**What Can Pakistan Learn from China?**

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Once a poverty-stricken (82 per cent) and periphery country, China is now the world’s second-largest economy and poverty-free country. It has graduated from the periphery to the central stage. It has become a newsmaker. We have seen in the recent past, that any policy statement by Chinese leadership or policy change becomes the major news or headline of global media. Now global growth is closely netted with the performance of the Chinese economy. IMF has pointed out that China will be the centre of growth and act as a pull factor for global growth. China’s share in global growth would be 22.6 per cent during the next five years, which is double the USA’s share of 11.3 per cent of global growth. Moreover, it will contribute 34.9 per cent to global growth in 2023, which is marvellous.

The question is how China graduated from a poverty-stricken and periphery country to a poverty-free and central country of the world. The analysis of modern history reveals a few very interesting facts, policies, and strategies.

First, Chinese leadership adopted a scientific approach to running the country. They started by identifying the problem and devising the right set of policies to tackle the problem. For example, in the early 1950s, Chairman Mao identified that there were three evils i.e., bureaucracy, waste, and corruption. He was convinced that China would have to tackle these evils if China wanted to move on. That’s why he came up with the idea to entrust the Party leadership to lead the work at all levels and minimise dependence on bureaucracy.

Second, Chinese leadership implemented progressive reforms and kept the reform agenda a living document. China kept on reforming and refining the policies and implementation framework according to needs and new realities. China did not stick to any point or reform or did not follow the personalities. China only followed the needs of the people and new economic and global realities. For example, during Deng Xiaoping’s time, China followed the policy of hiding its strengths. However, during President Xi Jinping’s time, China adopted a proactive approach and became more assertive. Another example is that China first invested in enhancing production capacity and then moved to an opening up of the economy. Now President Xi is leading a policy of comprehensive opening up.

The Yellow Emperor is famous for his pro-poor and inclusive style of governance

Besides, the reform agenda was guided by the principal contradiction, which is the most sophisticated form of scientific approach. The analysis of each principal contradiction indicates that each contradiction was built on the hard realities and according to the needs of people. The reform programs designed based on principal contradiction helped China to achieve the desired goals.

For example, when President Xi assumed the charge of the leadership of the CPC and China, he developed his principal contradiction based on two specific problems and one need of the people. He identified that the growth was unequal and unbalanced and people’s need for the rule of law and better living is on the rise. Since then, he has been leading China to solve this contradiction. First, he came up with the slogan to end poverty and China achieved the target in 2022. Now he is advocating for a new philosophy of development and more equal and environment-friendly development. China under his leadership is moving quite fast to achieve these goals and has achieved many milestones before the time.

Third, China never copied any economic or governance model. China always tried to devise its model. However, China never hesitated to learn from other models or best practices. For example, Deng Xiaoping introduced new production mechanisms by learning from the Western production system. He learned from the Western system but did not copy it.

Fourth, Chinese democracy and governance systems are quite different from the rest of the world. China innovated a people-centric governance system. It means all policies and actions must be steered to assist people and ensure their well-being of people and peaceful living. For that purpose, China introduced the whole process democracy (WPD) model. The WPD model is the outcome of learning from the teachings of elders like Confucius and Tao and the wisdom of 5000 years. They provided a theoretical basis for designing the modern-day WPD. Besides, CPC also draws lessons from the era of the Yellow Emperor for designing practical interventions. It is pertinent to mention here that the Yellow Emperor is famous for his pro-poor and inclusive style of governance which’s why the Yellow Emperor has a special place in Chinese civilization. China also learned from socialism and communism.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of Whole Process Democracy is that it believes in continuity of interaction among all stakeholders. As, President Xi said, “If the people are awakened only for voting but enter a dormant period soon after, if they are given a song and dance during campaigning but have no say after the election, or if they are favored during canvassing but are left out in the cold after the election, such a democracy is not a true democracy”. Thus, there must be continuity of interaction among stakeholders i.e. CPC, government, people, business, youth, etc. They must be consulted continuously not only on the election time.

Fifth, China is keenly focused on producing quality leadership because China believes that without quality and selfless leadership, a country cannot move on the ladder of prosperity. The Communist Party of China (CPC) carried the mantle to produce leadership and acted as a fertile nursery of leadership. CPC groomed the future leadership of the country by adhering to the core values of Chinese socialism. CPC has devised a system that is strictly based on merit and follows core socialist values like honesty, selflessness, integrity, justice, equality, etc. It never compromised on these values and merit. It helped CPC to deliver quality leadership for China, which turned around the fate of China.

In conclusion, these are a few steps along other, which helped China to move on the ladder of prosperity. Pakistan can draw a few lessons from the success story of China. First, apply a scientific approach to tackle problems devise policies, and get rid of the leadership superman dilemma. Second, concentrate on the production of quality leadership and devise generic means of grooming leadership. Pakistan should abandon family politics or private family limited parties more precisely companies. Third, Pakistan must concentrate on devising its own economic and governance model, according to local realities and needs. Pakistan should not copy and paste any model. Fourth, Pakistan should come up with its governance model, which must be pro-people and keep the people at the heart of decision-making and implementation.

Lastly, Pakistan must learn the art to work, to move hand not tongue. The government should stop lecturing or organizing advocacy events and focus on the implementation of policies, which can help people realize the dream of better living. It would be the greatest advocacy event to highlight the achievements of the government.

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