

Governance crisis in Pakistan and need for Reforms

Outlines

- 1- Introduction
- 2- What is meant by the governance crisis?
- 3- Eight principles of good governance given by UN.
- 4- Current governance crisis in Pakistan
 - a- Corruption has become the order of the day in Pakistan.

Case in point: According to corruption Perception Index 2024, Pakistan ranks 133 out of 180 countries.

b- Failure of state to deliver necessities of life owing to bad governance
 case in point: Pakistan ranked 136th in 2023 and 138th in 2021 on Legatum Prosperity Index.

c- Insufficient and weak Education and health sector

d- State run enterprises are suffering from catastrophic losses due to bad governance.

e- Pbo-elite ^{measure of} budget 2024 depicts governance crisis in state.

The Pakistan Business Council had this to say, "Sacred cows will graze freely while the golden geese will be cooked"

f- The poor tax to GDP ratio owing to unholy alliance between tax evaders and tax collectors.

Pakistan's
GDP ratio during fiscal year
2023-2024 remained 9% as
reported by FBR.

5- Major causes behind
governance crisis in Pakistan

a- Absence of rule of
Law and accountability.

b- Democratic instability
and fragile political system.

Case in point: Pakistan ranks 118
out of 167 on Democracy Index
2024.

c- Weak and Pliant judicial
system.

"The judicial system of
Pakistan is nothing but a
ploy to frighten". Said
renowned lawyer Aitzaz
Ahsan.

d- Dysfunctional institution and weak institutional norms.

e- The politicization of civil services and other sectors.

f- Lack of direction and poor policy decisions.

Reforms to solve governance crisis in country.

To ensure rule of law is mandatory.

The rule of law is the bedrock of democracy (Catherine Kennedy)

Reorganizing the size and structure of government.

Revival of democratic values

Social and political integration should take precedence.

Ameliorate and strengthen the recruitment process

Conclusion

The Essay

Quaid-e-Azam had rightly asserted that "Remember your government is like your garden. Your garden by the way you look after it, similarly, your government flourishes by patriotic, constructive and honest efforts to improve it". Governance of country encompasses regulation of institution, managing resources and implementing laws to create desirable circumstances for nation's development. It ensure participatory democracy and human development. Unfortunately, governance has always been fraught with many problems in Pakistan, making the nation bogged down in quagmire

of socioeconomic difficulties. The existence of massive corruption, tumbled health infrastructure, inability of government to deliver necessities and low tax to GDP ratio are major crisis of governance. As matter of fact, fragile political system, pliant judicial system and weak institution - norms have augment and pile up these crisis. It is the need of the hour to reverse this situation by adopting strict policies including accountability, rule of law, power separation, democratic norms in country. These reforms are mandatory to get prosperity within and respectful status in the whole world.

The concept of governance is defined as the management of public affairs, contrastingly governance crisis ~~is~~ the mismanagement of these affairs. This crisis exist when economy is weak, lack of accountability and transparency, political turmoil, no rule of law and absence of local governments. All these issues have deep roots and are apparent in the form of crisis.

When the administration of country is carried out in best interest of nation it is regarded good governance. The United Nation has put up some key indicators for

good governance: accountability, transparency, rule of law, participation, inclusiveness, consensus and governmental efficiency. These are the imperative principles of governance to run state in effective way.

Unfortunately, Pakistan had been suffering from mismanagement and bad governance since its inception. This essay, subsequently discussed the major crisis of governance in Pakistan.

To begin with, without good governance, corruption has become the order of the day, costing billion of rupees to economy. A

fragile economy like Pakistan has to bear leakage of 15 billion rupees daily in corruption. one can not get his legitimate work done without bribing government officials. According to Corruption Perception Index, the country's ranking in corruption is 130 out of 180 in 2024.

Besides, the state has failed to deliver the necessities of life to common man. government is unable to generate job opportunities, this situation has worsened in recent years. Lack of employment is a major antecedent of poverty. Moreover, government finds itself in intense situation.

while grappling the highest inflation rate. This in turn, has baffled the citizens to large extent. This poverty is major threat to peace and security of state. According to report of Legatum Prosperity Index, Pakistan ranked 136 in 2023 and 138 in 2021 on prosperity.

The low ranking from 2021 to 2023 presents gloomy picture of governance system.

Moreover owing to bad governance, the health and educational sector is deteriorating. Pakistan is far behind its regional partners in term of these sectors. Lack of facilities, bribery,

mismanagement are the main factors behind their fall. These are the most serious issues as health and education are the basic rights of every citizens.

In the same manner, state run enterprises are suffering from giant loss. The losses of top enterprises: PIA, Railways, Power Companies and National highways account for 90% of the total loss each year. While, there is no doubt that some of these needed to be liquidated, the decision to retain them should be conditioned.

Another factor, which

deficits the gloomy situation of governance in country is pro-elite measures of budget 2024. Government had to accept painful adjustment measures to meet IMF conditions - but the budget was example of how to reward elite and punish everyone else. The Pakistan Business Council had to say this Sacred cows will graze freely, while the golden geese will be cooked. certainly placing the burden addendum taxation on salaried class method parole to equitably distribute the pain of adjustment. these pro-elite measures included increase salary for civil servants. This deepened the crisis and discontent during this economic turmoil.

