

# Pale affairs

Political stability remains elusive concept in Pakistan. Explore factors contributing the fractured nature of Pakistan's polity and discuss potential reforms to the constitutional and political structure that could foster stability.

## Introduction:

Political instability remains major hurdle in Pakistan's stability since 1947. In different eras various problems fractured nature of Pakistan's polity. First of all, gap of leadership after Jinnah's death, secondly, constitutional delay that diminished the governance ideology of Pakistan, third lack of development led to ethnic politics and rift between institutions. In contemporary perspective political polarization and non democratic nature causes major hurdles in Pakistan's political stability. However, the constitutional and political reforms can help to overcome the issue. The reforms are following, devolution of power on local level and strengthen political parties through consensus oriented approach. Moreover, build civilian institutions capable to curb the role of military in politics. The suggested reforms would help to stabilize Pakistan's political situation.

Q.6 There are following causes that fractured the Pakistan's polity :

### i) Leadership gap after Jinnah open doors for undemocratic forces :

On 11 September 1948, the founding father of Pakistan died, which created the leadership gap in Pakistan. In 1952 to fill this gap, Ghulam Muhammad was selected as governor. He was a bureaucrat and had no knowledge regarding the emotions of masses. He used his discretionary powers to remain in power by dissolving assemblies and delaying constitutional making. His decisions created chaos throughout the country. To control the situation two military generals Iskander Mirza and Ayub Khan turned him down. Later in 1958, Ayub Khan declared martial law in the country and undemocratic forces entered Pakistan's polity and fractured the Pakistan's democratic and political system.

### ii) Constitutional delay diminished the governance ideology of Pakistan :

Pakistan's political ideology is based upon a federal system of government, means higher autonomy to provinces and minimum role of

center. The point was highlighted by Jinnah in many times particularly in his famous 14 points in 1928. However, long delay in constitutional making diminished this ideology and created rift between provinces and federal center. The provinces are divided on ethnic basis therefore, it created anarchy in the country resulted in fall of Dhaka in 1971. This shows that weak federation is always major hurdle for political stability in Pakistan.

### iii) Development issues created grievances and give rise to ethnic politics :

Since 1947 till today, the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained underdeveloped in comparison with Punjab and Sindh. That created grievances among local people that central government always focuses on Sindh and Punjab due to their political reasons. This grievance give rise to political parties that are based on local narratives. The rise of ethnic parties demolish the ideology of one nation and one Pakistan and slowly created gap between state and people. This national disintegration is one of the major cause of political instability.

ii) Non-democratic nature of political parties weakens the public participation.

Non-democratic nature of political parties refers to the dynastic way of leadership in political parties. In this way party politics revolve around certain group of people. This undermines the democratic nature in politics. Due to this people coming from non-political background avoid to join politics, considering it waste of personal resources and capabilities. This factor led to the political instability in Pakistan.

Political and constitutional reforms suggested to overcome political instability:

i) Devolution of power on local level to increase participation:

Devolution of power to local level means to create a strong institutions on lower level of the country to encourage commoners to participate in politics. After 18<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment this subject was given to provinces. Among them Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has somehow achieved remarkable success through KPK local government act, 2013. The system ensures representation at grassroot level and devolved

development funds and powers to the lowest tiers. Through this significant political awareness has been noted in KPK and their role in national politics has increased as well. Therefore, it is recommended for other provinces to adopt such policy.

## ii) Consensus oriented approach among political parties to eradicate non-democratic forces :

Consensus oriented approach refers to the result oriented discussion between all political parties to minimize the role of non-democratic forces in politics. The prominent example of this "Charter of democracy" signed between two major political parties to restore democracy in the country against Musharraf's dictatorship. In contemporary scenario, there is need for another charter of democracy between political parties to eradicate the role of non-democratic forces.

## iii) Ensure sovereignty of Parliament through strong scrutinizing committees :

According to the 1973 constitution, Parliament is supreme authority and every sub-ordinate institution is accountable in front of the

parliament. However, the ~~commit~~ committees related to security of institutions are not functional on practical grounds. The best example of this is Turkey's parliamentary oversight committee that oversee defense budget and military policies, as well as train parliamentarians to be well versed in defense matters and define role of every institution clearly. The same model can be adopted by legislators of Pakistan to ensure sovereignty and stability.

#### iv) Build civilian institutions capacity through restructurization and constitutional backing:

The effective institutions are those that have an effective mechanism of self accountability and independence from political pressure. According to article 240 of 1973 constitution, transfer and posting can be done through parliamentary recommendation. This article politicize the role of civil servants. Therefore, civil servants must be appointed through suitable commissions suggestion and must have fixed tenure of posting. This will help to build capabilities of civilian institutions and foster political stability in Pakistan.

