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Mir Gul Khan Nasir
- poems -

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Mir Gul Khan Nasir(14 May 1914 - 6 December 1983)

Mir Gul Khan Nasir(Urdu: میر گل خان ناصر), also widely regarded as Malek o-Sho'ara Balochistan (Urdu: ملک شورا بلوچستان;) was a prominent politician, poet, historian, and journalist of Balochistan, Pakistan. Born on 14 May 1914 in Noshki, Gul Khan Nasir was at the forefront of the Baloch Nationalist Movement and was most active between 1935 to 1980. His father's name was Mir Habib Khan and he belonged to the Paindzai family of the Zagar Mengal sub branch of the Mengal tribe. Mir Gul Khan's mother "Bibi Hooran" belonged to the Rakhshani branch of the Bolazai Badini. Mir Habib Khan had five sons and three daughters. Mir Gul Khan Nasir was number seven among his eight siblings and he was the fourth amongst his brothers (i.e.) Mir Samand Khan, Mir Lawang Khan, Mir Lal Bux, Mir Gul Khan and n Mohammad Khan.

 Education

Mir Gul Khan Nasir studied until Fourth Grade in his village. For further studies he was sent to Quetta where he got admission in Government Sandeman High School. After passing his matriculation examination from this school, he went to Lahore in order to pursue a higher education in Islamia College Lahore. During his second year in Islamia College, a piece of coal went into Mir Gul Khan's eye due to which he had to discontinue his education and return to Quetta. Lahore, at that time, was the hub of knowledge and political and social activities. The political, cultural, social and literary movements in Lahore made quite an impression on Mir Gul Khan Nasir. When he returned to Quetta Balochistan was split into several parts namely The Chief Commissioner's Province and The Balochistani princely states. The province of Balochistan was under direct British rule while the Balochistani States was indirectly controlled by the British through the Tribal Chiefs (sardars) and rulers,whom they had bought. In this situation the rulers of Balochistan were in no hurry to make the state progress and better the lives of its inhabitants. Because of these conditions Mir Gul Khan Nasir stepped into politics in order to join the other leaders who were fighting to liberate the people of Balochistan from the Imperialist powers.

 Boxing

When he went to Lahore, Mir Gul Khan Nasir saw the students taking part in different sports so he immediately tried out for the college football team and was selected. But with time, he got interested in boxing and began learning the sport. It didn't take him long to become quite good at it. His height (above 6'00") also provided him with an advantage in the game.

"Boxing helped Gul Khan Nasir get out of many a tight spot in his life" – Aqil Khan Mengal

After his training, Mir Gul Khan began participating in boxing tournaments. In the All India Universities Boxing Championship he was the runner up. It was in this tournament that he broke his nose.

** Anjuman-e-Ithihaad-e-Balochistan Anjuman-e-Islamia Ryasat-e-Kalat **

In 1921 an organization named "Anjuman-e-Ithihaad-e-Balochistan" was formed to struggle for the rights of the people of Balochistan. When Mir Gul Khan Nasir came back to Kalat, he joined this organization and was an active participant in it. During this time he also briefly held the office of Vice-Minister of Jhalawan in Kalat State. By 1936 Anjuman-e-Ithihaad-e-Balochistan had become inactive so The Baloch youth formed another organization "Anjuman-e-Islamia Ryasat-e-Kalat". Malik Abdul Raheem Khwaja Khail was elected the General Secretary of this organization while Mir Gul Khan Nasir was the President. Mir Gul Khan resigned from his designation as the Vice-Minister of Jhalawan in order to promote the new organization. Afraid of the popularity of the Anjuman, the political agents of Kalat conspired against the party and managed to have it banned in Kalat State.

** Kalat State National Party **

After the ban on "Anjuman-e-Islamia Ryasat-e-Kalat", On 5 February 1937 the Baloch youth once again got together and formed a new political organization by the name of "Kalat State National Party" (KSNP). Mir Abdul Aziz Kurd was elected its President, Mir Gul Khan Nasir the Vice President and Malik Faiz Muhammad Yousafzai became the Secretary General. The Kalat State National Party was affiliated with the Indian National Congress. It played an important role in curbing the power and influence of the Tribal Chieftains or Sardars, abolition of cruel and unusual taxes imposed on the poor by the Sardars and formation of a democratically elected Parliament fashioned after the British Parliament on Kalat State's independence. The KSNP had several ups and downs with the Khan of Kalat. At first most of the top leaders of the party such as Abdul Aziz Kurd, Faiz Muhammad Yoyusafzai, Gul Khan Nasir, Abdul Rahim Khwajakhel etc. were serving as government officials. In 1939, during an annual session of KSNP in which Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was also taking part as a representative of a Karachi-based political party, some thugs sent by the local sardars tried to disrupt the rally by firing at the participants. After that all the members of the Party who had government jobs resigned and were arrested. This was the incident which caused Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo to join the KSNP. After some

time the Khan reconciled with the KSNP leaders and re-employed them as government officials. Once again tensions rose between the KSNP and the Khan of Kalat and this time the KSNP leadership resigned for good never to work as government servants again. Paul Titus and Nina Swidler in their book "Knights Not Pawns: Ethno-Nationalism and Regional Dynamics In Post-Colonial Balochistan" write:

