**Nothing Worthwhile Comes Easy**

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Every Pakistani visitor to the US should prioritize visiting the world-famous Smithsonian museums. Museum of American History showcases the tremendous hardship the early European settlers withstood to make America their home, as invaders in the cold and harsh frontier land. They were the have-nots of Europe who headed to America as the land of opportunity. Violence may have procured the land, however, what made them carve a bright future for themselves was their religiously motivated Protestant work ethic of diligence, discipline and frugality. Beginning as a “protest” to Catholicism, Protestantism relies on salvation by divine grace and enforcement through social interactions.

The erstwhile have-nots Protestants of Europe who settled in America are the big brother of Europe today. The US leads militarily with NATO; monetarily with the World Bank and the United Nations; Technologically with Facebook, Google, Microsoft, big pharma and aviation stalwarts such as Boeing and Lockheed Martin; economically with the USD being the currency of world trade; and culturally with Hollywood.

None of this would have been possible without the grit of each successive generation.

People are early risers in Europe, the US and progressive Asian nations like Japan and South Korea. They live in extremely cold climates and yet their systems and institutions are admirable.

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What is admirable in these countries requires discipline and hard work to sustain and grow. Excellence always stands on the shoulders of grit.

Aviation is an industry that best showcases grit. International air travel is only possible because the Boeing Company goes through an excruciating inquiry every time there is an aircraft crash. They use extremely sophisticated equipment to retrieve every single surviving bit of a crashed aircraft’s debris – even from the ocean bed – to determine the cause. There has even been an instance where a two-year-long inquiry revealed that a lone loose screw caused a crash. This level of meticulous attention to detail sustains aviation.

After the massive destruction of two atomic bombs in Japan in the second world war, the company Sony rose to the occasion. Sony’s mission statement read: “To become the company most known for changing the worldwide poor-quality image of Japanese products.” Sony employees’ grit achieved this goal and sustains it to date.

When Apollo landed on the moon in 1969, Margaret Hamilton, wrote the spaceship’s entire software code by hand – a monumental task since computer technology was in its infancy. Hamilton landed humankind on the moon and was honoured with the Medal of Freedom in 2016 by President Obama, for her outstanding contribution to space exploration. There is a saying: “Hard work beats talent when talent doesn’t work hard.” Even seemingly frivolous professions, such as acting and dancing, require extreme discipline and training. The film, Top Gun Maverick owes a big part of its success to Tom Cruise’s passion as an aviator and his commitment to personal fitness at over 60 years of age. Ballet dancers and figure skaters enamour their audience with their performance, which is a result of gruelling daily rehearsals. The most backward nations are always the laziest nations. The common Pakistani is dishonest, lazy and ego-driven. This is why Pakistanis love to hero worship to evade personal responsibility when it comes to national issues.

Up until Imran Khan was elected as the Prime Minister, a majority hero-worshipped him. They believed that once he acceded to power, money that was previously stolen due to corruption will re-enter the system to enrich the country. Urban Pakistan pinned all their hopes on him, expecting to see an efficient bureaucracy, an effective judiciary, improved roads and infrastructure, the rule of law, wonderful social services and subsidized living for the common man. It boggles the mind how the nation was expecting Imran Khan to wave a magic wand and magically transform Pakistan.

Imran Khan was ironically cherished as a messiah because he did not make any demands from the people except street protests. Khan did not ask people to comply with traffic rules, to pay their taxes honestly; to be conscientious and fair in all their dealings; to always speak the truth; to form queues and become organized; to responsibly use public space; to not litter and make cleanliness a priority; and finally to unite as a nation rising above racism.

At Medina, the Muslims transformed under the leadership of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) only because they improved their attitudes and behaviours.

Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) takes full advantage of Pakistanis’ self-serving beliefs and attitudes. PTI cleverly feeds the lazy nation’s strong sense of entitlement. Imran Khan’s incessant talk about the Sharifs stealing from the state arouses anger and resentment. The nation joined the PTI bandwagon because they fantasized about a prosperous future, which would not inconvenience them in the least. In other words, the entitled nation foolishly expected pain-free instant magical change.

After Khan’s four-year stint as the Prime Minister, some grew disillusioned when neither the stolen wealth was recovered nor the thieves were taken to task. Nawaz Sharif was ironically given an NRO by Imran, who endlessly maligned Musharraf for the same. The prosperity they had hoped to be conjured out of thin air did not magically arise.

Meanwhile, many still remain blinded and Khan is seeing this as a ray of hope. Imran Khan has now expanded his repertoire of tropes. He still uses the trite old trope of “thieves of state” and continues to praise Islam. However, now he is scapegoating the military establishment. To hide his ineptness, he has declared that his hands were tied by the military. He attributes his dismal performance to being prevented from calling the shots. To bounce back to power, Khan dangerously turned the country against its army. What is most alarming is that he has brought Pakistan’s nuclear program into the discourse. Every Tom, Dick and Harry is now speculating about the fate of our nuclear arsenal. Just as Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto broke the country into two and blamed the army for it, Imran Khan is jeopardising our nuclear weapons safety net and is blaming the army for it. Our foolish nation lost in vain pleasures is blind to evil.

Quaid-e-Azam preached faith, unity and discipline. Our lazy nation has forgotten the great founder of the nation. They are fervently rallying for politicians, chasing a mirage.

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