

The Far Reaching Effects of Political Instability in Pakistan

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Essay

"When we neglect the history, history visits us in the same clothe" - Earnst Agyemang.

This statement of Agyemang reflects the political turmoil in Pakistan. Pakistan's politics is the paragon of paradoxes. The main factors behind instability are bad economic performance, regimes of dictatorship and centralisation of power. It is further exacerbated by the Intervention of judiciary in politics. All such actions resulted in the far reaching impacts on social condition of Pakistan: resurgence of the militancy in certain parts of country, impoverished condition of the public and Bad climatic progress. Furthermore, economy is also impacted as decrease in Foreign reserves, dip in the stock exchange and devaluation of the PKR has occurred. Over and above, ramification on politics are cynical that election won't change anything.

Blurred image of the country to the world and devaluation of the green passport.

There is dire need to learn lesson from the past. However, with proper measures these woes can be mitigated by conduction of unbiased elections, focusing on self development, independence of judiciary, electorate's youth bulge and enhancing the public participation.

Political instability in Pakistan is deeply rooted. It has badly impacted the social, political and economic condition of the country. However, with proper measures political stability can be restored.

The country's democracy is fraught with anti-democratic practices and the political environment is charged with turmoil and apolitical culture. Pakistan is suffering from political instability since its inception.

This is either due to the centralisation of authority or due to military interventions. First military intervention occurred in 1958, followed by the 1969, 1977 and 1999 interventions. Even under the civilian governments, a number of prime ministers changes which has created political turmoil in the country. Currently, political instability is due to the vote of no confidence succeeded against the former prime minister. It has lead to the waves in the country. Vote of no confidence presented on 8th March, 2022 in the national assembly. It was rejected on 3rd April, 2022 by the speaker. The ruling of speaker was declared unconstitutional on 7th April, 2022. And the incumbent government is formed on 10th of April, 2022. This is the current wave of political instability.

Political Instability occurs due to a number of reasons, among which the bad economic performance is on the top. Due to the lack of the effective economic policies and their implementation, the government becomes the unpopular. Pakistan's government economic performance are mostly below the par. This lead to the suffering of people under the government: Inflation rises to the double digits and people's confidence on the public lower. As per paper published by IMF of Arsen and Veiga "An additional cabinet change reduces the annual real GDP per capita growth rate by 2.39%. However, proper implementation of the policies can encumber the political instability.

The bad economic performance is followed the regimes of dictatorship. Dictator always takes advantage of the prevailing crisis of the country. Due to the

over and over again regimes of dictatorship, democracy subverted. Pakistan has experienced four regimes of the dictatorship, during which the political activities were banned. No freedom was given to the political parties and leaders. As, during the Ayub Khan's regime non-party base election was conducted. The way to military dictatorship were also provided by the civilian government's lack of performance. Pakistan has remained under the dictatorship of Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf. However, by strengthening the democratic principles, ways to dictatorship can be closed.

The regimes of dictatorship lead to the over-centralization of power. President takes the power in their hand and avert the political setup.

Centralization of power has resulted in the throwing of many democratic governments. Constitutional amendments were done to legalize the overuse of the power. This resulted in frequent change of regim with fluctuating policies. When policies don't suite to the president, he replaces the cabinet with the new one. Overuse of the article 58-2(B) has thwarted many governments between 1988 to 1999. And all was due to the overcentralization of power in the hand of single person. This shows that how the overcentralization of power has added to the political instability.

The overcentralisation of power always become practicable due to the intervention of judiciary. Judiciary either has legalized the rule of dictator or

intervene through excessive judicial activism. Whenever any undemocratic government came into power, judiciary ruled as the doctrine of necessity.

Judiciary has also done the menace, by overusing of suo moto powers.

Chief Justice has taken the notices of the cases that doesn't fall in his authority. In 2008, a

wave of judicial activism spreaded, and Chief Justice Iftikhar

Chaudhary has fired many judges with single stroke of pen (Ishrat

Hussain). The first step of judiciary that has paved the way for the dictator occurred in the early years

of inception. The judiciary has legalized the dissolution of

assembly by GOG Ghulam Mohammad against the petition filed by the Madaoi Tameez-ud-Din in 1954.

