

Q The Democratization process in Pakistan is still weak. Do you consider dynastic politics and feudalism are major hindrances on the way of establishing true democratic system in Pakistan?

1 INTRODUCTION

The democratic process in Pakistan has been weak since the inception of the country. Many problems have contributed to the weakness of democratization process in the country but most prominent are dynastic politics and feudalism. These two problems restrict democracy to flourish in the country because both bring various problems.

2- What are dynastic politics and feudalism?

i) Dynastic politics

Dynastic politics refers to the nepotism and repetition of same faces in politics. To put it simply, it means that the power is transferred to son after father. In Pakistan, Pakistan

Peoples Party (PPP) and ^{Pakistan} Muslim League Nawas (PMLN) are dynastic parties.

ii) Feudalism

Feudalism refers to the concentration of power in feudallords. The landlords hold the power and influence. In Southern Punjab, Sindh, and KPK, Feudal lords are present abundantly.

3- How dynastic politics and feudalism restrict democracy in Pakistan?

i) Repetition of Same faces

The major problem dynastic politics create for the restriction of democracy is the repetition of same faces in politics. New faces do not get opportunity. For instance, Nawaz, Shehbaz Hamza Shehbaz and now Maryam Nawaz are repetitive faces due to dynastic politics

ii) Eligible people are deprived of holding political offices

The repetition of

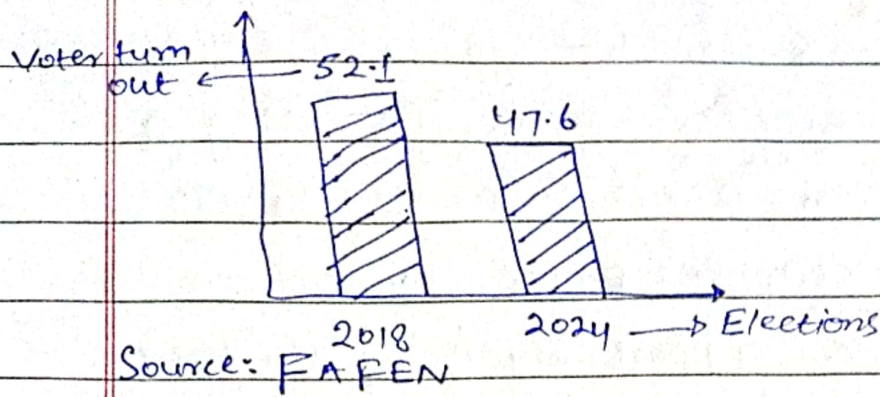
Same faces due to dynastic politics deprive eligible people from playing a part in politics. Under the dynastic politics, eligible people remain unable to get an opportunity. The party tickets are not issued to the deserving people due to dynastic influence.

iii) Repetition of Same Faces discourage people to vote

When the same faces remain in power in the country, the people, who want change, get discouraged because of not having change. The thing that makes matter even more worse is that these people are also deprived of power and can do nothing except facing same faces. The last option for them is that they do not consider it necessary to vote. This has become clear from the ~~see~~ result of 2024 election that was held recently.

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The graphical analysis of voter turnout rate makes it abundantly clear that the people are refraining from vote.

iv) Freedom of expression is curbed when the criticism is unleashed

When the criticism is unleashed by the public, the same party that came into power as a result of dynastic politics curbs the freedom of people. They use different tactics for this purpose. After 2024, election, PMLN came under severe criticism, but on the election day the service of internet had been disabled. Moreover, the recurrence of banning social media sites, which serves as a hub for public voice, has become common practice.

v) Women are restricted to join politics by Feudals

The feudal lords do not allow women to join politics. Therefore, there is a limited participation of women in politics. According to Global Gender Gap Report 2020, only 12% women were allowed to take the charge of ministerial position in the country. The recent example can be taken of the present cabinet of PM Shehbaz Sharif that includes only one woman in it.

vi) Feudals promote illiteracy for preserving their interests

The Feudals are aware of the fact that if the people who are dependent on them started to receive education, their dependency on feudals would come to an end. Therefore, they keep people aloof from education. In rural Sindh, many people are illiterate because of the feudals. These illiterate do not understand democratic system as well.

vii) Feudals force people to vote for a certain party

The feudal lords force the people, who are under their direct influence, to vote for the party that is favorite of the feudal. In rural Sindh and South Punjab, the candidates won because of the support of feudal lords. Ultimately, the people living under the influence of the feudal lord are left with no other option.

viii) Feudals contest elections and common men do not have any voice

In Pakistani elections, the feudals dominate the elections. The election is contested by feudal lords because of influence and resources. A common, although he is allowed constitutionally to contest elections, he can not get public support because he lacks influence. The training of the public has been done by the feudals in a

way that they do not see truth. The major political parties are also dominated by feudals.

ix) Major parties are dominated by Feudals

The political parties of Pakistan have been dominated by feudal lords. For instance, PMLN and PPP are based on feudal support. Similarly, PTI also draw support from feudals.

PMLN → Ahsan Iqbal

PPP → Bhuttos are Feudal Lords

PTI → Shah Mahmood Qureshi

In this way, these feudals dominate the political landscape of the country and restrict democracy to flourish.

x) Absence of devolution of power

Democracy, in a country, demands devolution of power to lower sections. The example can be taken of UK in this regard. But these feudals

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lords oppose devolution of power in the country. Although, the study of world bank conducted in an era of Mushraff has suggested that Pakistan needs devolution of power. The devolution of power is opposed by the feudals because it demands devolution of concentrated power in few hands to many hands.

4- Conclusion

In conclusion, it becomes clear that the dynastic politics and feudals are biggest hurdle in the way of democracy in Pakistan. These feudals assert their influence over the people who live under their protection and mould political scenario. Similarly, the dynastic politics also restrict eligible people to appear on political spot and take the charge. But the day is not far enough, when these hurdles will be removed forever.