Lastly, the tax to GDP ratio exacerbates the already burning situation. According to FBR Tax to GDP ratio in fiscal year 2023-24 remained 9% and projects that it would be between 8.1% to 9% in 2024-25 fiscal year. The major reason behind this low figure is the unhealthy alliance between tax collectors and tax evaders. Secondly tax collection system is outdated not equipped with modern strategies.

Having mentioned the current governance crisis in country. It is pertinent to disclose the causes behind the crisis. As causes are first step

to develop the solutions.

First of all the main factors behind this sorry state of Pakistan is the absence of rule of law in country. In this manner, criminal run amok, economy, bewildered, and institution collapse. people are treated differentially by office holders based on their status. absence of rule of law is the major cause of all crisis in country.

Secondly democratic instability and fragile political system is another cause of governance crisis. The MNA of ruling party who spent certain amount to win elections, his priorities would be

secured the money, securing contracts, after winning elections. These are not at all related to public welfare responsibilities conferred to him. A fragile system and unstable democracy can never deliver good governance.

In 2024, Pakistan ranked 116 out of 167 on Democracy Index. As less than 5% of population is businessmen, landlords but their presence in assembly is 95%. This situation shows the turmoil in governance system of country.

Moreover the weak and corrupt judicial system make it difficult for people to exercise their legal rights undoubtedly, a strong and

independent judiciary can change
fate of nation. Nevertheless,
outer influence can destroy
the institution. A renowned

Lawyer and Politician Aitzaz
Ahsan has rightly said
that the judicial system
of Pakistan is nothing
but a ploy to frighten. ✓

The weak judicial system
is major factor related to
absence of rule of law and
crisis in governance system.

In addition to these,
weak institutional norms and
dysfunctional institutions are
prime reasons behind governance,
crisis in Pakistan. These weak
institutional norms give more
space to nepotism, bribery

and corruption. The government jobs are allotted to the hitherto and hinds of society. Incompetent people as a result, are sitting at the helm of affairs. They pursue corruption and use federalism as a shield. This dysfunctional and outdated system led to a governance crisis in the country.

Another factor behind the governance crisis is the politicization of civil services and other sectors. Political appointments added fuel to the fire. At the time of independence, Bureaucratic-military elites ran the country; they included many competent persons. On the other hand, politicians were still used

amateurs and wealthy elites. They lack knowledge and have to depend on each other. This dependence makes institution more worse.

At last, among other ills of governance crisis, lack of direction and poor policy decisions is quite mentionable. Vested interest, lack of will, and poor policy decisions have led country towards bad governance, said by Dr. Umbram Javed Head of Political Science Department at Punjab University.

→ To improve the governance system the root causes mentioned above needed to be addressed.

Subsequently, some reforms are

given to come out of the crisis.

First of all, to ensure ~~rule~~ of law is mandatory. All citizens should be accountable to ^{same} law including leaders and lawmakers.

Caroline Kennedy aptly said, "the rule of law is the bedrock of democracy." democracy is incomplete without rule of law. judiciary and police should be depoliticize to ensure rule of law in country. institutional safeguards need to be provided and police reforms should be implemented.

Another idea to reform is to reorganize the size and structure of government.

The entire value chain of human resources needs to be reviewed and redesigned. Similarly, the division of functions and responsibilities between different tiers of government has to be clarified.

△
In addition to these, reviving the democratic values is only possible within the next consensus of 1973 constitution. Any constitutional amendments must be undertaken only after extensive parliamentary and public debates, and with active involvement of civil society. Free elections must be ensured by independent and empowered

election commission to overcome the crisis, effective and elected local governments must be put in place.

Moreover, social and political integration should take precedence over anything. The best way is to constitute a committee representing all political parties, to address their concerns and make them stakeholders in gain and loss of country. All political, social and religious communities should be on the board for the progress of country. Justly a culture of tolerance, accommodation for difference of opinion need to be adopted.

Lastly, the effective suggestions would be to improve and strengthen the recruitment process. A huge army of youth is unemployed, while officials are recruiting births and bins. Merit system should be transparent. Pakistan has abundant unemployed youth, harnessing their potential and organizing their skills is the imperative way to overcome governance crisis in country.

To sum up,
The essay discussed the governance crisis in Pakistan and ways to reform it.
These crises are the result of

bungling public affairs in Pakistan governance exists in the shape of corruption, insufficient infrastructure, absence of rule of law and wobbles economy. These crises are engulfing the beloved country from all corners. Many factors describe this baneful situation.

Some of these are, fragile political system, flimsy judiciary and dysfunctioning of institutions. Country, who has good governance, has high living standard.

Nevertheless in under-developed state, as Pakistan, basic needs of citizen are not met in certain aspects and place them in more brittle situation.

To make the country progressive and beautiful,

it is the dire need of the time to introduce major reforms including: revival of democracy, social integration, restructuring the government system and mandating the rule of law. By introducing these reforms and taking certain tough decisions now, Pakistan will be able to uplift the lives of people and develop good governance system. In this manner, she will be able to attain respectful status in the world.