**Article 5 for Pakistan and NATO**

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Article 5 is under discussion in Pakistan’s Supreme Court and among Nato countries for separate reasons. The Constitution of Pakistan’s Article 5 states the loyalty of every citizen to the state. It is under debate after Prime Minister Imran Khan invoked this Article to dismiss the no-trust motion against his government. Then, the President of Pakistan dissolved the National Assembly on PM’s advice. The result of this act is obvious – extreme political chaos and public disorder. Perhaps, Article 5 is invoked for the first time in the country’s history in the context of “external interference in connivance with the native politicians and institutions.”

Nato’s Article 5 states the “collective defence” of a member state in case of aggression against it or more than one country. NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history after the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States. Now, they are considering invoking this Article against Russia for a raging war on Ukraine, a prospect Nato member where the US has a decade long fiddling to uproot the pro-Moscow government and install its blue-eyed one.

Pakistan is going through the consequences of Article 5 invocation. It needs a thorough screening and scrutiny for its objectivity and rationality. The US has seen the severe consequences in Afghanistan for a built-up of 9/11 faking it as the terrorist attacks, and invoking Nato’s Article 5. Some twenty years later, the US once again is trying to push Nato members to another war that is not their own. If the decision is taken to invoke Nato’s Article 5, all 30 member states will jump into the war against Russia. They would fuel it up with their money and at the cost of their economy, peace and prosperity that is already under threat in the prevailing circumstances. The people in the Nato member states know well who benefited the most from their war investments and who are the losers at the end of the war.

Whatever the SCP decision would be, it would not be able to reverse the constitutional loss that the nation has suffered from the house-runners.

On the direction of US President Joe Biden, All the Nato member states and their friendly countries have banned airing the Russian stance on the Ukraine war. They all have banned Russian news channels too. Well, Pakistan has also put RT off the air from its satellite and cable news networks. RT is the first Russian 24/7 English-language news channel that brings the Russian view on global news. If we can put RT off-air, can we not plan to put a national government off office whose Prime Minister has shown his inclination toward Russia? Shall we not expect any reaction when the sitting Prime Minister says that there are “circumstances reflecting external fiddling and connivance with the opposition to throw him out”?

Act of the National Assembly Deputy Speaker under Article 5 of Pakistan’s Constitution is being debated in the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP). In the coming days, the five-judge larger SCP Bench will come up with its verdict on whether the April 3 “ruling” of the Deputy Speaker was constitutional or illegitimate. Whatever the SCP decision would be, it would not be able to reverse the constitutional loss that the nation has suffered from the house-runners. It will not be able to reverse the political confidence of the nation that has been shattered yet again. It will not be able to restore the citizens’ trust in the state institutions that are blamed yet again for hatching a pro-US conspiracy.

Article 5 of the Constitution of Pakistan needs to be looked at deeply in the context of “loyalty to the State is the basic duty of every citizen.” Article 6 explains High Treason as any person who abrogates or subverts or suspends or holds in abeyance, or attempts or conspires to abrogate or subvert or suspend or hold in abeyance, the Constitution by use of force or show of force or by any other unconstitutional means shall be guilty of high treason; any person aiding or abetting [or collaborating] the acts mentioned in clause (1) shall likewise be guilty of high treason. If these two Articles of the Constitution were invoked in letter and spirit, I doubt anyone that has been in the power corridors, anywhere in Pakistan at any institution, would survive.

Anyone out there to claim that our civilian or martial-law governments over 75 years were formed or toppled without any external interference? Were all the actions of the governments loyal to the State? Anyone? Raise your hand. The same is the case with Nato’s Article 5. No member state can raise their hand to be clean-handed, honest and loyal to its state and people.

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