The Khan attempted to play off nationalist and sardari differences by maintaining his authority as the traditional head of the Balochi tribes while appealing to the leaders of the Balochi nation. This was not always possible, and by 1939 the activities of the nationalists had so antagonized the sardars and British that they pressured the Khan to declare KSNP illegal in Kalat State. The ban on the party was lifted after World War II, though antagonism between the sardars and nationalists remained. In March 1946, for example the Balochi activist poet Gul Khan Nasir was expelled from Kalat State following complaints to the agent to the Governor-General in Balochistan from the Badini, Jamaldini and Zagar Mengal sardars. They claimed that Nasir and other activists had created disturbances in the town of Noshki by making speeches charging that the sardars were appropriating and selling local residents' wheat rations.

Muslim League

After Kalat's accession to Pakistan in 1948, the KSNP broke up. The Khan of Kalat, Mir Ahmedyar Khan joined Muslim League after the accession but was hesitant to do it alone so he sent Mir Ajmal Khan to Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo and Gul Khan Nasir to persuade them into joining the Muslim League with the Khan. Both Gul Khan and Ghaus Bakhsh thought that joining the ML would provide them the platform they needed to raise the voice for Kalat's rights. But within days they realized that they would never be able to achieve what they wanted while they were in the Muslim League. So they left the ML never to turn back to it ever again.

Usthman Gal

In the years that followed, Pakistan went through many changes. In 1954 the Communist Party was banned in Pakistan and then in 1955, all the provinces of West Pakistan were merged into one unit. In these conditions the Baloch ethnic nationalist politicians under the leadership of Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Mir Gul Khan Nasir, Agha Abdul Karim Khan (the brother of Khan of Kalat), Mohammad Hussain Anqa and Qadir Bux Nizamani formed the "Usthman Gal" which is Balochi for "The People's Party". Agha Abdul Karim was elected as the President of this party.

 Pakistan National Party

In 1956, the "Usthman Gal" was merged into the Pakistan National Party which also included "Khudai Khidmatgar" from N.W.F.P, "Azaad Pakistan Party" from Punjab, "Sindh Mahaz" from Sindh and "Woror Pashtun" from the Pashtun dominated areas of Balochistan. In this way, the Pakistan National Party emerged as the largest Left-Wing Political Party in West Pakistan.

 National Awami Party

In 1957, The PNP merged with Maulana Bhashani's Awami League to form the National Awami Party. It was the principle opposition party to the military regime for much of the late 1950s and mid-1960s. The party split in 1969 into two factions, the head of one faction remained in newly formed Bangladesh, while the remaining faction became the principle opposition party to the rule of Pakistan's Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. The party was outlawed by the Pakistani government in 1975 and much of its leadership subsequently imprisoned for alleged anti-state activities.

 1958–1960

During this period of Ayub Khan's rule, most of the Baloch leadership including Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Gul Khan Nasir and Faiz Muhammad Yousafzai were arrested on different charges. They were imprisoned in Quetta's Quli Camp which was famous for the inhumane torture of its prisoners. Here the Baloch Leaders were subjected to different kinds of torture. They were hung upside down from their feet and beaten, not allowed to sleep for days, laid facedown on the floor while soldiers jumped on their backs with army boots. By the time he was released, Mir Gul Khan couldn't even walk straight.

This was a very important period for the politics of Balochistan because it was in these years that the young and dynamic Sardar Ataullah Khan Mengal and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri entered Balochistan's political scene. It was also during this period that Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti was sacked from his position as the Minister of State for Interior of Pakistan and arrested. As a result of this, he also joined the NAP.

 1960–1970

During 1960–1970 the National Awami Party or NAP presented strong resistance to the Ayub Regime and for this reason, its leaders were constantly in and out of jail. In this decade Ataullah Mengal was catapulted to the top of the Baloch leadership because of his charismatic personality and Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri

also earned a lot of fame because of his political philosophy. Mir Gul Khan Nasir went to jail around 5–6 times from 1962 – 1970. As a result of NAP's struggle during this decade, the One Unit was discarded and Balochistan got the status of a province.

