**The Silver Lining in May 9 Events**

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A famous Taoist Chinese fable from the second century BC tells the story of a poor farmer. S?i W?ng lived on the border and raised horses for a living. One day, he lost his prized horses. After hearing of the misfortune, his neighbour felt sorry for him and came to comfort him. However, S?i W?ng simply asked, “How could we know it is not a good thing for me?” After a while, the lost horse returned and he came with another beautiful horse. The neighbour came over again and congratulated S?i W?ng on his good fortune. But S?i W?ng simply asked, “How could we know it is not a bad thing for me?” One day, his son went out for a ride with the new horse. He was violently thrown from the horse and broke his leg. The neighbours once again expressed their condolences to S?i W?ng, but S?i W?ng simply said, “How could we know it is not a good thing for me?” One year later, the Emperor’s army arrived at the village to recruit all able-bodied men to fight in the war. Due to his injury, S?i W?ng’s son could not go off to war and was the only young man in the village spared from death and disability.

This story elucidates the need to keep faith in the greater plan of God. Small events – which may be setbacks or temporary victories – are only stepping stones to one’s actual destination. Therefore one must not confuse the trees for the forest and always keep faith in the grand scheme of things controlled by Allah SWT alone.

May 9, is one such event. It was a black day in the history of Pakistan. Groomed and ordered by Imran Khan, angry PTI party workers attacked and destroyed military installations and important public buildings, chanting anti-military slogans. In my June 3, 2022 column on Imran Khan, I had written: “IK does not realise that the wise men in the military top brass understand that the IK phenomenon is a political suicide waiting to happen. It is only a matter of time before his political groupies cancel him.”

IK had grown smug when the public came out on the streets in his support the night he was ousted.

The iniquity of PTI workers demonstrated in their complete disregard for state institutions and state property has a positive externality.

Evidence of IK’s financial corruption through land dealings has surfaced and the court summoned him. It is now clear that Bushra Bibi, the wife of Imran Khan, engaged in very objectionable practices. Drunk on the power public support promised him, he decided to take on the establishment, the judiciary and the sitting government. His followers created armed rebellions unprecedented in Pakistani history. This event turned public opinion against the PTI. The arrest of his workers is also providing proof against PTI’s top brass claims of innocence in the May 9 violence. Imran’s core team of senior party members is now slowly breaking away, with members announcing their departure from his party or their retirement from politics.

IK had not understood the importance of faking a moral persona, every time he was in public. Smartphones are the omnipresent “eyes and ears” of the public. His video and audio clips are surfacing, providing proof of unbecoming or criminal and treasonous conduct. A jubilant Imran Khan was released after the events of May 9, and he is seen hugging his sisters and addressing his supporters at a small gathering. Believing in his exceptionalism and invincibility, IK is seen using foul language for the judiciary in this clip circulating on social media since the superior courts summoned his wife on corruption charges. According to IK, his wife is above the law and cannot be summoned to court despite her name being on the legal document in question. In an audio clip circulating on social media, IK is heard inciting his people to attack the police and the military. His followers obediently did so and inflicted violence on senior police officials.

Another audio clip has surfaced on national television where IK is heard approaching Maxine Moore Waters, the most powerful woman in the US Congress, seeking her assistance. Pro-Isreal congressman Brad Sherman and Zalmay Khalilzad a neocon Afghan-American foreign policy expert, have tweeted in IK’s support. This illustrates IK’s smooth realpolitik. He plays to the gallery by glorifying early Islam and condemns the West for its anti-Islamic sentiment. This has won hearts in Pakistan. The general public does not know his secret dealings with the same US, who he accused of engineering his ouster. IK is emulating Iran, which also engages in realpolitik against Israel to keep up a conservative Islamic facade but in reality, did nothing when Israel attacked Lebanon in 2007. In my May 22 column “War on Terror: 22 years on” I had covered how during the War on Terror Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria and Libya were destroyed by fierce civil wars. Pakistan was spared due to Musharraf and the military’s wise actions. However, Imran Khan is now leading us down the same path of civil war and destruction.

IK’s arrest, the ensuing violence by his henchmen, his subsequent release and the bail issued by the superior courts are all small events playing into the greater scheme of things which will lead to Imran Khan eventually being cancelled. IK had sought to cancel Musharraf, Sharifs, Bhutto-Zardaris and the military but things will come full circle for him soon.

IK may have millions of followers, which is why his politics has taken a militant turn, but his malignant narcissism will lead him where it led Z.A. Bhutto before him. When mortal men start playing God, then Allah the Almighty shows them who is running the show.

The rioting PTI supporters attacking sensitive military installations and destroying sacred symbols of war victories must also be seen in the context of the Chinese fable. There is a silver lining to it. The incensed PTI workers were engaging in what the Quran refers to as Fisq or iniquity.

Unsurprisingly, none of the social media Islamic evangelists was able to explain this crucial Islamic concept. Since there is an overlap of the subject in Christianity, I referred the matter to Artificial Intelligence or AI to define iniquity. ChatGPT gave an impressive definition within seconds and it reads: “Iniquity refers to immoral or unfair behaviour, especially that which involves a violation of moral or ethical principles. It is a term used to describe actions that are characterized by wickedness, injustice, or unrighteousness. Iniquity is often associated with deliberate wrongdoing or a pattern of behaviour that demonstrates a lack of regard for the rights and well-being of others. The term is commonly used in religious contexts to refer to actions that are considered sinful or contrary to the teachings of a particular faith. Iniquity is considered a serious offence and is often associated with negative consequences, both in this life and in the afterlife, depending on one’s belief system.”

The iniquity of PTI workers demonstrated in their complete disregard for state institutions and state property has a positive externality.

Pakistan is heavily indebted and many of our airports, highways and other strategic assets are mortgaged to other nations. This fact is not public knowledge as it is tightly guarded to avoid inflaming public sentiments. However, the violent rage demonstrated by the mob works to our advantage; since it will ensure that any foreign creditor with designs on our soil will think twice about setting up camp in Pakistan. The threat of foreign enclaves – reminiscent of “dogs and Indians not allowed” signs – within Pakistani territory where Pakistanis are denied access, are unviable due to the violent and iniquitous public. This is the silver lining in the dark events of May 9. May Allah protect and bless Pakistan.

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