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**Review of history**

The present government came into power with a purpose of bringing change in society by defeating the two traditional political parties. That’s the reason people still have high expectations with the PTI. However, I am observing that the political situation of our country is getting uncertain day by day. People are frustrated due to inflation, corruption, and unemployment but all political parties are busy mudslinging against each other.

Ironically, opposition parties which were once opponents in the past are now trying to use each other just to give a tough time to the government. Rather than focusing on solving public issues, the political leadership seems to be interested in designing strategies to handle opponents. Use of indecent language in political rallies and TV talk shows is becoming common. Unfortunately, political leaders are also not holding their workers accountable over such uncivilized behaviour.

Pakistan achieved complete independence from British rule on March 23, 1956, when the Constituent Assembly passed the first constitution, and declared Pakistan a republic. Iskandar Mirza took oath as the first president of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Unfortunately, at that time, politicians were not ready to bear each other. In a short period of three years, five prime ministers were changed.

Then on October 8, 1958 Iskandar Mirza suspended the Constitution and dissolved the Assemblies. Political parties were banned and the first martial law in the history of Pakistan was imposed. Then Army Chief General Ayub Khan was appointed as Martial Law Administrator.

According to the BBC, Iskandar Mirza in his written decision to impose martial law stated that he has been observing internal situations for the last two years with great concern. Pakistan, according to him, was having a brutal power struggle between politicians and becoming the hub of corruption. He stated that exploitation of patriotic and honest people was on rise.

The mentality of political parties has fallen to such a low level that I do not believe that elections can improve the current internal turmoil and we will be able to establish a stable government for solving various complicated issues of national interest. This is what Iskandar Mirza highlighted to defend his decision, blaming that politicians had brought Pakistan to the edge of disaster, and even they won’t stop from rigging in elections for their own purposes. He was of the view that if these politicians come back in power then they will again use the same tactics to make fun of democracy.

Ironically, within twenty days of the declaration of martial law, General Ayub Khan deposed Iskandar Mirza and declared himself president of Pakistan. The era of the 1960s under the Ayub rule deserves to be called the golden age regarding national development. Pakistan was moving towards becoming an Asian Tiger.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who founded the Pakistan People's Party was the foreign minister in General Ayub's cabinet. The intolerant attitude of politicians was also a key factor of the separation of East Pakistan.

History reveals that before the second martial law, public anger against Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was also on the rise. From the platform of the Nizam-e-Mustafa Movement, protests were going on all over the country. Similarly, the decade of the 1990s is considered the dark period of our national politics. Both major political parties were engaged in targeting each other in the name of democracy. As expected, the irresponsible attitude of the political parties resulted in the military rule of General Pervez Musharraf and the leaders of both the political parties were forced into exile.

Today, when I observe the miserable condition of the public and on the other side criticism against national institutions during the PDM rallies and abusive reactions by some government officials, it forces me to think that we are still living in the 1958 era.

The writer is a member of the National Assembly and patron-in-chief of the Pakistan Hindu Council.

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