** 1970 Elections **

In 1970, General Election were held in Pakistan in which the NAP managed to get a majority in Balochistan and N.W.F.P while the Pakistan People's Party got most of the seats of Punjab and Sindh. Mir Gul Khan Nasir won a seat in the Provincial Assembly after defeating a big landlord of Chaghi. East Pakistan broke away from Pakistan and Bangladesh was formed because of controversy that arose over the election's result. After the fall of East Pakistan, Bhutto wasn't willing to allow the NAP form its governments in N.W.F.P and Balochistan. But as a result of extensive dialogue held between o and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, NAP was able to form coalition governments in both the provinces in 1972.

** NAP government **

In Balochistan Sardar Ataullah Khan Mengal was elected as the First Chief Minister of Balochistan while Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo became the Governor. Gul Khan Nasir was a Senior Minister in this government and held the portfolios of Education, Health, Information, Social Welfare and Tourism. Later, Tourism and Information portfolios were given to other ministers. As the Minister of Education, Gul Khan managed to lay down the foundation for the Bolan Medical College which is, to this day, the only medical college in Balochistan.

During this time differences had arisen between Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti and the rest of the NAP Leaders. Bhutto, who was looking for a way to remove the NAP government, saw this and used Akbar Bugti to dismiss the NAP government. The N.W.F.P government resigned in protest. Governor's Rule was imposed with Nawab AKbar Khan Bugti as appointed as the Governor of Balochistan. Three months after the dismissal of the NAP government, Gul Khan Nasir was arrested on various charges before any other leader. In August 1973 Mir Gul Khan's brother, Mir Lawang Khan died in an operation carried out by the Pakistani Military. Mir Gul Khan's younger brother, Colonel (R) Sultan Mohammad Khan (who was the head of the Balochistan Reserve Police), was arrested the day he returned to Quetta after burying Mir Lawang Khan. Along with Colonel Sultan, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Ataullah Mengal, Khair Bakhsh Marri and Bizen Bizenjo were also arrested. Since all this happened during Akbar Bugti's regime therefore the public sentiment was against him in Balochistan at that time. Mir Gul Khan Nasir wrote a lot of poems against Bugti during his imprisonment. Later, a commission known as Hyderabad tribunal, was set up and Mir Ghaus Bakhsh

Bizenjo, Sardar Ataullah Mengal, Gul Khan Nasir, Nawab Marri, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Syed Kaswar Gardezi, Habib Jalib and many others had to defend themselves in a treason case in front of the tribunal.

While in prison differences arose between the Baloch Leaders. After the ouster of Bhutto's government by General Zia-ul-Haq, negotiations for the winding up of the Hyderabad tribunal and the release of all detainees was initiated leading to their eventual release in 1979. On their release, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Gul Khan Nasir and Ataullah Mengal brought back their followers who had taken refuge in Afghanistan while Khair Bakhsh Marri and Shero Marri, themselves, went to Afghanistan. Sardar Ataullah Mengal also left for London. Gul Khan Nasir and Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo joined Wali Khan's National Democratic Party.

** Pakistan National Party **

After sometime, Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo had a falling out with Wali Khan over the Saur Revolution of Afghanistan. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh and Mir Gul Khan left the NDP and formed the Pakistan National Party or PNP. Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was elected as PNP's President while Gul Khan Nasir became the President of PNP Balochistan. Even though Gul Khan had joined Mir Ghaus Bakhsh's party, he was of the opinion that the Baloch should not be pushed into another term of turmoil by pitting them against the Martial Law Regime but rather they should be educated, trained and made ready for the future conditions that might change the situation and geography of the subcontinent. But Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo thought that the Martial Law should be fought head on to make democracy in Pakistan stronger. The Establishment, taking advantage of the situation, set the state machinery into motion and by using different tools, especially the media, aggravated the differences between the two leaders to the extent that Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo demanded a resignation from Gul Khan Nasir which Gul Khan refused to tender in. But after the lapse of some more time, Mir Gul Khan tendered in his resignation and concentrated all of his abilities towards his literary work.

** Imprisonment **

Mir Gul Khan Nasir was arrested on several occasions from 1939 to 1978 on many different charges, all of them pertaining to politics. He collectively spent almost 15 years of his life in jail.

** Literary services **

Mir Gul Khan Nasir wrote poems in English, Urdu, Balochi, Brahui and Persian.

