

State, society and hum

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THIS one factor alone is responsible for declining participation of common man in the democratic political process, the fact is evident from the results of last four elections in the country during which voters' turnout has remained very low and is declining continuously. The regulated democracy has turned electorate apathetic and indifferent to the prevailing electoral process as a result of which participation of people has substantially reduced and situation will further aggravate if the loopholes in the system continue unabated. Therefore, there does exist a dire need for supporting a true democratic process and giving people their right of democratic governance by making them part of decision-making process.

The right to democratic

governance has also been marred by personality centred political parties. The organisational structure of parties has been very weak and non-representative rather party caucuses are stuffed with elite groups either with feudal background or from business community. Hence political parties do not have their roots among the people and votes are mostly casted on the basis of regional, tribal, caste and clan system prevailing in the society, right to dissent is something non-existent.

Legitimate right to opposition has never been respected. The whole administrative machinery revolves around the vested interests of selected groups due to which the process of development remained at the lowest ebb.

The irony is that there is little community organisation which is the most important

element of a participatory democracy. The masses have been deliberately kept ignorant and illiterate. Communities promote civic trust,

organisations could not yield desired results as they are formed by the individuals and vices and virtues of individuals have either changed or

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co-operation, and dialogue without which democratic institutions become brittle. The activities of community-based

have remained dormant. Therefore, under the circumstances the process of transformation depends more on

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individuals who can work hard at community level to strengthen civil society for protection and promotion of human rights and democracy in Pakistan.

The state of human rights will not be helpless and hopeless if effective mechanisms are introduced for checking misuse of the existing laws and new ones are introduced to control corruption and making the administration accountable.

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Last but not the least, human rights are universal in nature and spirit and hence any particular nation or community should not be judged on local criteria but on the basis of standards as set in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other Covenants and Protocols. It is always responsibility of the states to protect human rights through effective constitutional guarantees and that of non-governmental organisations and individuals to support and watch governments for protection and promotion of human rights without any discrimination on the basis of sex or religion.

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Concluded