**Keep the Hope Alive**

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July 26, 2023

Propaganda mills have expedited their usual business immediately after the PM signalled to hand over the baton to caretakers in August. Over-exuberance of a few media persons in predicting, the name of caretaker PM is quite meaningful. This tendency is enough proof to understand the quality decline in media debates.

Why the mainstream media is so obsessed with digging out the name of the caretaker PM? Why do the real pinching issues of public interest still await serious attention? There are speculations about the upcoming elections. Interestingly, all the speculations are negative and lack credible evidence. Elements of chaos and disappointment dominate in most of these speculations. Some of our charged anchors and a particular group of V-loggers are adamant about snatching every bit of hope from the audience.

Mainstream media, wittingly or unwittingly, overdosing the audience with speculative trash in the name of analysis. The overall impact of this daily-based rhetorical exercise is nothing but the multiplication of chaos and instability. Leaving aside petty party politics, the leadership cadre should allocate maximum efforts to build a national agenda to stabilize the country.

There is a dire need to break the chain of chaos and instability. Unwise political manoeuvres and a culture of verbosity is the main reason behind escalated social unrest and disorder. The recent five-year tenure of the national assembly also proved to be another replay of traditional tug of war. Unfortunately, this tenure was divided among two contesting groups i.e. PTI along with its allies and PDM. The balance sheet of both ruling regimes is not impressive.

Pakistan cannot afford verbosity and rhetorical politics devoid of solid actions

Economic deterioration is a common failure for which both governments blame each other. The undeniable fact of the matter is that both ruling groups lacked economic vision and continued to over-rely on foreign loans. Inflation remained a permanent worry for PTI and before the VONC scenario party had to face a serious decline in public popularity.

It was PDM-PPP’s surprising VONC move, which snatched the crown from PTI but enabled it to restore its popularity. It is now part of our shadowy political history that PTI floated deceptive narratives wrapped in charming slogans through keyboard warriors. Resigns from the national assembly, dissolution of two provincial assemblies and futile long marches could not deliver the desired results except political instability.

Bleak prophecies, revolving around the default and disintegration of Pakistan, floated vigorously on media platforms. This so-called political campaigning eventually damaged market stability and negatively influenced potential investors. The other side of the picture is more disappointing where the PDM government miserably failed to deliver the promised results. While facing unprecedented inflation and currency devaluation, the Pakistani public has all the right to question the real intent behind the ill-timed VONC misadventure of PDM. Though, PDM deserves due appreciation for securing a stand-by agreement with IMF the roughing up of Pakistan is all because of decades-long negligent approach. Every donor and well-wisher of Pakistan is urging for requisite structural reforms.

It is surprising for the world that a country like Pakistan, with enormous untapped potentials, running poll to poll for a few billion dollars loan. On the internal front, the masses are dejected and disappointed. The commitment of the political elite to the masses and the future of the country has become doubtful.

The state is unable to deliver the masses some of the very basic amenities of life i.e. water, medical support, protection and education. Due to state inaction, poor people are compelled to buy everything from the private sector. This is the worst form of elite capture. The situation gets more disturbed when so-called leaders divert the onus of failure to their rivals and befool the simple followers with fabricated narratives.

This culture of deceptive politics and manipulative manoeuvres is a real reason behind the disappointment of youth and much talked about brain drain. Taking advantage of the prevailing disturbance, a few traditional critics started questioning the creation of Pakistan. This tendency is absurd and very alarming as well. While realizing the seriousness of prevailing challenges being confronted by the nation, let us not get distracted by the creation of Pakistan.

Most of the troubles are self-created and curable. There is nothing wrong with the country. However, there is nothing right with our ways of governance. Hereditary politics and cult culture are no solution to our existing problems. Pakistan cannot afford verbosity and rhetorical politics devoid of solid actions. Pakistan is destined to rise and shine.

This is not possible without altering the time-tested flawed electoral and political norms. Instead of discussing the personalities of a particular leader, our debates should now focus on the performance of parties, their manifestos and above all well-known unfair politics.

The public, being the real stakeholders, should hold the political leadership accountable for unfulfilled promises and false distracting narratives. People should realize the real power of voting and appropriately use this sacred right in upcoming elections. Let’s get rid of the wrong idea of Pakistan’s failure as a state.

Recent victories of Pakistan in the International Junior Squash Championship and Emerging Asia Cup are good omens for the future. Instead of looking outwards, the people of Pakistan should start introspecting to tackle self-created problems. Let’s keep the hope alive and strive for the best.

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