



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Asghar Khan: From Professional Pilot to Political Democrat**

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**ABSTRACT**

History of Pakistan is full of diverse politicians who made their mark in the field of history and politics. The name of Air Marshall Asghar Khan (1921-2018) always remained on the topic of this list. This paper is an attempt of detailed study of professional and political life. He was among few political leaders who had started agitational politics. It also highlights the paradigms of leadership which came from military background. How they have seen politics of Pakistan and how they contributed as a leader. Asghar Khan was a professional pilot, his idea of professionalism worked in Pakistani politics. He was able to gain popularity and had also done street politics. He was successful in introducing justice in politics. The argument justifies the idea of western model of politics and also western political democracy which is not liable in a country like Pakistan. Descriptive research method has used to analyze the historical data. The course of political journey showed the upheavals the politics of Pakistan as well as Asghar Khan political sagacity. He remained the part of politics of alliances which undermined his political career. Asghar Khan was true military man who devoted his politics for the sake of his country.

**Keywords:** Aknoor, Awami League, Royal Air Force, SEATO, Tahrir

**Introduction**

In the history of Political leadership, the study of Bennis (1959), Burns (1978), Blondel (1987) and Teles (2012) conceptualized the political leadership by contextualizing and analyzing of ideas. American Academy of Science and Arts published a Handbook on Political leadership but there is not a set criteria of political leadership. It varies from country to country. The pattern of Pakistan politics and Political leadership are different. In this research paper, the political leadership and politics are not examined in western style, but it completely focuses on the personality of Air Marshal Asghar Khan, a known politician of Pakistan (Chaudhary, 1974).

Asghar Khan was born in 1921. He served in Indian army before he migrated to Pakistan and joined Pakistani Air force. He became commander in chief of Pakistan air force. Asghar Khan continued to serve his rank till his retirement in 1968. He founded a political party Tehrik-e-Istiqlal that opposed Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Muslim league. Despite all his efforts he did not make a remarkable impact in the 1970s Elections. He adopted the politics of agitation from 1970-1990. Asghar Khan's party merged in Tarkih -a-Insaf in 1990. He died in 2018 but left the legacy of agitational politics (Léon, 1968).

**Literature Review**

Saeed Shafqat wrote a political biography of Asghar Khan in which he has covered all aspect of political career of Asghar Khan. Asghar Khan was the founder of the party Tehrik-e-Istiqlal and his relations with other opposition leaders discussed in this book, like as Bhutto. He also deliberates the legislative election in 1970. Ian Talbot's book is a useful source about Zia government. The writer discoursed Martial law derivation. Asghar Khan focused the Defense Services to change the government. It is a detailed and descriptive

research work about military regime and writer express Pakistan National Alliance with Asghar Khan joins the cabinet of Zia and repudiated the Pakistan National Alliance 1985 .

.G.W.Choudhry has written two books on the history of Pakistan “The last days of united Pakistan” is an important source of information about the proposal to transferable authority to the selected legislatures of the Pakistani people after years of autocracy was a failure, resultant in the civilian battle of 1971 and the cessation of Pakistan.M. Rafique Afzal, The third volume, *Political Parties in Pakistan: 1969-1971* deals with the various political parties, active during second Martial Law regime. The book starts with a short preface. It focuses on the role of political parties during very crucial and vital years of Pakistan's history i.e. 1969-1971

The book *Pakistan: History and Politics, 1947-1971* is different in approach and theme than all edited works and three volumes on political parties. This is a comprehensive account in a historical framework from creation of Pakistan to its split in 1971. The aspects of politics, economics and foreign policy of Pakistan have been addressed to understand the historical process

Talbot, while reviewing the book has appreciated the work and mentioned that the author had produced an excellent narrative history of Pakistan’s formative years, which is both competent and accessible.’ It is well researched and comprehensive account of multifaceted and complicated history of Pakistan.

The thesis would discuss the “Asghar Khan as a political leader”. Air Marshal Asghar Khan has also author of 13 books, both in English and Urdu language. His first book manuscript named “*Pakistan at the Cross Roads*” is distributed in 1969 and it was in English language.

His further renowned English books “*The First Round, Indo-Pakistan War 1965(1979).*”

*Generals in Politics (1983)*, Former Air Marshal Asghar Khan vividly spell out the dangers inherent in a situation that allows the armed forces to infiltrate the political process.

