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# Crisis of good Governance in Pakistan: Causes, Impacts and way forward

Outline:

## I. Introduction

Thesis Statement:

Indeed, there is <sup>severe</sup> great crisis of good governance in Pakistan. There are numerous causes behind the prevailing crisis of good governance, leading towards unprecedented impacts. Therefore, there <sup>are</sup> certain pre-emptive measures to curb the crisis of good governance.

2. Understanding the term good governance and its importance

3. A critical overview of the crisis of good governance in Pakistan

4. Causes behind the prevailing crisis of good governance

A. Political instability and polarization

B. Fragile economy and unequal distribution of resources

C. Mass illiteracy: unable to keep in check the ruling elite

D. Obsolete, and flawed accountability system

E. A lack of political will in the country's political leaders

5. Impacts brought by the crisis of good governance in Pakistan

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A. Corruption permeated in every nook and cranny ✓

B. Devastated economy of the country ✓

C. Political quagmire and social unrest ✓

D. Wastage of already scarce resources ✓

6. What prudent steps can Pakistan take to address the crisis of good governance ✓

A. Increase literacy rate, mass awareness and active participation ✓

B. Strengthen the accountability system to ensure rule of law ✓

C. Structural reforms to bolster economy ✓

D. Visionary leadership to adopt political will for change ✓

E. Ensure transparency and meritocracy in the recruitment process. ✓

7. Conclusion

Essay

Governance implies control, direction and rule with authority to administer the system of administration. Good governance, runs the system of administration according to the defined laws. Whereas, bad governance subverts from the concerted laws unreasonably. And Pakistan also faces the crisis of good governance, owing to several reasons. Including political instability and polarization, one of the major cause and mother of all evils. Certainly, fragile economy, mass illiteracy and flawed accountability further exacerbated the system of administration and good governance. Such dismal state of good governance, brought unprecedented impacts in Pakistan. For instance, the curse of corruption, economic instability and social unrest delved the country into uncertainty and chaos. However, there always lies a ray of hope for resilient nations, and Pakistan is among those great nations. Therefore, Pakistan needs to adopt prudent steps to tackle the crisis of good governance effectively. For example,

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increase literacy rate, strengthen the accountability system and adopt structural reforms to boost economy. In fact, visionary leadership is the need of the hour to pragmatically ensure all these dreams in letter and spirit.

Understanding the term good governance and its importance is necessary. Good governance means when all tools of state machinery are used effectively for sole purpose of progress and prosperity. And the importance of good governance is that it includes, it ensures stability and tranquility in the country, without any obstruction. According to Diane Kalen, "good governance is the art of putting wise thought into prudent action in a way that advances the well being of those governed". Hence, it is witnessed that the sole purpose of good governance is bringing ease in the life of people, in order to ensure peace, prosperity and progress of the nation.

In Pakistan, the crisis of good governance has been

the protracted issue since its inception. After independence, the country faced multifaceted crises, owing to those crises the crisis of good governance took the pace unprecedently. As the intervention of undemocratic forces in the political affairs of state badly distorted the system of administration and governance. Additionally, unshrewd support of judiciary to undemocratic forces deteriorated constitutional crisis. Consequently, such state of affairs led towards crisis of good governance and stagnant democracy. As the political leaders involved in power tussles, instead of focusing on the wellbeing of governance and ordinary citizens. In a nutshell, there is a great crisis of good governance in Pakistan since independence.

To begin with, political instability and polarization is one of the major cause behind crisis of good governance in Pakistan. There are several reasons of political instability and polarization as it hampered the growth of good governance, while leading

towards crisis of good governance. Military intervention in democratic process created smoky ground for political instability. Due to lack of political consensus among ruling elite, political polarization took the base among ordinary citizens. Subsequently, such a state of intolerance emboldened unrest in government mechanism, ~~resultantly~~ ~~leads towards~~ resulting in anathema of good governance.

Furthermore, fragile economy and unequal distribution of resources are another enigma in way to crisis of good governance. According to the World Bank, "Pakistan's GDP is estimated to be contracted by 0.67 per cent in fiscal year 2022-2023. As unemployment, high inflation, poverty among others have made economy stalemate. In effect, protests, mass mobilisation and unrest occurs in the streets and around the country, that seem detrimental for governance. Similarly, the unequal distribution of resources further

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deteriorates the existing ~~situation~~ crisis of good governance. As marginalized peripheries in the country feel alienated, owing to myopic policies of federal government. Consequently, dwindling economy and unequal distribution of resources double the crisis of good governance.

