**Expecting different results after repetition**

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Imran Khan (IK), the son of Lahore is the 22nd Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan who finds himself surrounded by mediocrity and thugs. While one by one, the ‘thugs’ are being exposed, the delivery mechanisms still remain weak.

To compound the situation, PM’s reliance on the bureaucracy has increased manifold; those who control the files and paperwork in his secretariat and prepare briefs and summaries.

As an independent observer, to me it is very clear that what Einstein said over half a century ago holds true till today, “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results.” On April 25, 2021 Kaptaan completed 25 years of his political journey that started at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Lahore.

Some of the important players (Comrades Ahsan Rashid, Naeem-ul-Haq, Ms Saloni Bokhari) are no longer in this world but the leader marches on despite the fact that the country today faces a serious management challenge.

[Global food insecurity at 5-year high amid COVID, conflict, UN warns](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/global-food-insecurity-at-5-year-high-amid-covid-conflict-un-warns)

Between Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (ZAB), the 9th PM and IK the 22nd, a lot of riffraff have held this highest office of the land. Benazir Bhutto as the daughter of the East did try to make a difference for which she had to pay a heavy price while the thugs looted with impunity and then got away.

But there is a stark difference between the two popular leaders of their time. ZAB shunned the past players and started afresh, he then went astray and started to flirt with the old with disastrous consequences for him and also hurting the fledgling democracy for which he had struggled.

IK entered office only with one old guard (Comrade Naeem-ul-Haq) who was already fighting a battle with cancer. Till his last breath, Comrade Haq tried to maintain a balance around the PM but after his demise, the dreadful (incompetent, thugs, bureaucrats) took charge of the secretariat.

When Pervez Musharraf took over in October 1999, he promised several reforms. One of them was the ‘Devolution Plan’. Lt General Tanvir Naqvi was put in charge of the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB) and after him Daniyal Aziz took over from where he had left off.

[Hundreds of farmers head to Delhi to protest Farm Laws despite COVID restrictions](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/hundreds-of-farmers-head-to-delhi-to-protest-farm-laws-despite-covid-restrictions)

One day, I got a call from the Chief Executive Secretariat that a briefing was requested. I met the General face to face, after the usual burst of English he said that I have the mission of correcting the direction of the nation through a sound plan. “Good idea but who will implement this?” was my spontaneous question. He replied without blinking; “The bureaucracy”.

After the following questions I never had the chance to meet him again; “What has the bureaucracy delivered in 50 years? Have you taken them on board on this plan? Why will they implement an initiative that reduces their power and influence?”. I am sure he had no definite answers to these concerns either.

Another important interaction; I remember—it was around 2011—Comrade Ahsan Rashid mentioned how the electables had started to join the party. I warned him about the dirty laundry that they carried with them which will have to be washed by the Comrades.

The issue was highlighted and raised in several executive committee meetings, heated debates followed but their wrecking power was grossly underestimated till it was too late.

[Alibaba’s Jack Ma Foundation chooses African business idols](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/alibaba-s-jack-ma-foundation-chooses-african-business-idols)

The ‘thugs’ gradually took control of an otherwise clean movement led by credible individuals. Comrade Ahsan by nature was a mild and peaceful person who avoided confrontation.

The right leaning party members rallied under the leadership of Javed Hashmi who claimed to be a ‘Baghi’ (Rebel) while the rest associated themselves with Shah Mahmood Qureshi (SMQ) and Jahangir Khan Tareen (JKT).

The old rank and file were left out in the cold. I personally tried to convince Comrade Ahsan whom I considered to be the Chou-en-Lai of the movement to lead credible individuals who wanted to stay away from the ‘Thugs’. Ahsan Sahib was fighting cancer; he was weak and frail. The ‘thugs’ decided to push him out.

First in the Inter-Party Elections, he was made to lose the contest for the position of President Punjab and then in the national elections of 2013, a conspiracy was hatched to keep him out of the provincial assembly fearing that he would be the logical choice for the Chief Minister’s slot.

[Punjab gov't to enforce complete lockdown from May 8](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/punjab-gov-t-to-enforce-complete-lockdown-from-may-8)

In the ‘Dharna’ that followed in DHA after the 2013 vote fraud, Ahsan Sahib became a part right away while the person in charge of the election cell conceded defeat and the ‘thugs’ returned to their respective constituencies.

IK is the undisputed leader of his times. I could see the smile on his face during SMQ’s tirade in Multan against JKT and his supporters on April 25, 2021. The next day he met JKT’s supporters in Islamabad whom SMQ had called Titar-Bateer (Neither here nor there). During the meeting with his party members the PM held his ground like a statesman. He uses the term ‘Fasley Bateeray’ (Seasonal Birds) for such people.

Management is not the forte of the leader for which he needs professional managers not ‘thugs’ and status-quo and misleading bureaucrats together with the ineffective mediocrity housed there.

Enough is enough—it is time to put the house in order and deliver. Old ways will produce old results, for change of direction a new approach and fresh faces are needed.

[Chris Paul leads Suns to overtime win over Cavaliers](https://nation.com.pk/05-May-2021/chris-paul-leads-suns-to-overtime-win-over-cavaliers)

Re-engineering of the PM Secretariat is the need of the hour. As a leader, IK is expected to do the right thing, it is up to his managers to do things right which they have not been doing resulting in a management crisis. The smile on the face of the Kaptan in Multan said it all.

In Punjabi it is called ‘Gatka Time’ (Local form of Sword Fighting). With Swords drawn, the duel should start to weed out the negative forces from the highest office of the land.