*My Political Struggle (2008)*, It has always been remained the main center of all political activities. This paper presents the role of the people of Punjab in the movement for restoration of democracy which was launched for challenging the rule of Zia-ul-Haq's Regime. The research will explore the following questions. Why did the Punjab not provide support to MRD? What was the role of the politicians of the Punjab in MRD? Why did the political parties of the Punjab join MRD? How did the civil society exert influence over the movement for restoration of democracy?*Milestones in a Political Journey. Milestones in a Political Journey*, this book comprising his selected letters, speeches and party papers, his principled politics was laughed at by his contemporaries. In a letter to the editor in *Dawn* in October 1972, Asghar Khan had lashed out against certain observations made about him in the column, *Between the lines*. The column had belittled him, saying that he “lacks political acumen” for a suggestion he had made to the government regarding the new state of Bangladesh’s recognition. Asghar Khan had proposed that Bangladesh be recognised as, through this action, “Pakistan would have retrieved much of the lost ground.”

Though he led a strong PNA movement against Bhutto, Asghar Khan did not hesitate to demand Bhutto’s release publically in a detailed letter written to General Zia-ul-Haq. In the letter, he had also lashed out at the martial law government for not holding elections in 90 days as promised and for turning Islam “into a mere penal code of crime and punishment.”

The book is a compendium of articles and speeches of Asghar Khan spread over almost four decades. Khan may have failed to form a large party for lack of ‘good people’ in

politics, but his stand on the issues of secular democracy, federalism and Kashmir has always been progressive. The book also includes a statement of Gohar Zaman Khan, former I.G Police NWFP, on the death of his dear son, Omar Asghar Khan. The statement raises several pertinent questions about the 'so-called suicide' of Omar. It clearly points out that Omar, who was one of the country's finest and most progressive politicians, was murdered and it was no suicide. His Urdu masterpieces include *Sada-i-Hosh*, *Chehray nahi Nizam KO Badlo*, *Islam – Jamhooriat aur Pakistan*, *Ye Batain Hakim Logon Ki*.

### **Material and Methods**

To conduct the research all primary and secondary bases during investigation work to explore the part of the Asghar Khan. Both the investigation systems have helped in reaching positive decision to fulfill the gap and historical and descriptive method. Historical research method would be used in this paper in order to interpret the political events of Asghar Khan from 1921 to 2011. Source of data which includes books, articles, newspapers, and internet, critically analyzed to prove the argument.

### **Results and Discussion**

In 1947, Asghar Khan joined the subcommittee. After his migration to Pakistan, the prime minister of Pakistan Liaquat Ali Khan promoted his rank to Wing Commander of Pakistan Air Force. He became the first wing commander of Pakistani army and began his duty in Risalpur. Asghar Khan was the number one Stryker Cluster in Peshawar Air Force and was the senior of the officers among others. In 1950, Asghar Khan was appointed as the Directorate-General of the Air Operation (DGAO) and later in 1955 he was promoted to Associate Chief of Air Staff at the Air Head office. In 1957, the Prime Minister Hussein Suhrawardy appointed him as the commander-in-chief of Pakistan Air Force. He was first native commander in chief who was given the title of "Father of Air Force" (Ghayur, 1989).

### **Educational Services**

Education holds an important part in Asghar Khan's life. Therefore, he rendered his services in this sector as well. First of all, he established a Fighter Pilot Leader School System known as Combat Commander School System. Then, he also laid the foundation of Air Staff College and Aeronautical Engineering College. He also taught in these institutions and would provide knowledge relating to cultural & traditional aspects of air force (Altaf, 1993).

### **Pakistan Air Force (PAF) (1957-65)**

After the retirement of Air vice Marshal Arthur McDonald, Hussain Suhrawardy appointed Asghar Khan as the commander in chief. On 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1957, PM upgraded him by providing him with three-star rank air marshal. He had the privilege of being the first native and youngest air commander ever. After taking the command of air force, the next 8 years were under his visionary leadership. He took the steps for the expansion of air force by providing them with the latest facilities and equipment and by importing the latest fighter jets from USA. He also launched the latest fighting training programs and combat courses to train young pilots according to modern warfare (Altaf, 1993). His juniors noticed that Asghar would take his time and think before making any decision but once the decision was made he would make sure that his decision was implemented (Altaf, 1993). For appointing the candidates and the selection process he was very strict and would not sweat to suspend the senior officers for not fulfilling their duties properly. He wanted to make sure that qualified individuals were hired especially in combat units. During his tenure, he established air force bases in Smugly, Sargodha and Peshawar. He also negotiated with USA for providing latest equipment's and fighter jets for an indefinite time period. The level of combat units and fighter squadrons was quickly raised,

majority of which were equipped with State of the Art equipment, F-86 Sabre's, F-104, Canberra, C-36 Hercules, T-33 and the T-23 aircraft etc (Altaf, 1993).

