

ly session

Bhutto's 'mad game of power politics'

LAHORE, March 4: Malik Ghulam Jilani, Convener of the Punjab Pakistan Front, has called for setting up immediately a platform to dissociate the people of Pakistan, including many members of the Pakistan People's Party from the "mad game of brazen-faced power politics in which Mr Bhutto has indulged and brought this country to the verge of immediate disaster".

In a Press statement here to-

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'Nation on verge of disaster due to Bhutto's power politics'

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day, he dubbed the move for the new Round Table Conference as an "ill-starred initiative" and said the time which had slipped past and the blood that had been spilt in the streets of Dacca during the past two days was irretrievable.

He said: "My heart is bleeding over this tragedy as much as the hearts of those whose kith and kin have been slain. In fact it is bleeding still more, for in their case they have the consolation of pride and martyrdom for a cause, whereas I have nothing but a burning shame on behalf of those whose brutal folly has brought about this blood-spilling".

Malik Ghulam Jilani said neither third party mediation nor Round Table Conferences, nor even a National Assembly could redress the stark tragedy that started the country in the face. The time had come, he said, when all efforts and all energies must be concentrated exclusively on the immediate transfer of power to popular representatives. In the absence of an agreed constitution for the country as a whole, this could only be done through the provincial assemblies which must be called into session forthwith and asked to assume their proper functions, he said.

CONFUSED REACTIONS

The PFF Convener said he had read with deep interest the mingled, even somewhat confused reactions of important personages to the President's invitation to the top twelve in the country to attend a conference at Dacca on March 10. After Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's summary disposal of the move, the fact was that it hardly deserved any further re-ference.

He was critical of the national Press and said if it had been at all competent to discharge its traditional functions, all the publicity given to the RTC and other people's reaction to it might have been easily stopped after the Awami League chief's reaction had become known.

Malik Ghulam Jilani said, "there are of course those who have followed the age-old practice of welcoming anything that bears the seal and stamp of the reigning authority. There is nothing either surprising or in anyway noteworthy in what the Khan-e-Azam Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan or the dancing figure of the land of Moenjodaro have to say about it. Whatever need be said about it might as well be left unsaid. It goes without saying. But there are others, many of them well-meaning and genuine patriots, who have spoken out their minds in a state of frenzied anxiety over the preposterous decision to postpone the National Assembly and the situation, bordering on the insane, that has been created as a result of this decision which is in fact not a decision at all but a mere shirking away from decision".

He said it was no use losing one's sanity even in grief, more particularly at a time when sanity was precisely what was needed and what was lacking. "When I say that the time that has been lost is irretrievable, what I mean is that neither a conference of mock-dignitaries nor even a full-fledged session of the National Assembly can undo the loss that has been incurred" he observed.

Malik Ghulam Jilani said all sincere, patriotic and right-think-

ing people must now concentrate first on ensuring immediate transfer of power to elected representatives of the people, and secondly on the adoption of concrete specific measures on behalf of the people of West Pakistan to proclaim their innocence in what was happening in the East Wing for the last couple of days. They must make it clear to their East Pakistani brethren as well as to the rest of the world that "they have been duped and used as decoys in a nefarious design of which they were kept deliberately ignorant when they were asked to cast their votes for the National and Provincial Assemblies", he said.

The PFF chief said we of the Punjab Pakistan Front have called for a convention of all right-minded politically inclined people in this Wing to record their disapproval and denunciation of a man who has abused their trust and betrayed Pakistan in the clearest possible manner".

Malik Ghulam Jilani believed this was the only clear-cut path that could lead the country out of the present crisis which was at once moral and political and penetrated to the deepest recesses of the nation's soul. There was no other way, least of all the way of force, he added.

He said every day we were being reminded of the dangers that knocked at our doors from across the borders. The army should have enough to do to withstand these threats. Its energies could hardly be spared at this crucial hour for civil needs.

Events today move at "supersonic speed", he said. "This means that before I can hear what is happening, it has happened. Swift calculated, correct action is the need of the hour — nay the minute and the moment. If this is not forthcoming and if we continue to prevaricate, I do solemnly warn that the doom that has hovered over our heads each single day which we let pass in our folly may finally overtake us and crush whatever hope there might be of our posterity leading a better, happier and freer and more honourable life than we did in our time."

BAB MEMBERS APPEAL

Meanwhile, four prominent members of Lahore High Court Bar Association here today appealed to the President of Pakistan, Gen Yahya Khan to summon the session of the National Assembly on or before March 7.

Mian Mohammad Yasin Khan Wattoo, Malik Mohammad Jaffer, MNA-elect, Mr Abid Hasan Minto and Sahibzada Sher Ali Khan, in a joint Press statement, said that the postponement of the Assembly session had widened the gulf between the people of the two Wings, and confrontation instead of conciliation had resulted due to it.

In this hour of crisis and alarming situation in the country, they continued, no citizen of Pakistan could afford to be a silent spectator to the situation.

They said the need of the hour was to create an atmosphere of goodwill and understanding between the people of Pakistan and to frame a viable constitution and transfer of power to the elected representatives of the people. The critical political situation, they feared, would serve foreign powers to exploit it for their global interests.

They appealed to the old politicians of the country to come forward for rapprochement between the parties. Some solution must be formed out for the maintenance of the integrity of the country, they added.—PPI.