# IMHERITED SOCIOPOLITICAL STRUCTURE

The limited social reforms introduced by the British Raj, anti-colonial struggle and Pakistan Movement brought about attitudinal changes and expectations with regard to the legitimacy of the new order but failed to break the traditional structure and ingrain the values of the new order. The people’s expectations of sociopolitical upliftment were high but their predilections for their castes, tribes, and ethnic groups still persisted. The political party was apparently democratic but factionalism still persisted, hence it was being controlled in a personalistic manner. The civil and military services were internalized by rational rules but an authoritarian style still persisted. Hence for the ruling elite, authoritarianism, though an anomaly was a practical necessity. However limited reforms, restricted socialization, Pakistan’s democratic movement, and relations with the western democracies had convinced the ruling elite that democracy, though theoretically, was the only legitimate form of government.

After partition the political ruling class was factionalized and comprises of the following three major disparate groups—there were others, but none so significant in this regard:

A vital proportion of this elite migrated from Muslim minority areas that were oriented with Islamic revivalism; they had been more concerned with the rights and interests of Muslims rather than democratic values. After migration these people had lost their constituencies and had no base in the new country from where they could stand for democratic elections, though they had cordial relations and influence with the bureaucracy and other institutions of state.

Feudal lords from the western part with clannish identity were another powerful group of the ruling political elite. This group had secure constituencies and they were more concerned with personal or to some extent class interests than democratic values. This group historically had been patronized, sometimes for generations, by the Raj through the bureaucracy and thus it was inbred in them to work with the bureaucracy as junior partners, though they themselves had an authoritarian mindset.

Another group of the political elite were those who were oriented with ethno-linguistic identities. They comprised of a non-landed class. Majority of the members of this group were from the eastern wing and they had liberal and socialist tendencies. This group had weak links with the powerful state institutions.

Neither the British Raj nor Pakistan Movement provided a common framework through which the political elite could interact and resolve their differences. According to Jalal, ‘the Muslim League could not pull the different and frequently conflicting regional strands in Muslim politics into a unified and coherent whole.’18 Hence, the ruling elite,

with

divergent

orientation

and

motivated

with

personal

interests, was marked by factionalism.

On the

other hand, the executive elite,

the bureaucracy,

infused with a sense of intellectual superiority, felt dubious about the integrity and capability of the political class and was thus reluctant to owe allegiance to them. Above all the

founder

of Pakistan,

Jinnah,

having

a long experience of

authoritarian management of the Pakistan Movement and

particularly his skilful handling of politicians

from

the

Muslim majority areas, was convinced of his supervisory role over politicians through bureaucracy.