### **President Ayub Khan**

Asghar Khan was quite contented and satisfied with the development of PAF. He upgraded the PAF with the latest equipments and was seeing the results of his efforts in the form of qualified pilots. Keeping in view his endless efforts, President Ayub Khan gave him a four-year extension which he accepted but didn't accept the third term. In March 1965, President Ayub Khan asked him to join the PIA and CAA but he refused. Later with the pressure of the president he agreed to join the service till they found anyone qualified enough to take over his job. As per his nature, he worked hard for the betterment and establishment of P.I.A and took him to the height of success by providing it with his best insights (Asghar, 2011).

### **Civil Aviation**

P.I.A has been an interesting experience for Asghar Khan. He tried his best to improve the quality and services of the airline till the completion of his tenure. The working style was different i.e. it followed a bureaucratic culture but still he managed to go with the flow. He wrote many letters to government officials for the improvement of airline and CAA but didn't receive any positive response. During his working tenure, he made significant changes in the airline such as change of airhostess uniforms, low accident rate and achieving high level of profits up to 5.5 million. Asghar Khan took interest in operational flying, as he had been flying all kinds of military jets during his service as Air Marshal. He took the license of Airline Transport Pilot and could even fly the Boeing Aircraft. His era of working in P.I.A is golden one as he made the operations of P.I.A an all jet operational (Asghar, 2011).

He also worked as a retailer in Ministry of Defense. He was allotted as the president of national flag transporter. He also installed new equipments and latest facilities were introduced along with new fighter jets. He also introduced conventional warrior exercise programs and fighting courses in PAF. He also reorganized the latest air defense network by emphasizing on systematic operational training and maintenance, along with supply & communication service. Despite of pressure from government to maintain his designation in ministry of defense, he discontinued his duties and left it in 1968 to begin his political journey (Asghar, 2000).

### **South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)**

From 1958-65, Asghar Khan represented Pakistan in SEATO as military adviser. This conference was held in Wellington, Canberra, Manila, Hong-Kong, Paris, London, and Washington. During his 8 years of service, he visited different countries of the world like Spain, Portugal, France, Sweden, USA, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Turkey, Iran, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Afghanistan, and India as commander-in-chief of PAF. In September 1965, he was appointed as emissary on the behalf of President to have some serious talk with top national leaders. From October 1965 to 1966 he visited China, Tashkent, and Soviet union as a member of Pakistan Delegation (Asghar, 2000).

### **Foreign Awards**

He is also recipient of many foreign awards which include Order of Taaj by government of Iran, the Order of Crown by government of Thailand and the Grand Cross Order of Aeronautical Merit by the government of Spain. He was also given prestigious awards by government of Pakistan Hilal-e-Quaid Azam in March 1958 and Hilal-e- Pakistan in 1962 (Asghar, 1979).

## **Asghar Khan and Indonesia**

Once Asghar Khan started his duty as a civil commander in PAF, him and Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto did not have a smooth relationship. Both countered each other on several occasions. Bhutto considered Asghar Khan a very aggressive personality. He was making an allowance for Bhutto as the war between the Pakistan and India was dangerous. Then, he organized a meeting with Indonesian Naval Army's admiral R.E.Martadinata and there he received guarantee on Indonesian aid for Pakistan. The Indonesian premier Sukarno stated that "India's attack on Pakistan is like its attack on Indonesia and it is our foremost duty to help you in time of difficulty". Thus, keeping its promise Indonesia provided aid to Pakistan by its naval forces coming via Russian sea border to Karachi (Asghar, 2000). On the other hand, Asghar Khan and Arjan Singh of Indian air force had a convention between them on Ran of Kutch. Both were determined to keep the air force which meant saving the outbreak of war. This message reached PAF rapidly and was further delivered to the foreign minister. A press conference was being held in which all armed forces officials were directed to attend. The departure of Asghar Khan was exclusive in the loop. The PAF commander in chief was unaware and was not given self-assurance about the nature of the conference. The arrangements were made without the knowledge of Asghar Khan, and the management made the authorization of the Operation Gibraltar by the Premier Ayub Khan. When Asghar Khan came to know about this, he presented his resignation which was accepted on the spot (Asghar, 1979).