To add to this, mass illiteracy present in the country is another major hurdle to attain good governance. As uneducated people are unable to keep in check and balance the ruling elite. According to Pakistan's economic survey, 2022-2023, "the country's literacy rate is 62.8 percent. Educated masses play pivotal role in the prosperity of nations. French revolution is the best evidence in which common educated masses play imperative role in their independence from despotic rulers. Sadly, in Pakistan mass illiteracy is of great concern, owing to such an unawareness political elites resort to malgovernance. To sum up, existing illiteracy and lack of vigilant masses to hold political

leaders further amplify the crisis of good governance.

Additionally, obsolete and flawed accountability systems creating an environment of exemption which is detrimental for just and credible justice. In such situation the of impunity, the confidence of ordinary citizens on justice system is abolished.

According to the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index, "Pakistan ranks 130th out of 140 members in its adherence to rule of law."

As per this report, it is evident that Pakistan lags behind in provision of justice. As Dr Martin Luther rightly said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." It is pertinent to note that justice plays a decisive role in consolidation of good governance, though it is absent in Pakistan.

Lastly, the existence chronic crisis of good governance in Pakistan is due to, lack of political will in the leaders. Political leaders fear the radical change, owing to their vested interests. Political leaders



do not want to change their status-quo, rather they display explicit indifference towards common populace by suppressing them. According to the Asia Power Index, "Pakistan ranks 20th out of 26 nations in terms of efficacy of political leaders." Such grave situation reflects the insincerity of political leaders towards change. Hence, inefficacy of political leader magnify the crisis of good governance and creates an atmosphere uncondusive for efficient governance.

Having examined the causes of crisis of good governance as they have direct impacts on institutions and ~~is~~ their functioning and ~~is~~ the over all well-being of society.

To begin with, the consequential impacts of corruption which has been permeated in every nook and cranny, owing to bad governance. Pakistan has been prone to the curse of corruption, as it badly hampered the growth of institutions. Ironically, corruption has reduced the confidence of common citizens

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to trust on state institutions. According to the corruption perception Index, "Pakistan ranks 140th out of 180 countries. Such dismal condition reflects Pakistan's grave situation of corruption. Due to inefficient government mechanism to curb corruption, reduced Pakistan's image on international footage. Foreign investors fear to invest in Pakistan, owing to its susceptibility to owing to the curse of corruption. In effect, economy is badly impacted in this dire situation of crisis of good governance.

Apart from corruption economy of the country is also impacted unprecedentedly, due to crisis of good governance. Since independence, the economy of the country has faced many unreasonable fluctuations. As the economy of the country has been dependent on foreign aids and grants, owing to shortsighted policies of the ruling elites. According to the world Bank, "Pakistan's GDP has declined by 0.6 per cent instead of growing due to the prevalent issue of good

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governance in the country. As such myopic policies gave birth to balance of payment crisis, budget deficit, energy crisis, among others. Elites are exempted from tax net. Poor people bear the brunt of high inflation and indirect tax collection. To cut long story short, anathema of good governance has hardly exacerbated economy and investment.

Moreover, absence of effective governance has fueled political quagmire among ruling elites, ultimately leading to social unrest. Political deadlock occurs when there is lack of consensus and compromise and it is explicitly evident in current state of affairs. According to the Political Stability Index, Pakistan ranks 181 out of 194 nations in terms of political stability. Political parties in the country show case intolerance toward each other, rather they resort to they saw each other as enemies. Subsequently, such state of animosity leads towards social unrest, while making government policies ineffective.

When such gridlock occurs in the country, then political and social stability become a nightmare. In short political instability and social unrest are the direct impacts of crisis of good governance.

Last but not least, crisis of good governance, owing to inefficient leaders and administration has greatly impacted the resources of Pakistan.

As Pakistan is a poor country, it cannot afford the wastage of already scarce resources, beneficial for survival. due to unsustainable conservation.

According to the Indus River System Authority, Pakistan receives

145 million acre-feet of water yearly but can only save 13.7 million acre-feet, reflecting the advertent neglect of the official for the lifeline of humanity. So,

it is evident that malgovernance can have great repercussions for on natural resources as well. In a nutshell, crisis of good governance can lead towards mismanagement of beneficial resources.

In the light of challenges posed by crisis of good governance, it is crucial to discuss actionable steps and policy measures that can pave the way toward improved governance practices.

