orders from a fascist Bhutto.

On the lighter side there was an amusing incident at Sihala jail. My son Sherazam, then a student at Karachi had flown to Rawalpindi, borrowed a car from Wali khan's son and come to visit me. When he was

preparing to leave the car would not start. It had to be push-started. While Sherazam sat in the drivers seat the car was pushed by the whole PNA leadership consisting of Mufti Mahmood, Asghar Khan, Professor Ghafoor, Maulana Noorani and my self. With all the opposition heavyweights behind it the car had no option but to start immediately.

(the following is being included much against my grain, only to show the kind of man Bhutto was, and to what limits he could go):

On the sixth day of the hunger strike I experienced severe chest pains that almost rendered me unconscious. I sensed some one watching me from the other side of the bars. I was surprised to see the jail superintendent standing there all by himself. He seemed very perturbed for some reason. Then strangely he broke down, "as a jail superintendent I've done some awful things in my life but I have my limits. Bhutto Saheb personally rings me up almost daily to see if I have broken you yet. But today he gave me orders which, even though I am scared of him, I cannot obey. I have applied for leave and am taking off tomorrow. I'll face the consequences of my decision but my mind is made up". Then he warned me, "the deputy jail superintendent is a vicious man, I don't know what will happen when I'm gone" -----

I had known Bhutto for some 23 years. To him lying, double-dealing and deceit were normal means of attaining and keeping power. His evident acceptance of new elections was now belied by his unexpected trip abroad. It was a clear indication that mischief was afoot.

During one of the PNA meetings at Sihala Asghar khan revealed disturbing news, Bhutto had decided to deal with the PNA hardliners once and for all. Bhutto had now concocted an ingenious plan by which Kausar Niazi

and Ghulam Mustafa Khar would become victims of an assassination plan. In retaliation an enraged PPP mob would then proceed to murder Asghar Khan, Shah Ahmed Noorani and myself. This may seem a bit far fetched to some, but even Kausar Niazi, one of the plot's two sacrificial victims, believed in its authenticity.

Gen Arif writes about a very revealing episode: "Gen Zia expressed his apprehension to Bhutto that, if the agitation did not end, it could erode army's discipline and cause division in the ranks. This would be a disaster for the army and for the country. Mr Bhutto sensed the mood and laid on the charm, "you are my brother and I trust you". He asked Gen Zia not to get unduly worried as the government did not plan to employ the army in a hurry again. He went on to confide that he had taken '*other measures*' to deal with the PNA situation. That statement rang an alarm in Gen Zia's mind".

The rest is history.