## **Active Participation in war of 1965**

As soon as Asghar Khan Journey started in Pakistan Air Force (PAF), it was taken up by the war of 1965. In 1965, a dispute roused between the India and Pakistan at the point of Kinch in Sindh. The operational areas go to PAF operating area of aircraft. Indian air force was operating at the short distance from this area, due to which their efficiency and grip on the war zone was stronger than Pakistan. Due to this reason, Asghar Khan felt that Indian army might prove to be fatal for them (Asghar, 1979). As Asghar Khan knew the Indian Commander in Chief of air force due to history of working together in the period of pre-partition. He called him on the telephone and asked him about the Kitch area as he was concerned that war zone of Kitch area cannot be further kept as war free area. Arjan Singh responded that it is a totally political decision and whatever order he might receive, he is bounded to follow them. Asghar Khan Stresses the fact that, if this area would not be kept away from war it might result in dangerous consequences. The purpose of the telephone call was served. When Indian army decided to not use this Kitch run off. This telephonic call was heavily criticized by Pakistan Naval in Chief, as he labeled him with treachery charge but, due to this telephonic call Pakistan Navy was being rescued from any kind of severe damage (Asghar, 1979).

After this war, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, foreign Minister of that time seconds the opinion of Ayub Khan regarding the Pakistan armed forces. Also, the foreign secretary Aziz Ahmad was also confident that the issue of Jammu Kashmir can be resolved by the help of Pakistan Army. They were all confident that if Pakistan Army kept their energy, power, and determination like their performance in the war they can overpower the Indian army in Kashmir and the locals will be on their side. At that time, Asghar Khan was commander in chief of PAF and was unaware of all this ongoing planning. They were planning to cut the road to the Kashmir, so they can give a shockwave to their enemy. President Ayub Khan and General Musa did not let any PAF officials to know about this planning as they thought that their plan would be leaked (Asghar, 1979). The mission was about to take place in August 1965. Asghar Khan came to know about this through newspaper where it was stated that heavy troops have entered Indian occupied area of Akhnoor. He called the president and asked him: "You want a war with India"? On this president inquired him that where did he got this news, he told him about the newspaper and was worried about the fact that Indian

forces will try to invade in Punjab especially in Lahore, and it will continue till Kashmir (Asghar, 1998).

The president Ayub Khan assured him that foreign minister has given assurance that Indian army won't be making any strong moves and that they can occupy the area. He also said that Mr. Bhutto met Chinese foreign Minister Chan Zee who was of the same opinion and was sure that this war won't spread towards Punjab. Asghar Khan was quite shocked & tensed at the same time. He decided to stay at the PAF instead of going to Karachi, as he could see the future i.e. beginning of war (Asghar, 1998).

As Asghar Khan predicted the war got started and each & every Pakistani individual was in high spirits for active participation in the war. Asghar Khan was quite disappointed by the wrong assessment of president and foreign minister. As everything went opposite according to the plan, Ayub Khan was not ready for the war. He was sent to China to have war crafts but was instructed to not use direct route to Pakistan, instead he should go via Indonesian sea borders. Prime minister was not happy with this all, as he was of opinion that war crafts must be supplied to Peshawar and Kasoor as soon as possible. But Ayub Khan thought that, America would not be happy with their move of seeking help from China at the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day of war (Asghar, 2009).

### **Political Journey**

His political journey started at the press conference of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1968. He announced his opposition to the General Ayub Khan regime and started campaigns against him, which later resulted in the downfall of Ayub Khan.

### **Press Conference in Lahore**

He was observing the on-going situation of the country where social, political, and economic distress could be seen. The rich were getting richer and vice versa. The situation of law & order was also getting worse day by day. The future of the country appeared to be at stake. In this kind of situation, it was suggested that the government should pave the way for those individuals who can run the country and drive it towards its betterment. For healthy growth of the country, men and women should work as a one unit. For this purpose, he decided to come forward and fulfill his duty as a Pakistani citizen. His intention was to take a step forward and try to eradicate the problems the country was facing. In the press conference, he addressed all the Pakistani citizens to work with discipline, in a united and selfless manner and try to instill all those values & ethics within themselves on which Pakistan was created which was being ignored by the leaders (Asghar, 2008).