#### Conclusion:

Since independence, the most critical concern for internal security is national integration. Discuss the role of constitutional provisions enabling provincial autonomy and devolution of power to strengthen national integration in Pakistan?

### Introduction:

For the survival of any state, the security matters are very important. Since independence, Pakistan's internal security faced challenges due to the problem of national integration. There are various important factors that foster disintegration in Pakistan. These issues are, national identity crises, sectarian divide, unequal distribution of resources and political centralization. However, after through 18<sup>th</sup> amendment stakeholders try to fix this problem with provincial autonomy and devolution of power. That somehow restored national integration but due to contemporary challenges problem still prevails.

Internal security has been compromised due to the problem of national integration in the following ways:

## i) Identity crises creates disintegration:

Pakistan is diverse country in terms of ethnicities, language and religious beliefs. According to the political ideology of national philosopher Allama Iqbal, the major muslim ethnicities like Punjabi, Pashtun, Sindhi and Balochs should come under one Pakistani identity. However, after independence the political mistakes like "one unit scheme". Through this the administrative units of west Pakistan was merged into single administration. Balochistan have distinct tribal identity and Baloch leaders thinks takes this scheme to remove their identity, which resulted in second insurgency of Balochistan between 1958 to 1959. Still Pakistan is facing hurdles due to identity crises.

## ii) Sectarian divide in the country:

In 1977, when General Zia-ul-Haq imposed martial law in the country, he proposed the scheme of islamization. Despite the ethno-lingual differences in Pakistan, the common muslim identity bind people. But they are divided on sectarian basis. Zia imposed the Sharia law favourable for specific sect, created chaos for others. To defend their belief people choose the



way of violence. From 1979 to 1988 different incidents in Peshawar, Karachi, Jhang and in Gilgit Baltistan turned into massacre. The sectarian division has changed the social fabric of Pakistan forever.

### iii) Unequal distribution of resources :

Disparities in the allocation of resources among provinces have created grievances, particularly in less developed regions like Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). This phenomenon led to economic deprivation and create loopse for foreign involvement. The role of Afghan Taliban and Indian intelligence in the shape of Kullbusham is very clear. This deprivation create disintegration as well as poses threats for internal security.

### iv) Political centralization :

Pakistan's political history has been characterized by the centralized governance system. Contrary to that, ideology of Pakistan suggest federal governance model. The martiala's and centralization of power from 1958 to 1971 created mistrust among masses and state that resulted into fall of east Pakistan in 1971. Afterwards, the military coup of 1977 and ~~in~~ 1999, and

misuse of Presidential power created the same situation of disintegration and threats to internal security.

**Role of provincial constitutional provisions in strengthening national integration:**

The face of 1973 constitution was radically changed by Zia-ul-Haq and Musharraf through 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> amendment. However, in 2009 the democratic government restored it through 18<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment.

**i) Division of legislative power in 1973 constitution:**

The part 1 and part 2 of constitution provide the clear structure of federal governance model. The constitution ensures autonomy of power provinces by enlisting the legislative power on three levels. Federal list like defence and foreign affairs legislated by federal assembly. Provincial list includes matters like Police, public health, development and education. The third list concurrent list and both national and provincial assemblies can legislate on that matters. This structure ensures greater autonomy to provinces and help to strengthen national integration.

## ii) Role of Council of Common interest and National economic council :

Council of Common interest (CCI) was established under article 153 to resolve the dispute between provinces and federations in areas of shared jurisdiction like electricity and natural resources.

Besides, National Economic Council (NEC) was established under article 156 to promote balanced economic development throughout the country.

## iii) Salient features of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to ensure provincial autonomy :

a) Article 19A ensures transparency in all matters of government should be public.

b) Article 58 was substituted which empowers president to dissolve assembly assemblies.

c) Article 91 restricted ~~the~~ the two terms for Prime Minister was abolished.

d) According to Article 157, Federal government will consult with respective province before the construction of hydro power plant.

e) Article 160 ensures that in any NFC award the share of province will not be reduced than previous.

f) The royalty of natural resources collected by federal government will be paid back to provinces under Article 161.

The 18<sup>th</sup> amendment significantly expanded provincial autonomy, addressing long standing grievances like minimizing the role of federal government in public sector, distribution of resources and autonomy in governance.

**Challenges related to proper implementation of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment:**

Through restoration of 1973 constitution through 18<sup>th</sup> amendment the provincial autonomy has been largely ensured. However, the challenges like proper electoral reforms, weak civil institutions due to political intervention and traditional judicial mechanism are hindrances in proper implementation of the provisions to ensure complete provincial autonomy and national integration.

**Conclusion.**