**Elevating Democracy: The Crucial Role of Youth Participation**

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While addressing the youth, Michelle Obama once said, “You’ve got to vote, vote, vote, vote. That’s it; that’s the way we move forward.” The advice has proven valid in Pakistan as well which is evident from the election-related statistics in Pakistan. Pakistani demographics charts reveal that the young people are more in number than the old ones and have a big say in the election processes.

This Pakistani youth is now educated and is well qualified to understand the trends of the world and is capable of seeing into the future and the present. They may not be much concerned about the past but they are having an eye on their future and so don’t want to re-experiments on the people who are already tested and tried and could not alleviate their socio-economic woes. The recent elections show that the youthful people have taken fate into their own hands and hence reflect the awareness necessary to live a cultured and civilized life under the banners of democracy which makes the government of the people, by the people and for the people.

The words of Nelson Mandela “Youth engagement in elections is not just a right; it is a responsibility. Success in shaping the future begins with your vote”, holds good about Pakistani youth also.

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At last, Pakistan has initiated its walk toward democracy it has gone through an election and has got the post-election voices reverberating people’s will. The voice of the people and its echoes are the very beauty of democracy. Pakistan has begun to include this noise in its sociopolitical environment. We can find an abundance of such political voices around us and the people have a feeling that they too have their say in the affairs of their country. It is so far a better environment as compared to the hushed and excluded voices in the past.

The much-touted election process has just completed. People have taken part in elections from all walks and social strata of life. A few have been successful and some could not reach the golden egg. The whole of the country has been in the grip of elections. People discussed debated and commented on the process and the activities that were generated by the hype of the election. Many have lost their traditional grip and the so-called electables have turned into losers.

The election system also played well and allowed voting and to get voted on. The old and the young, men and women, the educated and the common people all took their way to cast their vote. The same vote would enable the people to become members of the parliaments at national and provincial levels. They would further move on to establish executive and legislative and finally, the affairs of the state would be in the hands of the elected representatives of the people.

The results of the elections have brought forth new realities indicating that the people have voices and have now learnt to use their right to vote for their favourite candidate and oust the simply unwanted. This is the very root of the democratic process on the way to establishing healthy democracies in the world. Whatever the case maybe it reflected the will of the people and so established the rule of the people for the people and on the people. If this process is duly repeated every five years, the people’s will would prevail and no unwanted person based on his money or power can win the hearts of the people unless they have performed for the good of the people.

On the one hand, the current result demonstrates that the Pakistani voter is now much more aware of their power than they used to be in the last few decades and, on the other hand, they also exercise their power with their will and wish. They have not voted for the people who traditionally have been claiming their right to get the vote of the people. Instead, the people have evaluated the performance of the people in the past and have given votes to the ones who have been helping deal with the issues of the people.

Moreover, they have also shown who they want to be seen in the offices of the government. Ultimately, we can claim that the will of the people has prevailed and the dynamics of Pakistani politics have changed altogether and shifted hands from the power corridors towards the general people. Now, one can say that vox populi, vox God which affirms in the words of John Lewis, “The vote is precious. It is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democratic society, and we must use it.” And so, we may conclude in the words of Justin Trudeau that Youth participation in elections is the key to a successful and thriving democracy. Your vote is your power; use it wisely.

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