### **Pakistan Democratic Party**

A conference of all parties was held in Dhaka. Nur-ul-Amin was nominated as one of its premium members. Initially PDP had no office, but its start was good, as many hopes were attached with it. It was considered that it had experienced leaders which came from two parts of the country i.e. East and West. West Pakistani leaders were not happy working with the East Pakistani leaders. It was their narrow mindedness as they were not cooperating with them on any matter. Asghar Khan was disappointed by East Pakistan leaders and working in PDP was getting difficult. After this scenario, Asghar Khan decided to leave PDP and leave politics as well. He thought that his purpose of entering the politics had been served and therefore, he realized that work done here is more difficult than said. Hence he had a short political life but his withdrawal was not accepted by the masses. He was one of the most dedicated politicians and people wanted him back in politics (Asghar, 2008). Therefore, respecting the public demand, he came back in politics during the military regime, which promised to hold the elections. Surprisingly. Elections were held within 90

days. Asghar Khan decided that the candidate from their party will be independent (Asghar, 2008).

### **Creation of Tehrik-E-Istiqlal**

The main purpose of this research is to study the detail political life of Asghar Khan who was the founder of Tehrik-e-Istiqlal and participated in Pakistan National Alliance (PNA). His journey was not smooth as he faced many challenges. This elaborates his role as the opposition leader as he blamed the government of Ayub Khan, Yahyah Khan and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto for the distress in the country. He openly criticized the government of Bhutto and thus played a vital role in the death sentence of Bhutto. He hated the diplomatic policies which were adopted by Bhutto. On the other hand, he was not happy about the government of Zia-ul-Haq as well. This chapter focuses on the detailed history of his political life (Asghar, 2008).

### **Defense Minister of Pakistan**

In 1970, Asghar Khan worked as the Defense Minister of Pakistan. He criticized the government of Ayub Khan for the Pak-Indo war of 1965, Yahyah Khan for the 1971 war and Bhutto for his failed & compromising policies. He blamed Yhayah Khan, who did not let Mujib-Ur-Reham form his government in East Pakistan, which resulted in the partition of the country once again. During this time, he rejected the awards like Hilal-e-Pakistan and Hilal-e-Quaid-e-Azam which were given to him in January 1969. After this, he met different political leaders and had discussions regarding the ongoing condition of the country (Asghar, 2008).

In 1970, he laid the foundation of Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, making it the first secular party. He resigned from his current post and started working towards the establishment of his party. Asif Fasi ud din Vardag was one of the head leaders of this party and had strong commitment with party policies. Asghar Khan states that when he formed the party, he kept the country before his own self. He further stated that he had felt that same strong force which attracted him to start his political journey at a time which was very crucial for the country (Asghar, 2008).

He said that he was really inspired by the Quaid's first constitution speech on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1947. It helped him in making his own agenda of how things must be done for the betterment of the country. He said Quaid emphasizes that we must strive our efforts in developing of such a society in which maintenance of law & order is done, civil & Islamic rights are protected, elimination of corruption & bribery takes place and freedom from sectarian & religious superstitions. Asghar Khan wanting to join politics had only one purpose i.e. to serve his country (Asghar, 2008). Today he is a well known political leader and man of his words. He was well disciplined & a punctual man with high regards towards his principles. This forced him to start his protest against the corrupt government. He started a movement against Bhutto in 1971. His directors said that Asghar Khan played as a footie with Pakistan, when its first military law was imposed in 1977.

### **His Political Relations with other Leaders**

Mujib-Ur-Rehman leader of Awami League started his campaign against Ayub Khan. He started this movement in East Pakistan with his six point's agenda. On the other hand, Bhutto who was working with Ayub Khan Government as foreign minister resigned from his designation and left his office. Later on, he also started to protest against the Ayub Khan and in 1967, he formed his own party, Pakistan People's Party. His party worked on socialist theme and was totally against the Ayub Khan. After Asghar Khan's retirement from Pakistan International Airline (P.I.A), he was living a peaceful life in Abbottabad. After six months of his retirement, Bhutto visited him. He asked him to join his party and claimed that together

they can rule for more than twenty years. On asking what his party agenda was Bhutto replied in a humorous way that people are fools, and that he wanted to make fool out of them Asghar Khan denied his offer and protested their party's agenda. He said that the purpose of a party must be strong enough so that it can work for the rights of people it intends to serve. Later on, he went to Lahore and made a press statement, which spread like fire in jungle (Asghar, 1979).