Most of his poems are in Balochi language. He was good friends with Faiz Ahmed Faiz. Once Faiz Sahib offered to translate Mir Gul Khan's poems in Urdu but Mir Gul Khan turned down the offer. Most of Mir Gul Khan Nasir's Urdu poetry was written between 1933–1950 and there has been no publication of his Urdu poetry to this date.

Mir Gul Khan's poetry is filled with revolutionary and anti-imperialist themes and it reflects his progressive nature and socialist ideals. Mir Gul Khan Nasir was very much against the class differences that prevailed at that time, and still do. His poems exhibit his dislike for the chauvinistic attitude of the rich towards the poor. A famous quatrain of his goes as follows:

"Had Mir Gul Khan Nasir been born in Punjab he would've become Faiz Ahmed Faiz and if Faiz had been brought up in Balochistan, he would've become Gul Khan Nasir".

— Habib Jalib

Balochi:

Wáhde pa garíbáñ ki jaháñ tang bibít
Láp húrak, badan lúç pa badrang bibít
Haq int ca cušeñ wár o azábeñ zindá
Márí bisucant, sar birawant, jang bibít

Translation:

When the world starts to constrict around the poor man
His mutilated naked form is left to fend for his hungry gut
Then it's better from this life of misery and torture
If war ensues, heads roll & lavish palaces are burnt to the ground

** Posthumous Compilations **

Gulgaal (1993) is the ninth compilation Mir Gul Khan's poetry.

Shanblaak (1996) is Mir Gul Khan Nasir's tenth collection of Balochi Poetry which also includes Urdu translations by himself.

** Awards **

Mir Gul Khan Nasir was posthumously awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz (President's Award) in 2001 for his literary services. Other Sitara-i-Imtiaz winners that year were Dr. Ilyas Ishqi, Professor a Naseer-ud-din Nasir and Kishwar Naheed.

In 1962, when the USSR government decided to award Faiz Ahmed Faiz with the

Lenin Prize, they also wanted to present Mir Gul Khan Nasir with the Prize but because of his (Mir Gul Khan's) differences with the Ayub Khan Regime of that time, he wasn't allowed to go to Moscow.

** Death **

Soon after resigning from the leadership of PNP, Mir Gul Khan's health deteriorated and he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Not having enough money, or accepting any from his relatives, he was not able to procure treatment in time. It was only after his condition became so bad that he could not leave his bed that he was taken to Karachi, where doctors, after checking him, gave him only a few days to live. Mir Gul Khan Nasir died on 5 December 1983 in the Mid East Hospital, Karachi. He was taken back to his village, Noshki, in a huge procession. On 7 December 1983 he was laid to rest in his village's cemetery. The funeral proceedings were attended by a large number of people. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Malik Faiz Miuhammad Yousafzai and other leaders were not able to attend because they were in jail, while Nawab Akbar Bugti's movement had been restricted to Quetta. Ataullah Mengal and Khair Bakhsh Marri were abroad, in self-exile.

Cries And Shouts And Hurried Calls

Cries and shouts and hurried calls

A colourblind crowd is celebrating

They say, "It's dawn" but when I look at life

The dark, black night is in full swing

Lighting strikes and a voiceless thunder

It seems as if clouds are raining somewhere far off

But the smell of rain doesn't permeate the air

Instead, blood is rising up in a ditch

O fools! Where is the bright morning?

The enraged night is still here and strong

The Yazeed-like imperialists are still

Crushing the bones of the valiant patriots

In the populated and scenic Bangladesh

Once again a storm of blood is rising

Again the agents of imperialism

Are setting cities and villages on fire

Mujeeb, the celebrated patriot

Is sprawled on the ground in a pool of his own blood

He's been dressed by the accursed (slaves of imperialism)

In a red coat decorated with bullets (as medals)

The contemptuous agents of foreigners (imperialists) have committed genocide

Again, it is the story of Hussain against Yazeed

O courageous comrades! Be privy to the Yazeedi nature

In your (unity and) wellbeing is their loss

The mouth (they speak through) might be theirs

But the tongue in it is that of the imperialists

They're vain because their pockets are full of money

And their aid is the imperialists and (their) platoons

For the extermination of the brave patriots

They've been provided with countless weapons and forces

There's no mercy in the hearts of these cowards

It is because of them that the world is dark

They don't allow the flame of freedom to burn

Dousing it wherever they see it alight

Mujeeb, the fearless Bangla Bando (Friend of Bangladesh)

