

Discuss the Obstacles in the way of good governance in Pakistan. In your view what steps can be taken to achieve goal of good governance?

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1. INTRODUCTION

Good governance has always been an importance issue since the inception of Pakistan. Crisis of good governance in the country has led to socioeconomic backwardness and political chaos. Bad governance is caused by some grave drivers. They include weak institutional setup, political instability, absence of rule of law, law and order problem, and debt trap. However, good governance can be instituted by strengthening democracy, eradicating corruption, focusing social development, and ensuring freedom of speech in the country.

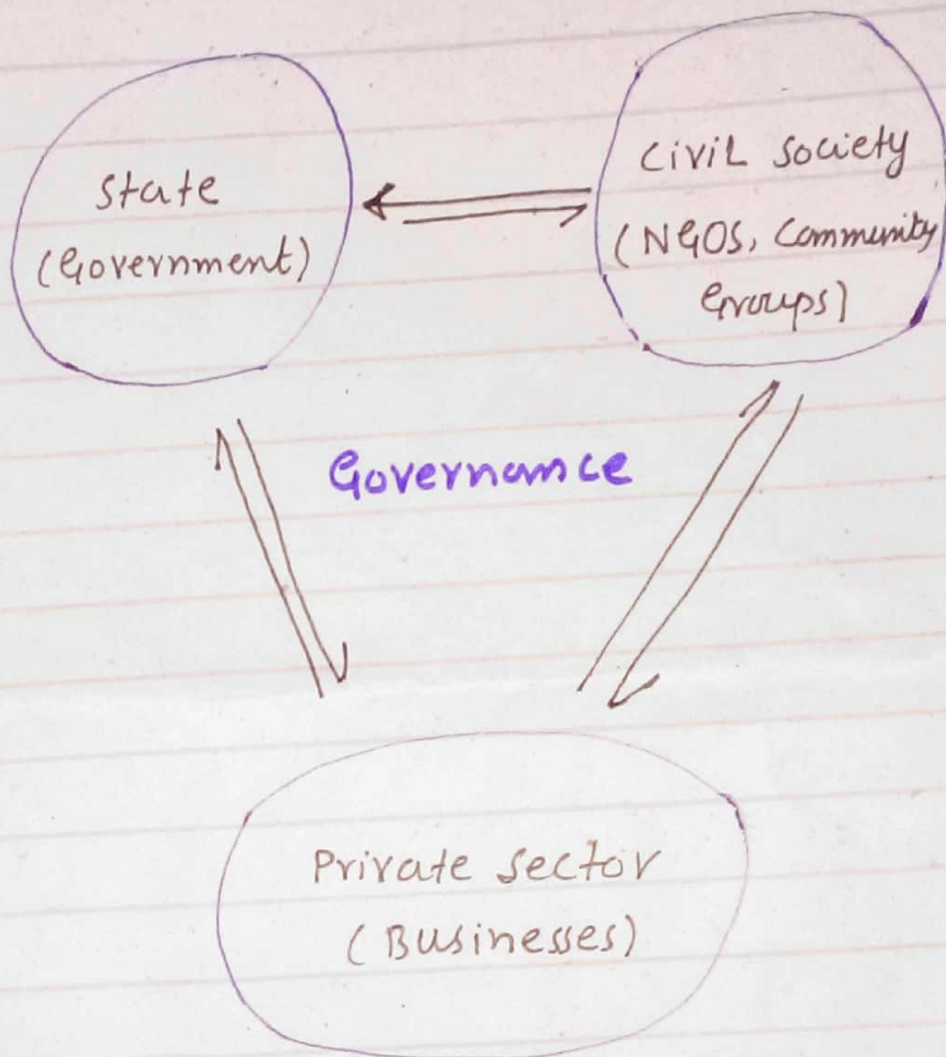
"The basic idea of governance as I see it, is to hold society together so that it can develop and march towards certain goals."

(Lal Bahadur Shastri)

2. DEFINATION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The process of decision making and implementation is termed as governance. According to the report of the United Nations Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development agenda, "governance refers to the exercise of political and administrative authority at all levels to manage a country's affairs." The concept of good governance was explained by UNCHR in its Resolution 2000. The Commission recognized that "Good governance has transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and responsiveness as basic elements."

ACTORS OF GOVERNANCE



(Above diagram shows the actors of governance)

3. OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF GOOD GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN

(i) Weak institutional setup:

Strong and independent institutions are pivotal for the realization of good governance in any state. The institutions dealing with corruption and accountability etc. need to be built, sustained and made stronger than individuals. Unfortunately, serious attention has not been paid to build institutions in Pakistan from day one. The institutions with functions of accountability e.g. the police, the NAB, etc. are not fully independent. As a result, institutions remain weak and instrument of politicians.

(ii) Political instability:

Political instability has caused socioeconomic disruptions, social unrest, and obstacles to service delivery. As a result, crisis of good governance emerges across the country. In his recently published book, *Pakistan at the Crossroads*, Christophe Jaffrelot said, "persisting political instability is a major driver of bad governance in Pakistan."