### **Elections of 1970**

On 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1970 elections were held in Pakistan. The contest was mainly between two parties from two different sides of country i.e. first is Bhutto's Party PPP in West Pakistan and second was Mujib-Ur-Rehman's party Awami league in East Pakistan. The Awami league had an advantage that it was the only party contesting in East Pakistan whereas in West Pakistan PPP was facing competition with Muslim league (Qayyum) Jamiatui-Islam (JI), Jamiatui-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI) and Jamiatui-Ulema-i-Pakistan (JUP) (Asghar, 2008).

The results of the elections were quite shocking. Awami League won 160 seats in East Pakistan whereas PPP won 81 seats in Sindh & Punjab, and Jamiatui-Ulema-i-Pakistan was victorious in Baluchistan. General Yahyah Khan and Bhutto were not happy with Awami League victory in East Pakistan. They did not want to make their government and thus created a situation of unrest in East Pakistan in the form of a civil war. This civil war was later converted into war of independence by Bengalis which resulted in formation of Bangladesh. After this, Yahyah Khan resigned from his presidential position and this government was taken over by Bhutto who formed a new constitution in 1971. Asghar Khan criticized the government of Bhutto at various events. In 1970, legislature elections were held in which Asghar Khan's party was defeated. In the civil war of East Pakistan, he helped Bengalis. He wanted to sustain the political and economic rights of people of East Pakistan which the government was not giving them. As he knew that West Pakistan was in Bhutto's control, so he also wanted to give power to people of East Pakistan (Asghar, 2005).

### **Popularity of His Political Party during Z.A Bhutto Regime**

During the period of 1971-77, when Bhutto was in power, he played an important role against his government's downfall. In 1977, when elections were to be held, Asghar Khan's Party was gaining much popularity among the nation. Many political leaders were joining his party. He was openly criticizing the government of PPP. The constant criticism against the PPP government created a dangerous rift and rivalry among the two parties. But Asghar Khan was determined and focused on his goals and his fearless nature was something making him outstand among other political leaders. However, Asghar Khan mentioned some of the dangerous encounters during his rivalry with PPP. He said that once he was addressing a public meeting and suddenly he was injured by a stone from the mob of PPP which was led by their MNA Pakistan (Asghar, 2005).

On another occasion, his jeep was set on fire by a PPP worker while he was travelling to Gujranwala. He was accompanied by his friend Raja Mohammad Afzal Khan and it was his personal jeep. Later, he came back to Lahore where he made a press conference. In this conference he used strong words and criticized the government of PPP. Next day when he saw the newspaper he was shocked as many of his statements were not present. Obviously, it was PPP government's work, which were quite quick in their actions. He was also warned by a PPP Federal Minister that his tongue will be pulled out if he continues speaking ill about their leader. Processions were made against Asghar Khan where his images were burnt and a slogan was chanted against him (Sherbaz, 1999).

Although, there was not a single case where images of any political leader were burnt like this. The sole purpose of all these activities was to stop them from making



ill comments on government which was done by a mob of PPP But enough evidence was present which was explaining that Bhutto wants him to stop his activities either with the help of public mob or his party workers but it was public love and support and party workers constant effort which did not let their morale's to move down, and they kept steady on their mission. During this time, Bhutto decided that he would not going to arrest Asghar Khan, as it will give him more power and importance in the eyes of public. During five and half years, the power of Tehrik-e-Istiqlal increased by this movement against the Bhutto. Asghar Khan knew that his telephone was been traced and a vehicle of intelligence followed him wherever he goes. He was not bothered by all these activities, as he faced similar circumstances in the government of Ayub Khan (Sherbaz, 1999).

