**Civilian supremacy of the corrupt**

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The periods of civilian supremacy have been very brief in the land of the pure. After the assassination of the first Prime Minister (PM) Liaquat Ali Khan in 1951, the encroachment started by the leftovers of the colonial establishment. Then after the dismemberment of the Quaid’s Pakistan, what was left came under elected civilian leadership. Finally Bhutto’s daughter, Benazir and Zia’s political heir Nawaz Sharif got together to sign the ‘Charter of Democracy’ (COD) which on paper looked very good as it was aimed at ‘Civilian Supremacy’.

After the assassination of the Daughter of the East in 2007, her husband Asif Ali Zardari took control of Bhutto’s People’s Party. Riding on the sympathy vote, the party managed to come into power for a record fifth term. The first test of ‘Zardarism’ came with the election of Chairman Senate in 2018. He picked Sadiq Sanjrani to replace his own party stalwart Raza Rabbani. He was able to pull the strings and Sanjrani Sahib became the first Chairman of the upper house from the neglected/ignored province of Balochistan. The secret ballot was his main weapon through which foul play was possible. Islamabad is a funny place, where many a warrior is forced to surrender, quite like the cold weather of Russia where attacking forces are drawn in to freeze. Sanjrani Sahib crossed the line and had to face a no-confidence motion; this time the secret ballot came to his rescue while the show of hands was clearly against him.

[6.9-Magnitude earthquake hits off Russia's Kamchatka peninsula](https://nation.com.pk/17-Mar-2021/6-9-magnitude-earthquake-hits-off-russia-s-kamchatka-peninsula)

In the past while the information was collected for the ‘Dossiers’—this time around it was revealed to the civilian government before the event on a real-time basis. ‘Zardarism’ was back into play. The PM moved an ordinance to move away from the evil of secret balloting which had been repeatedly used to derail the democratic order in the past. The opposition was in no mood to get rid of this menace as it was a part of their strategy to corner the elected government.

After the 18th Constitutional Amendment, Pakistan is being managed more as a Confederation instead of a Federation with autonomous provinces as envisioned in the 1973 constitution. PML-N is now a party of Punjab, PPP is totally out of the province. Islamabad or the federal government has been cut to size. The position of Chief Minister (CM) Punjab has gained power beyond control. Even before the 18th Amendment, Nawaz Sharif was able to challenge the authority of Benazir Bhutto as PM. She was termed the PM of Islamabad, not Pakistan.

[PPP never intended to resign from assemblies: Rana Sanaullah](https://nation.com.pk/17-Mar-2021/ppp-never-intended-to-resign-from-assemblies-rana-sanaullah)

Supremacy requires moral authority which has been missing in the civilian leadership since the last forty years. In the life of nations, vacuum allows undesirable intrusions. Unfortunately, either this situation is deliberately created or is a result of mismanagement. In the sixties there was a political vacuum which was filled by leaders like Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Today, the menace of corruption has shaken the very foundations of the state which has to be addressed. Pakistan is in a debt trap; interest payments consume about 40 percent of the nation’s budget. To run the affairs of the state more borrowing has to be done. A major course correction is required for which courage is needed at all levels.

Today, corruption has created another vacuum of leadership which seems insurmountable. Only an honest and able civilian leadership can fill this void. Two very powerful books titled, ‘The Power of Ethical Management’ and ‘The One Minute Manager’ by Kenneth Blanchard were published in the decade of the eighties that highlighted the principles of effective management. Credibility is the most powerful quality of leadership. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the father of the nation spoke in English which was not well understood by the masses but they listened to him with full attention. A reporter asked one of the audience listening to his public address if he understood what Jinnah was saying, prompt came the answer; ‘No, but I know he is speaking the truth’. Fortunately, Pakistan is finally moving in the direction of credible leadership though the journey is painfully slow, but I am sure we will get there as the direction is correct.

[PM Imran Khan to visit Lahore today](https://nation.com.pk/17-Mar-2021/pm-imran-khan-to-visit-lahore-today)

Imran Khan, as head of the government falls in the league of honest leaders like Liaquat Ali Khan, Khawaja Nazimuddin, Feroze Khan Noon and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Under his leadership, the days of the Zia-era leftovers are now numbered. In the words of the legendary leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan; “We neither run away nor can we be bought” (Na Bikthay hain Na Baghtay Hain). The Kaptaan will fight till the last ball has been bowled or as they say in the US, ‘till the fat lady has sung’.