**Building national integration**

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August 25, 2021

This August 14 marked the completion of seventy-four years of independence of our beloved Pakistan and every single citizen celebrated it with great fanfare. While it’s been more than seven decades, we flunked in building national integration in Pakistan which is not only an immense hurdle in the way of the development, but was the dream of our founder Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. As Quaid-i-Azam said in a reply to a civic address presented by the Quetta Municipality on June 15, 1948, “We are now all Pakistanis—not Balochs, Pathans, Sindhis, Bengalis, Punjabis and so on—and as Pakistanis we must feel, behave and act, and we should be proud to be known as Pakistanis and nothing else”.

The term national integration is the awareness of a common identity among the citizens of a country; this means that although we belong to different castes, religions and speak different languages, we recognise the fact that we are all one. It is not just a national feeling, but the spirit which brings people of all dialects and beliefs together in a similar endeavour. This kind of integration is very important in the building of a strong and prosperous nation.

[US claims blast in Kabul was strike at Daesh/ISIS-K terror group](https://nation.com.pk/30-Aug-2021/us-claims-blast-in-kabul-was-strike-at-daesh-isis-k-terror-group)

Historically, Pakistan started its life in an extremely challenging scenario, demanding the utmost struggle for strategic alignment and survival. The task of nation building proved to be a very difficult process due to evolving circumstances. Early deaths in the central leadership, financial and administrative difficulties in the 1950s, political instability and crises, Indian aggressions of 1948 and 1965 and the dismemberment of the country in 1971; complicated the national integration process and brought forward several issues. Socio-economic disparities, the impact of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the revolution in Iran were some of the factors which kept the governments distracted from focusing on this core issue.

Some important reasons for the failure of national integration in Pakistan are—a crisis of leadership, economic disparities, provincial biasness, political instability and governance issues, feudalism and the existence of the jirga system, sectarianism and extremism, minority issues and education.

[KP govt to provide low cost housing facilities to citizens: CM Mahmood](https://nation.com.pk/29-Aug-2021/kp-govt-to-provide-low-cost-housing-facilities-to-citizens-cm-mahmood)

The crisis of leadership in Pakistan was a major hurdle in the way of creating unity among the people of the nation. After the death of Quaid-e-Azam there was hardly any leader behind whom the nation could be united. Many leaders prefer personal interests rather than national interests. They built up economic assets through illegal means.

Economic disparities are not far behind in affecting the process of national integration in Pakistan. The system of Pakistan has been structured such that the gulf between the poor and rich has widened with every passing day. An imbalanced provision of resources, uneven infrastructural and industrial developments and the lack of employment opportunities; all of this resulted in disparity of economic well-being of the public. It is mainly because, wealth in the hands of the few paves the way for their constant power and ensures the continuity of this gap. Thus, economic inequalities led towards the weakness of national integration.

Provincial biases are posing a threat to the basic existence of the country. It leads towards the destabilisation of the state and is shaking the basis of national integration in the country. The smaller provinces have developed a sense of deprivation. They think that they have been deprived of their just share in the national exchequer and of their just royalty which developed animosities among the provinces. The water dispute has existed among the provinces along with having objections on the construction of Kalabagh dam. Likewise, the dispute over the National Finance Commission (NFC) Award is a problem, as they don’t agree on the formula in which the resources are to be divided on the basis of population.

[Israeli premier says his visit to Washington achieved its goals](https://nation.com.pk/29-Aug-2021/israeli-premier-says-his-visit-to-washington-achieved-its-goals)

The sense of regionalism by the lack of socio-economic justice has created fractions, groups and sects working for their own vested interests. There is a trend of promoting personal, class, group, factional and regional interests instead of national interests. Almost all parties are talking about Sindhis, Balochs, Pukhtuns, and Punjabis and other small groups. There is no talk about Pakistan. This politics of regionalism has widened the gulf between different sections of society. It has shaken the basis of national integration in Pakistan.

Political stability is one of the most important prerequisites for strengthening national integration. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been lacking this requirement for very long. Political instability has widened the gulf between the ruling and the ruled. It has posed a big threat to national unity and integrity. Delayed justice, inefficient institutions, rampant corruption and lack of accountability are some of the major contributory factors of a lack of good governance.

[President Alvi visits residence of former CM Sindh for condolence](https://nation.com.pk/29-Aug-2021/president-alvi-visits-residence-of-former-cm-sindh-for-condolence)

Minority issues are also paving the way for disunity in the country. Pakistan is a safe haven for minorities and they have been living in their motherland for decades, undoubtedly. But the problem lies in extremist mindsets against them. They (especially Hindus) are often linked with India and its fascist Modi government’s illicit and brutal acts to its Muslim minority. What we have to understand here is that the whole country, including both the minority and majority, is standing against the fascist Modi regime and its brutal acts against Indian and Kashmiri Muslims. Hindutva and Hinduism (Sanatan dharma) are both different in nature in every aspect. The lack of trust in minorities by not giving them top slots or in other words, not giving them the opportunity to do something for their motherland is also an issue. Additionally, biased selection of parliamentarians from minorities by political parties is another facet, as they are unable to even speak in Parliament or resolve the issues of minorities.

[Bangladesh, WHO ink deal for 100M COVID-19 vaccine doses](https://nation.com.pk/29-Aug-2021/bangladesh-who-ink-deal-for-100m-covid-19-vaccine-doses)

The last factor is education. The major issue here is not following a single curriculum in the academic sphere. The private institution mafia is exploiting educational institutions which is causing disparity among masses.

The solution can include the media and proper training of academia among other things. The media can unveil the truth and the injustice being done to people. It educates the people and moulds their opinion, making heroes and villains. It changes lifestyle, thinking, culture and the traditions of a society. Secondly, training teachers to create national integration rather than to fill the minds of students with any of aforementioned problems can be the best option. It will help build the sense of national integration in upcoming generations.

We must remember that patriotism is not limited to raising the Pakistani flag on significant occasions like March 23 or August 14, but a promise for the motherland to burn the midnight oil to make it a developed nation. This is only possible through national integration which later makes our national interests secure. We must look to make our beloved Pakistan a great nation of the globe in every aspect; political, economic and socio-cultural.