Is in front of the firing squad with his family

Again, the flag of freedom is flying at half mast

The imperialists are back to their old tricks and deceptions

Again, conflicts are being resolved with the gun

Again, The Golden Land (Sonar Dharte) is on fire

O brave friends! This is how time shoves us

In the same manner my motherland (Balochistan) is also burning

Don't be timid O Warriors! Don't stop,

Even though the path is tough and filled with hardships

Mujeeb's blood will, at no cost, go to waste

This is just a test of the steadfastness of the patriots

It won't last; this night of terror won't last

Even though it's dark and foggy at the moment

Nasir sees clearly, with his heart

The flag of your victory waving in the wind

Mir Gul Khan Nasir

Man O Mullah

(The Mullah getting ready to deliver his sermon,
Stroked his beard proudly,
And started preaching:)

“One is a Master, One is a Mir (a leader or chief)
One is a Ruler, One is a Pir (a saint)
One is sad, another is happy

One makes heaps of wealth
One is starving, One is fed
One’s faults are visible, another’s are hidden

One rides his steed,
Wears only the best
His galloping horse kicks up dust

While another Bare-footed,
Naked and hungry
Miserably drags himself through life

Without a doubt it’s God’s will
It is written in the Righteous Book (Quraan)
That the path is narrow and quite tough

Five fingers can never be equal
God himself has made it that way
So, you should accept this as fate”

Waves of anger rising in my heart made me interrupt him
I said: “May you be smitten O Mullah!
Don’t lie so much

Evenings of begging have left you blind
The Devil has over-powered you
Why are you hiding the truth like this

Humans of every kind are alike
Men and women, both, are equal
Just as Honour and Dignity are the same

Humans aren't high and low
O Moron! Just read the Quraan
You've been misled by the Satan

These Mirs, Masters and Sardars (Tribal Chieftans)
These Pirs, Clerics and Zardaars (the Wealthy)
These are the real roots of evil

They are criminals and pimps,
Traitors of humanity,
Blood sucking Leeches and Poisonous snakes

They travel in cars and planes
Their houses are furnished with velvet carpets
And they eat from golden plates

I know you're mouth is watering
You're living off loans from the Rich
Mullah! Now just think

From where did they get this wealth?
How did they amass this fortune?
How did they become our masters?

Mullah! Now stop making excuses
The mother's womb didn't provide them with all these riches
Nor did the sky rain money on their heads

Listen to my words,
Open your eyes which have been blinded
The answer is right in front of you

They have stolen the rights of the weak,
They have looted the property of the poor
And disrobed everybody in sight

Who has told you this is fate?
It's an argument not thought out,
A serious blow to faith

Mullah! Now don't you mislead

Don't stray people off the path of God
Just to satisfy the affluent

Don't sell your faith for cash
Don't present the lies as truth
And stop your incessant gibbering

The times have now completely changed
You're going to vanish alongwith the rich,
The aristocrats and the powerful monarchs

A better age will dawn on us
When no one will be worried for food
And there won't be wars for money

Mullah! It's time you woke up and smelled the air
Because in this new world your obsolete teachings won't work
There won't be anymore killings in the name of religion

Humanity's liberation is inevitable
Mullah! If there's any doubt in your heart
Then you ought to be taught a lesson

Mir Gul Khan Nasir

Socialism-I-Amal

Today, the world is changing fast

Socialism's charm is in full swing

Sindh's Wadera, with a bank balance of millions

Is telling Lenin how socialism should be

Punjab's rich and pompous Chaudary

Is twisting and twining socialism

Khan Sahib (of The Pashtuns), whose pockets are full of cash

Is (pretending to be) trembling in agony [like the strings of a violin]

On the pain of the proletariat

Mir Sahib (of the Balochs) is looting the impoverished Baloch farmers (not the big landlords)

On pretext of enacting land reforms (like Mao)

Even as I am uttering these words

The fire burning in my heart is barbecuing it

The dacoit has donned the mendicant's garments

The murderer's thoughts are of earning rewards from God

The defendant wants to be the judge

Thieving pigs desire to be compared to friends of the Prophet

The wolf yearns to be made the shepherd of the sheep

The cat dreams of getting pieces of fresh meat

The mouse is craving for flour

The jackal is impatient to get its hands on the hen

The rich and powerful are asleep

The black snake (the bourgeoisie) is burning

The bosses' brains are located in their heels

The ship of their thoughts is sailing towards a mirage

These Mirs and Waderas fail to realize

That imperialism is about to leave (its foot is in the stirrup)

The poor labourers and farmers

Have their loins girded, and are ready for a revolution

The age of flattery has gone

Now things will happen as they do in the books

The public have become their own masters

The bubble of the aristocrats is about to burst

Take a look at the tides of change

Nasir is moving forward with the red flag

Mir Gul Khan Nasir