On one occasion, Asghar Khan was traveling with Malik Wazir Khan on a train to Bahawalpur. He was a civil servant and he worked as a senior officer in his party. He had great thoughts and opinions about the growing problems in the country, but he had little experience. He suggested to visit the city of Caravan with their families and minimum staff. They all would have holidays for A period of six months in which taking break from all the will things will help them rethink about all the scenarios in better way The idea was good, but Asghar Khan was of opinion that there is no electricity, water supply and parking area present. Wazir Khan said that those were the old days and that now everything is available, and plan came into formation. They had to attend a meeting in Rahim Yar Khan for three days and when they were coming back in two vehicles Federal Security Forces (FSF) started following them and were announcing on speakers that they are thieves. As a result, suddenly thirsty people came in civilian dresses and attacked them. On this attack a driver of FSF was killed and we escape that mob luckily. But this was one of the most dangerous encounters (Morrice, 1993).

After this incident Asghar Khan addressed the press conference giving them detail about the incident mentioning Federal Security Forces in it. The Chief Minister of Punjab denied this all and claimed that story of Asghar Khan is baseless and is not true. He also said that no single personnel of FSF was killed. Later, PPP workers and hired mob accepted to stop the road by the police and taking towards his home in Abbottabad. The police meeting was not a very good and resulted in building the party (Morrice, 1993).

In 1972, Asghar Khan's personal farm in Sukkur was taken over by Bhutto with the help of security forces and was looted. Later, this matter was taken to Sindh Assembly where Chief Minister denied any involvement of government in this matter. He said that if his property couldn't be saved by the current government how is this government eligible to run the country (Morrice, 1993). Also, he said, that why police helped that mob in destroying his property. When Asghar Khan came to file a complaint, the general inspector said that this work was done by local superintendent on the orders given by authorities. Later he came to know the order giving authority was the Supreme Court of Pakistan (Morrice, 1993).

In the same year his house in Abbottabad was burned, which attracted huge public attention. A police officer was assigned to investigate this incident but the findings of this incident were not disclosed to the public. His family had to live in a stable, as they did not have another choice. Also, Asghar Khan's brother Brigadier Aslam Khan, who had performed in Jammu Kashmir when the Indian clash was going on in 1947, had to face severe consequences. He was handcuffed on the charge of theft and was patrolled on the roads of Muzaffarabad. He was kept in prison in Gilgit agency for a long period of time, where he was treated in a very inhumane way. Bhutto thought that he was the one who was financing the political activities of Asghar Khan as his brother was in timber business (Morrice, 1993). His other brother Tariq Khan was also arrested when number of people were arrested in the Attock Conspiracy case. He was kept in Attock fort for many weeks and again he was ill-treated. His sons Ali and Omar were kept in Lahore Lock up for few days.

Asghar Khan's wife also took active participation in politics. On 9<sup>th</sup> April 1977 he took part in woman procession in Lahore, where she was badly beaten by the police. She got several injuries and later was arrested in Lahore. Then again, she took part in ladies' procession in Rawalpindi where she was arrested for three weeks and was kept at forty miles North of Abbottabad. She was a woman of strong will and power. She knew about the difficulties which were part of the path they had selected. She values the sacrifice of the people of Pakistan and thought that they were fighting for their rights which is great thing to do (Radoslave, 2012).

Asghar Khan was against Bhuttoism. He boycotted the Election of 1985-1988 and showed his alliance to Pakistani Awami league, a party of Muhammad Khan Junejo. He faced the case of Mehrangate and dealt with it in the supreme court of Pakistan. Asghar Khan and his party did not get the public support and eventually merged in Tarikh-a-Insaf in 2011. He died in 2018 and buried with full state honor. Asghar Khan was the author of several books. These books are a great source of history and politics of nearly 6 decades of Pakistan (Radoslave, 2012).

### **Conclusion**

Asghar Khan was the pilot and a politician who served his country on both ends. He was a perfectionist, either in Pakistan Air force or as a party head. It is beyond discussion what he gained and what he lost. It was very much important what he contributed in the history of his country. His political struggle was commendable in military regimes and democracy. He followed a different pattern in Pakistani politics and was the true believer of democracy. Air Marshal Asghar Khan's life and political career represent a unique blend of professionalism and agitational politics in Pakistan. As a military leader turned politician, he challenged the established norms and contributed significantly to the political landscape. His ability to connect with the masses through street politics and his commitment to justice demonstrated a departure from conventional politics. Asghar Khan's journey underscores the complexities of applying Western models of democracy in a diverse and challenging environment like Pakistan, leaving a lasting legacy in the nation's political history.

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