To start with, education is the most important aspect of life which has the most significant power. It changes the destiny of nations. The rise and fall of nations depend upon education. So Pakistan's progress depends upon educated masses. The state needs to abruptly increase literacy rate and mass consciousness. As famously said by John F. Kennedy, "The goal of education is the advancement of knowledge and dissemination of the truth." Education enlightens the masses about their fundamental rights. In fact, they will actively participate in democratic processes and hold the public office holders accountable for their mischieving. In short, mass literacy and awareness in Pakistan can pave way for good governance in order to ensure stability, progress and peace.

Furthermore, there is a dire need for to strengthen the accountability system, in order to ensure rule of law. Rule of law, is an important doctrine that plays systemic role in democratic set up. Rule of law and accountable system creates an ecosystem of equity for all citizens. It makes citizens responsible and vigilant to act according to the defined laws. One of best example left by, Hazrat Umar Farooq, R.A, as he said, "that if a dog dies hungry on the banks of the river Euphrates, Umar will be responsible for dereliction of duty. So, it is a great source of evidence for all nations, in order to ensure duty, responsibility and transparency. The need of hour in Pakistan is that political leaders and policy makes should ensure rule of law, accountability and transparency. In a nutshell, ~~the~~ of law adopting rule of law and accountable system in Pakistan can pave way for good governance and constitutional supremacy.

In addition to that, to bolster the fragile economy of Pakistan, structural reforms ~~are~~ should be adopted. Economy is the necessary in contemporary world. Global competitiveness for Pakistan will be a nightmare without radical ~~to~~ and market based reforms in economy. However, positive steps taken by the ~~the~~ government like the initiation of special Investment facilitation programs, to ensure quick and decisive-making and build confidence for foreign direct investment are welcome. In fact, the implementation of such ventures is necessary, otherwise all in vein. Moreover, Pakistan is on the brink of economic uncertainty, therefore, confidence building measures are necessary to make smooth ground for investment and commercial activities. As such effective measures ~~will~~ would create an environment conducive for economic activities. In short, government should <sup>make</sup> credible grounds for economic activities, to ensure sustainable development and good governance.

Apart from structural reforms, visionary leadership is the need of <sup>the</sup> hour in Pakistan, in order to ensure such reforms pragmatically. Visionary leadership requires political will and foresightedness, above than personal whims and desires. For instance, it was the political will of Nelson Mandela and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and their visionary leadership roles, that changed the destiny of their nations. So, it is pertinent to note, ~~that~~ indeed, visionary leadership plays ~~divisive~~ decisive role in architecting the trajectory of nations. Hence, the political leaders of Pakistan needs to set a progressive charter of economy, democracy and national integration. Above all, they also need to draw a demarcation among <sup>all</sup> state institutions, to consolidate the doctrine of separation powers. In brief, pragmatic leadership is precondition for good governance, and the ruling elites in Pakistan need to adopt political will, to ensure good governance and stability.



Lastly, administration plays the role of spinal cord in ~~at nation~~ the state building. It requires competent and capable individuals, in order to run the system of administration effectively. Therefore, Pakistan needs to ensure transparency and meritocracy in the recruitment process, without any external political influence, nepotism favoritism, *inter alia*. For instance, Singapore, according to global governance agency, is having one of the best form of government and administration, significantly least corrupt country in the world. So, Pakistan need to adopt and learn administrative policies from Singapore. To sum up, ensuring transparency, accountability, and merit based ~~recruitment~~ recruitment can have a trickle down effect on the overall state mechanism, if in ~~order~~ to effect to bring the house in order.

In the end of the above made discussion, it may be concluded, that definitely there is unprecedented crisis of good governance. Governance,

an imperative tool of the state which runs the entire system of the state administration. However, good governance implement policies pragmatically, whereas bad governance depart from the norms of accosted laws. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been delved in the curse of crisis in good governance, which badly retarded country's growth and progress. Due to political uneasiness, dwindling economy and outdated accountability system. Regrettably, such dismal state of bad governance, pushed the country to unprecedented repercussions. As the curse of corruption penetrated in every all and sundry institutions. It consequently created unrest, devastated economy and resources. However, Pakistan is a resilient state, it always has firm determination and beacon of hope. Therefore, political leaders and policy makers need to take shrewd steps to resolve the crisis of good governance. Promoting literacy, accountability and rule of law. Under visionary leadership.

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