

Failure of democracy in pakistan



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Failure of Democracy in Pakistan Democracy is a form of government in which supremacy of power is vested in the people of the voters collectively, and it is administered by them or the officers appointed by them. according to Chambers Dictionary it also means a state of society characterized by recognition of equality of right and privileges political, social and legal equality. The most accepted definition of democracy is Government of the people, for the people, and by the people (Abraham Lincoln). Liberty, equality and fraternity are the helpmates of modern democratic political creed.

Irrespective of religious belief , clime and country democracy has become a watchword and political philosophy in the free world, as opposed to dictatorship and despotic rule. Since its inception, the most difficult challenge Pakistan has struggled to meet has been to establish a true democratic system, which could guarantee its survival, stability and development. Unfortunately, the plant of democracy in Pakistan has not taken its roots deep enough to make the country “ a durable democratic state”, despite this fact that Pakistan blossomed in the soil of democracy.

Pakistan was conceived on the basis of Islam, which is democratic both in letter and spirit. It is indeed very unfortunate and a sad testimony that the plant planted by Quaid-e-Azam and watered by the blood of millions of Muslim men, women and children has not thrived in the country. In other words we have not proved worthy of the freedom achieved after immense sacrifices and constant vigilance as the price of liberty. After the sad demise of Quaid-e-Azam and Shaheed-e-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan, the spirit of freedom

movement died down and selfish interests and political intrigues dominated the national scene.

Again Pakistan began as a democratic country. It is imperative to have constitution when a country starts fresh. Sudden and unexpected events within the body politics of Pakistan not only delayed the making of a constitution according to the needs and ideology of the country but also thwarted the process shaping the opinion in favour of democracy as a modern political necessity. The Draft Resolution was thrown into cold storage. Anyhow, the country had a Constitution in 1956 that was strangled and killed after military coup by General Ayub Khan in 1958.

As no country can run without Constitution, which provides checks and imposes certain limitations, the second constitution was drawn in 1962 to give a semblance of democracy in the form of Basic Democracy and to suit the purpose of one man who was a dictator in guise of a president. Not Parliamentary but presidential form of government with wide powers was imposed on the people. It also served the seeds of regionalism and disintegration in the country. There was democracy in name only. Experimentation in politics is always dangerous because it kills continuity of democratic convention and gives rise to instability in the country.

It is only a strong constitution that is always above the ordinary law and gives stability and inspires sense of nationhood among the people. When the experiment failed, second Marshal Law was imposed in 1969. No direct elections, that are essential for healthy democratic process and to change

the government according to the choice of the people, had been held in the country. Wide based political parties are essential for running democratic government by the elected representatives of the people. The representatives should not only enjoy the support of the people or the voters but they should also be answerable before them.

Otherwise democracy becomes a force. This is what happened in Pakistan. Some ambitious politicians, right hand men to the despotic rulers, rose on the political horizons and started ganging their own gait. The cloud of disintegration had already assumed dark colour. 1970 Elections were held in free atmosphere on party basis to put the country on road to democracy. What followed is the darkest chapter in the history of the country. The country was dismembered as a result of lack of political foresight, sense of compromise and undemocratic attitude on the part of some political leaders.

The war of 1971 maimed Pakistan; broken shred were put together. The breaking of the country necessitated making of a fresh constitution and the result was 1973 Constitution democracy in Pakistan. Nothing had been provide in 1973 Constitution to secure this, though it ought to have been so to make it a lasting document. The very fact that it that id had been amended time and again is a clear proof of its weakness. Constitution is an instrument by which government can be controlled but it was otherwise. The next elections were held in1977.

The elections were far from being fair and had been rigged as accepted by the then government. Power was used to prolong power. People came out into the streets and again power was used to suppress the public. Thousands

lost their lives for the sake of democratic rights. The country was on the verge of civil war; the Army Chief General Zia stepped in and the country was again thrown into the lap of Marshal Law. In the late 1980's democracy was again at the crossroads in Pakistan after the demise of General Zia due to natural calamity. Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif also failed comprehensively.

Four General elections in the 1990's brought each of them twice to power. They did not seem interested in developing of the democratic norms in the country. Neither respected constraints on the use of power rather they trimmed and amended the constitution for their personal convenience. Their behavior brought ruin to the democracy. It also brought the military back to power. Thus we see that the main causes of failure of democracy in Pakistan had been lack of regard for the country's constitution and misuse of powers. The country's constitution have been ignored and tampered with time and again.

There has been plenty of the lip service paid to the constitution and to the constitutional practice in the country. Deviation from the constitution had been the main reason why the sapling of democracy could not flourish and thrive in the country. Another reason for the break up of the democratic rule had been the contending political ideologies propagated by the political parties. The political profession is much to be blamed for playing the game for political gains and for seeking power instead of serving the people and the country.

The very purpose of creating Pakistan has been thrown into the background. The practice of political aggrandizement led to side spread administrative and social corruption. We have still to see real rule of law in the country. Democracy can never exist without rule of law, justice, civil liberties and equality of opportunities. Representative ruler ship could not uphold these values due to favoritism, nepotism and obstructing the course of law. Treasury benches and opposition are the essential constituents of democracy. The nascent institutions of democracy can be strengthened. They are essential for making the democratic set up work. In fact democracy was revived in Pakistan, these democratic conventions were shown poor respect. The rulers were too proud to listen and to bear criticism. Such limping democracy could not serve long. A survey of democracy in Pakistan can not be completed without assessing the electorate, the voters who are the makers and of leaders and mainstay of democracy. Right of franchise is the bedrock of democracy. Three elections on party basis in 1970, 1971 and 1998 indicated that the majority of the voters did not exercise their right. Again in three election in 1990's the average turnout was very dismal. Unless the people are educated and use their votes intelligently, democracy can never prosper and run smoothly in the county. One of the reasons of constitution's weakness in Pakistan is vast uneducated and unformed electorate. Aristotle has rightly remarked: " To neglect the education of the young ones, is to weaken the constitution of the country". Democracy is a function of education. It can not be managed effectively and justly without sound education of the voters and their high level of information.

In conclusion, it can be analyzed that it is not democracy that has failed but the politicians who have failed to run the country on correct democratic principles of equality, justice and fraternity. Moreover, the electorate has been unable to check and control the professional politicians that have changed colour like a chameleon. The remedy lies in the words of Lord Beveridge, “ Power as a means of getting things done appeals to that men share with brutes; to fear and greed; power leads those who wield it to desire it for its own sake, not for service it am render, and to seek its continuance on their own hands.

Influence as a means of getting things done appeals to that which distinguishes men from brutes. The way out of worlds troubles today is to treat men as men, to enthrone influence over power and to make power revocable”. If we want to make Pakistan a really lasting democracy, we must act on the above advice. Thin only will enter in the reign of true democracy and the people will manage their own affairs instead of being dupes and pawns in the hands of dishonest men.