Fractured politics on sale

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It is unfortunate to see the divide and rule policies of some political parties. This unethical trading of politics is certainly not good for the country.

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We saw as to how the independents of 2018 election voted for the government and it was expected that the Prime Minister would be elected by independent MNAs. The political sale has become so open that no remorse is seen on the faces of politicians. Let us review the historical processes of the past of this fracturing and creeping of greed in our politics under successive governments. All laws of floor crossing and administrative efforts failed as the political greed won.

I would like to state some facts, which make us understand as to how our politics have been drowning in the sea of greed till today.

At the time when Pakistan came into being in 1947 the Muslim League was the only major party in the newly born Pakistan. The Pakistan Muslim League was the original successor of the All-India Muslim League that led the Pakistan Movement to achieve an independent country, and six of the country’s Prime Ministers have been affiliated with this party, namely Liaquat Ali Khan, Khawaja Nazimuddin, Muhammad Ali Bogra, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali, and I. I. Chundrigar.

Mohammed Ali Jinnah died on 11th September 1948 who could not get proper treatment and breathed his last in an out of order ambulance from the airport to the hospital. PM Liaquat Ali Khan was assassinated in October 1951 as result of conspiracy that hatched from abroad in order to eliminate the leader who would refuse to take dictations from them.

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In 1951, Liaquat Ali Khan was succeeded by Khawaja Nazimuddin, a Bengali, and Malik Ghulam Muhammad was appointed the Governor General of the state. Khawaja Nazimuddin was forced out of office in April 1953. By 1953, dissensions within the League had led to the formation of several different political parties and sale and greed of political leaders came in full swing. During the legislative elections held in 1954, Suhrawardy provided his crucial political support to the United Front that heavily defeated the Muslim League in May 1955 (held by a system of indirect voting) and Pakistan got surrounded by riots and famine.

After supporting the vote of no-confidence motion at the National Assembly, Prime Minister Mohammad Ali was removed from the office and the three-party coalition government of Muslim League, Awami League, and the Republican Party, appointed Suhrawardy to the office of Prime Minister in 1956. He, however, lost control over his party, Awami League, and resigned on 17 October 1957.

In October 1958 the Army seized power and the martial law regime of Muhammad Ayub Khan banned all political parties. This was the end of the old Muslim League.

President Ayub Khan in 1962 formed Pakistan Muslim League again and appointed himself as a successor to the original Muslim League. Just a short period after its foundation, the party was further divided into two factions: The Convention Muslim League supported President Ayub khan and the new Constitution, and the Council Muslim League, opposed the new Constitution, denouncing it as undemocratic.

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President Ayub was also forced out by his own Commander-in-Chief Gen. Yahya Khan and installed him as Martial Law Administrator, once again derailing already fractured political fabric. He had to resign in 1971 after the fall of East Pakistan. During this period, Mr. Nurul Amin (a right wing political veteran) attempted to reunite the factions of Pakistan Muslim League and to bring people of both the provinces closer but failed as the country was heading in different direction.

As a result of general elections, which took place in 1971, Awami League of Sh. Mujibur Rehman and Pakistan People’s Party emerged as major parties in respective provinces. Neither of the factions of Pakistan Muslim League (PML) could secure visible public support in the elections. However, after separation of East Pakistan from rest of the country, Pakistan Peoples’ Party (PPP) formed the government in erstwhile West Pakistan under Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

The Pakistan Muslim League was formally dissolved alongside other parties following the 1977 Martial Law, though it supported it. However, it was restored in 1985, when General Zia organized his supporters into a formal party under the leadership of Muhammad Khan Junejo. In 1988, however, Zia dismissed Junejo government consequently the party split between Pakistan Muslim League (N) and Pakistan Muslim League (J). The death of Gen Zia in an air crash incident provided an opportunity to Pak Muslim League to come under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif who was a part of Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI), which was formally dissolved in 1993. Creation of IJI and receipt of money from National exchequer was yet another splinter in Pak politics and political sale was shameless act by many politicians who could be seen not playing real politics but business.

The greed and lust for power further jolted the already fractured political fabric when Gen. Pervez Musharraf ousted the government of PML (N) headed by Nawaz Sharif in 1999. A quite good number of PML/N as well as PPP members opted to ditch their respective parties and joined the hands of Gen. Pervez Musharraf for their personal benefits. This greed for power gave birth to PML (Q), headed by Ch. Shujaat Husain and Ch. Pervez Elahi and amalgamation of PPP turncoats to group called PPP (Patriots). PML/Q remained a staunch supporter of Pervez Musharraf and his government.

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The PML/N once proudly claiming to be the custodian of legacy of Zia later turned hostile to its breakaway group called PML(Zia) led by the son of Gen. Ziaul Haq.

In 2000, at the controversial elections held by the Pervez Musharraf in October, five different parties using the name Muslim League contested elections. The largest of these, the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-e-Azam), won 69 seats out of 272, and the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), loyal to Nawaz Sharif, won 19 seats. PMLQ made its way to corridor of power and enjoyed till 2008 at the expense of PML(N). Power greed continued later as well and the same majority of members from PMLQ jumped back into PML N in 2013. The lust of power brought them back. In 2013 elections, Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) emerged as the largest party in the country; the party formed its government at the center and Nawaz Sharif was re-elected for third term as Prime Minister.

It was not only the PML and then the breakaway groups like PML/N that suffered from this trend of horse trading or migration to other parties for the sake of power lust but PPP also suffered when the main PPP was fractured and different members of the PPP left the party and formed their own parties like National Peoples’ Party of Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Pakistan Peoples’ Party (Sherpao) led by Mr. Aftab Ahmed Sherpao. The PPP found by Mr. Zulfiqar Bhutto suffered further fractures when her daughter Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was betrayed by few leaders of her party and joined the cabinet of Gen. Pervez Musharraf under the fold of Pakistan Peoples’ Party (Patriots) for the lust of power and to save them from accountability by NAB. The Patriots then helped form government by Mir Zafrullah Jamali and joined the cabinet.

Later, many among the rest of the members of PPP also left to join PTI and now they are the part of the cabinet of PM Imran Khan. Similarly many PMLN leaders with big names also left the party and later on joined PTI.

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If you look deeply in to it, every time, the bid made to politicians was different, but the common bait was nothing but power.

The politicians in the past and even now could not hold their grounds hence they kept on presenting themselves for the sale in the political auction and rest the nation knows how the loyalties were negotiated. This act of politicians is highly detrimental to the democracy.

Considering the past traditions of Pakistani politics, unfortunately it seems like there would be further more fracturing in PMLN in the future as rumors are being heard from yet another group of the party. The way the politicians have been doing politics for their own benefits has not left good impression on the future generations.

In conclusion, I would like to say that if this political fracturing and political greed of power further continued, the future of democracy does not seem to be any bright.

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