This shows that how excessive intervention of judiciary in politics has added fuel to fire of political instability.

"Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."
Reinhold Niebuhr.

All the episodes of political instability resulted in the far reaching impacts on social condition of Pakistan. Political

instability has resulted in the reurgence of militancy in various parts of country.

This is due to the fight for power among the leaders and paying no heed to the situation of security in country.

Many militant organization has mustered again and has done many attacks on the civilian unarmed population.

Attacks on the security agency also carried out by militant organizations.

The wave of terrorism has neither

leave the foreigners. Mammouth
deaths occurred due to such attacks.
Recent attacks of these organizations
has mostly targeted the area of
KPK and Balochistan. The terrorist
attack by TTP on the security
office in Bannu has lead to
the death of soldiers (Dawn, Nov 2021).

This is the reflection that how
the militant organizations has taken
the advantage of current political turmoil.

Recurrent terrorist attacks has
exacerbated the already impoverished
condition of the public. The gravity of
situation has occurred to the frequent
changes of the policies. Every new
government brings with it own policies,
always contradicting to the old one.

The short time also did not allow
for the effective implementation of
the policy. All the brands than has

to bear by the common people, traders and merchants. Public has to bear the storm of high prices of fuels, commodities and the staple food. The price of milk has reached to the 200 rupees, and the price of flour is 130 rupees per kg (Looming food crisis in Pak, Mohsin Galimullah, Dec, 2022).

This shows that how the political instability has lowered the living standards of the public.

Not only the impoverished condition of people, but also the ability to deal with climatic disasters has effected by political instability.

Climate related disasters need the war footing approach. But due to the political turmoil and segmentation of ruling parties it is not possible. The recent flood of 2022 has affected almost

116 districts of the Pakistan. It has lead to the massive loss of lives and crops. Many of the buildings and roads are destroyed.

The intensity of the disaster can be ton down by having a strong stable government with effective

policies. Around 2 Million acres of crops in Pakistan destroyed:

four thousand acres in Balochistan,

One lac eighteen thousand in Punjab

and one lac fifty four thousand

acres in KPK. (The news, Sept 2022)

This indicates that how the gravity of the climatic related disaster exacerbated due to political instability.

Along with the social conditions of country, economy is also badly impacted by the political instability. Economy is got effect in many ways, the chief among which is the depletion

in foreign reserves. As the country exports is ~~is~~ lagging behind imports. There is an ballooning current account deficit. The condition is exacerbated by the trade deficit. Foreign investors also do not invest in Pakistan due to political instability and all this lead to economic crisis.

According to the State bank of Pakistan there is only 6% FDI growth relative to the \$11.8 Billion current account deficit confronting the country. This implies that political instability has the far reaching effect on the foreign reserves of Pakistan.

Depletion in foreign reserves has resulted in the dip in the stock exchange. Multinational companies are not willing to invest their capital in Pakistan. This is due to the fact that with change in government, economic policies also

changes. This result in loss of the
confidence of the investor. All the
projects which are installed by
the previous government, got delayed.
Developmental work also suffer from
this. The progress of the country
shifts into the backward direction.
As, in 1990, Peshawar to Karachi
Motorway was initiated, it would
have been completed in a few
years, but government toppled. All
these incidence throws light on the
dip in the stock exchange due
to the political instability.

When dip in stock exchange
occurs, the value of PKR is
always negatively impacted. This is
due to the depletion in foreign
reserves and foreign direct investment.
Dollar gains against the PKR in
the international market. The purchasing

power of the people decreases and people are pushed towards the abject poverty. Devaluation of the PKR is mainly due to the current account deficit because imports are more than exports. Pakistan economy is consumer driven import growth rather than expansion of the export base and volume. Currently, in international market 844 PKR against 1 dollar is the rate. This indicates that how the currency devaluated due to political instability.

Besides economy, political instability has also the political ramifications in Pakistan. Top on the which is cynicism in voters that election would not change anything in Pakistan. The faith of the voters on the political process of democracy faded away with time. Frustration and misery spikes

in voters. The result of which lead to the decline in turnout during the election of the country. Democracy also get subverted in this way. Public then supports the dictator to carry them out of crisis. All the political setup in country get reversed. In history, whenever the civilian government fail to deliver to public and started fighting over the power, the dictator take the ground against the loopholes. They got the support of public sentiments and lead to the martial law. This indicates that how the political instability loses the confidence of voter and lead towards the regime of dictatorship.

