**How will US elections impact Pakistanis**

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November 3, 2020

Lebron James is a legend in Basketball. He has dominated this extremely popular sport in North Americafor 16 years. He has accumulated a fortune and is an icon for the younger generation. What sets him apart is that he is a star with a conscience. Black people make up about 12 percent of Americans. They have been left behind for many reasons. A big one is staying away from the electoral process. Lebron along with many other notables are trying to change that.

Lebron started “More than a Vote Campaign” encouraging people to vote, and combating misinformation to black people. He was instrumental in convincing National Basketball Association (NBA) to permit the use of their huge stadiums, dotted around the country, as voting stations. A huge facilitator during COVID permitting social distancing.It has earned him universal respect. There are multiple enablers around the country, many of whom have never been involved in elections, coming together to beat President Trump.

Historians view the 2020 Presidential race as the third most important election in history with consequences far beyond their term. In 1860 Abrahim Lincoln’s victory saved the Union from splitting the United States of America. In 1940 Franklin D. Roosevelt’s election led to US involvement in World War II. It led to the defeat of Nazism, otherwise we would still be dealing with Nazi dictatorships in Europe. 2020 elections are also up there. Another four years of Trump would change the face of democracy as Americans know it. It would be a racist regime with weakened institutions. Anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, heartless and intolerant.

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Nearly a million Americans of Pakistani origin would be severely impacted. Our youth will see dwindling opportunities, becoming outsiders in their own home. Many Pakistanis run small businesses. With COVID out of control across USA these businesses would be hit the hardest. Everyone must vote orthe consequences are serious.

Donald Trump caught the hearts and minds of voters in 2016. Beyond the Republican base he tapped into a vote bank of disgruntled blue collar white people around the “Rust Belt”. Since the 80’s there was a serious decline in the US industrial manufacturing base. Production shifted to countries with cheaper labor pools. With rising unemployment and cities looking like ghost towns, the disgruntlement grew. They saw Trump as a savior and flocked to him as a Messiah with a cult like following.

President Trump has no political background. He is a product of gloss and gossip columnists. He gained exposure in a popular reality show. The one liner that defined him was “You’re fired!” He brought that mindset to the Presidency. His four years in office have established him as a fascist hogging limelight by creating controversies galore. Unfortunately beyond his performances there is no substance. He is a fake and lying comes to him naturally. Fact checkers on media state he has averaged 50 lies a day! He lives in an alternate reality. From a Pakistani perspective, his recent tweet speaks volumes about this tendency. He claims Osama Bin Laden’s arrest and execution was a hoax. It was a double that was kidnapped. The Seal Team that carried out the raid was killed under Joe Biden’s orders.

The contrast between the two contestants is extreme. President Trump is aggressive, combative and negative to a fault. He spouts poison against anyone who disagrees with him. He has “malice for all, charity for none”. He is ruthless and takes no prisoners. During his clamp down on immigrants he separated over 500 children from their parents. While the kids were in cages no one knew where the parents were. Unimaginable trauma. Such cruelty from the leader of a nation that claims to be the compass of morality and beacon of human rights is the height of depravity.

Vice president Joe Biden is on the other end of the spectrum. His care and empathy oozes at every step. He is balanced, a steady hand at the helm of affairs. He has been in public life for the last 47 years. He carries very little baggage for a person with such long exposure. During the last debate Trumps efforts to smear Biden fell on deaf ears. He may be boring but he is a credible, fatherly figure. What America needs to unify a deeply polarized nation.

This election will be decided by COVID. The pandemic has swept USA. America is the worst manager of this virus. It has the highest number of infections in the world. Being only 5% of world population it accounts for 20% of total deaths. What a loss of prestige! Trump is a bull in a china shop. He has defied science and scientists taking the most absurd position of resisting wearing masks.

Pandemic has hit the economy hard. Trump failed to recognize the linkage between the two. He still claims “we are turning the corner” without realizing there is a ferocious tiger waiting around the bend. Yesterday there were 87,000 infections. The highest since the start of COVID. It will only get worse if Trump gets another term.

The American voters have recognized this fully. Early voting is through the roof. 50 million votes already cast. Despite closing polling stations in Republican run states, voters have stood in lines for hours waiting for their turn. The signs are ominous. Biden’s victory is within reach. It suits Pakistan. It is a lot easier to deal with a leader who doesn’t lie for a living. Stability suits the global scene.

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