(iii) Rampant Corruption:

Pakistan is suffering from evil of corruption since long. Rampant corruption in the country has shattered almost every segment of the society. It is only due to corruption that system of meritocracy, law and order

(iv) situation and rule of law cannot stand tall.

According to the Transparency International, Pakistan ranks 140th out of 180 countries in the newly released Corruption Perceptions Index 2022.

(v) Lack of accountability and transparency:

Due to bureaucratic dol drums and political interference, the process of accountability and transparency across the board cannot take place.

As a result, corruption persists, rule of law is bulldozed, and crisis of bad governance emerges. Political elites influence this process of accountability and transparency and they also target to their political opponents in the name of accountability

(vi) Law and order problem: ^{by influencing agencies.}

Pakistan is facing law and ^{order} problem since long. Law enforcement agencies have failed to maintain law and order in the country.

Worst law and order situation hinders to effective service delivery in the country. Thus, deteriorated law and order causes bad governance in Pakistan.

(vii) Absence of rule of Law:

Pakistan has witnessed absence of rule of law since long. Citizens of the country do not satisfy from the justice system of the country as justice is delayed, docile judiciary

and there is weak institutional setup in the country. According to the World Justice Project's (WJP) Rule of Law report 2022, Pakistan ranks 129th across 140 countries in the world.

This shows dismal situation of rule of law in the country.

(viii) Debt trap: a growing threat

Debt trap is one of the most serious threats to Pakistan. The country is growing dependence on loans and neglecting circular debt ~~have~~ could move the country in bleak future. Inflation is mounting and touching its record level owing ~~that~~ to increasing dependence on loan denars.

Pakistan Economic Survey 2023 says, Pakistan had ~~35.4%~~ US \$ 126.3 billion external debt by December 2022.

(viii) Absence of decentralization of powers in letter and spirit:

Pakistan has witnessed the absence of decentralization of powers in a true spirit in recent past. Decentralization shifts the locus of powers from the centre to the people at the local level resulting in a responsive and accountable authority. World Bank and other multilateral ~~banks~~ development banks have time and again established through their research that, "centrally administered bureaucracies are inefficient at allocating resources."

4- STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN TO ACHIEVE GOOD GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN

(i) Strengthening democracy:

Pakistan cannot attain the goal of good governance without strengthening democracy. In this regard four pillars namely parliament, executive, judiciary and media need to play active and vibrant role in this regard. The country has also to ensure decentralization of powers so that service delivery can be efficient and responsive.

In this way, democracy needs to strengthen.

(ii) Eradicating rampant Corruption:

Uprooting of rampant corruption is essential for attaining good governance in the country. For this purpose, political interference should be terminated from NAB and FIA. Some reforms should also be introduced in these agencies so that overcoming of corruption can easily be possible.

(iii) Focusing on social development:

Without ensuring social development, the goal of attaining good governance cannot be achieved. Ailing health sector and education sector need progress. Similarly, women empowerment, providing basic facilities of life to community, promoting sustainable development goals should be top priority of government.

(iv) Ensuring accountability and Transparency:

There is dire need to Pakistan to ensure accountability and transparency across the board. In Pakistan, corruption watchdog like NAB should be allowed to work in the lines of Hongkong's independent Commission on corruption. It does arrest accused till the case ~~is~~ ^{allegations} ~~is~~ ^{allegations} does not prove on accused.

(v) Ensuring Freedom of speech:

Government should not impose such restrictions ^{on social media} that could bulldoze freedom of speech. Both print and electronic media should not be controlled in any way so that media can play its constructive role for the service delivery. Media personnels also should not be persecuted in the country.

(vi) Eradicating polarized politics:

In contemporary times, Pakistan has not witnessed such a political divide in its entire political history. Today, people have divided political opinions due to persisting polarized politics which could threaten federation. Therefore, eradication of polarized politics is need of the hour. Civil society, political parties and democratic institutions have to play their active role for this cause.

5- CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The current condition of Pakistan is not good as it confronts serious threats from foreign and internal powers which are directly or indirectly disturbing the process of good governance inside the country.

Despite significance legislative amendments, governance is still a significant challenge for the bureaucracy and politicians.

All basic elements that are part of the good governance are not under exercise in the country, thus, crisis of good governance emerges.

6- CONCLUSION

Pakistan has been an state that became fail to establish good governance since its birth. Some potential barriers have always obstructed institution of good governance in the country: weak institutional setup, rampant corruption, law and order problem, political instability, and absence of rule of law are included among them. As a result, every segment of society has got shattered. However, by strengthening democracy, eradicating corruption, ensuring rule of law and freedom of speech, good governance can be instituted in the country.

"Good governance cannot remain merely a philosophy. Concrete steps have to be taken for realizing its goals."

(Navendra Modhi)