Not only politician loses the confidence of the public, but also they loses the confidence of the western powers. It displays the blurred

image of country to the world. The relation with the foreign countries got affected. This results in the decline of the support from world and politician faces difficulty to run the government. No country shows willingness to do partnership with the country with political instability. This pushes the country to remain in constant backwardness.

As in past when government changes frequently, every coming government brings with it own foreign policy and thus overrided the policy of the previous government. So, this shows that how political instability shapes the negative image of Pakistan to the world.

Display of blurred image to the world lead towards the devaluation of the green passport.

People in the western world don't respect Pakistani passport. It is then

not valued by the countries. People consider green passport holder as someone subordinate to them. They do not pay respect to them. The tourists also get decrease in number that visit to the Pakistan. Pakistanis enjoys visa-free access to only 38 destinations out of the total 200 countries. Pakistan is ranked at 91st along with Somalia in the report prepared by Henry and Partners (Visa Restriction Index). This shows the implicit impact of the political instability on the devaluation of the green passport.

The impacts of political instability on political, social and economic sphere made it compulsory for the nation to learn the lesson from the past. When Pakistan

got independence, and all hurdles were easily handled. It was lead to the road of prosperity Pakistan economy was far better than the world power: China. In 1960s, Pakistan economy was growing with GDP \$116 while China and Korea economy was \$98 and \$109

respectively. Exports in Pakistan was also high in the past. Pakistan export has dampened from \$100bn in 1960 to \$23.79bn now. All of these happened due to the political instability and short lived policies. Therefore, country's leader need to learn the lesson from the history.

Although, there is a grave situation of political instability in Pakistan, but with proper measures it can be reversed to political stability. The

Top approach is to conduct the transparent and unbiased election. When transparent elections will be conducted, the faith of people on government increases. People will support the democratic government and the chance to the dictator will be hindered. The allegation of rigging will also lose the ground. In this way, political stability will be ensured.

With the transparent and unbiased election, the elected government has to build the capacity for self development rather than seeking the foreign aid. As, seeking of foreign aid and loans bring with them stern terms and conditions. To fulfill these terms and conditions, unpopular election has to be taken.

Due to which the public suffers and loses confidence on the government. The advantage of which is taken by the opposition or by the dictator. Bangladesh has accomplished \$6 Bn infrastructure project without seeking foreign aid. By following the self development model, political stability will be ensured. The focusing of self development should be supplemented with the separation of power and independence of judiciary. Judiciary has to be given the areas on which it can interfere with the political process. So, motto on wide range of areas and excessive interference in political institution destabilize them. Judiciary has to follow the India model of judicial review, that is only interfere in the country's affair to solve the dispute.

between the two governments. By applying such measures political stability will gain the strength.

With the independence of judiciary, youth bulge has to be electorate. Youth are the makers of any nation. They should be encouraged to take part in the electoral process. 67% of the

Pakistan population is under the age of 30. All of this population has to be encouraged to take part in political process. This will stabilize the government.

Not only electorate the youth bulge, but also the public participation has to be enhanced.

The war footing approach to involve the public in discussion and debate has to be enhanced. The policies of the public importance

has to be shared with public. Public should participate in decision making process. The voting turnout has to increased. Public has to keep eye on the undemocratic process. A strong public opinion serves as the wall to hinder the political instability.

In a nutshell, political instability is a common phenomenon in Pakistan since its inception. Either it is in the form of military intervention or due to the absolute power in the hand of president. This resulted in the negative effects in the social sphere in the form of militant attacks, impoverished condition of public and inefficiency to meet the disasters. Economy is also impacted as the foreign reserves depleted, stock exchange has experienced a dip and PKR has devalued. The political sphere has also suffered

due to lost of the confidence of
public, worsen relation with world
and evaluation of green passport. However,
with Stern measuring like the
transparent and unbiased election,
self developmental programs,
independence of judiciary and
electorates of the youth bulge, political
stability can be stored in a
long run.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep, And
miles to go before I sleep.

Robert Frost.