

## Democracy, Development and Authoritarianism in Pakistan

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**Abstract :** More than sixty five years of Pakistan's political history unveils a long draw out battle between military hegemony democracy. There is imbalanced and uneasy relationship between state structures and civil institutions which is establishing an unaccountable polity and un-equitable socio-economic order.

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**Introduction :** Authority is anchored on bureaucratisees and military axis with the co-opted elite from the landed aristocracy. At present Pakistan polity reprints an ideological conflict being triumvirate forces of state led Muslim nationalism regional particularism and than pluralism.

The conflict among sectarianism and ethnically exemplifies the fragile state of Pakistani political process and their dependency upon the army.

As a result of this Pakistan has completely changed in to a turbulent state. Besides, this frequent onslaught of military rule, rising of religious fundamentalism, terrorism, violent sectarianism, Jihadism and collapsing economy have created instability in Pakistan but also whole South Asian region.

So what should be done to come out from such critical situation of Pakistan.

A viable political system must be searched for Pakistan.

A fair and balanced relationship between state and the civil society.

Democracy and development correlation mechanism should be developed.

An overview of Pakistan's political history suggests that state construction has consolidation of Pakistan has been a conflicting course with the social dynamic underlying the political processes. Like other post-colonial states, where the unloading political processes has been hampered, Pakistan, too has relied on its civil service the frame of Raj-and ultimately, on the army to maintain the continuities of government.

Ironically both transitions, i.e., in 1971 and 1988, from military-hegemonic to civilian rule were burdened with divisiveness, rather than consensus. Transitions that once the context of social and political cleavages and divisiveness were bound to be fight violence prone and inherently unstable. Thus, Pakistan embarked on a path of democracy, which was conflict ridden, divided and tentative.<sup>2</sup>

The development of the Pakistani state suggests that a well-interned military bureaucratic establishment, the bedrock of Pakistani state structure, constitutes this based edifice. These monopolist power elites have too often opposed measures and as





democratization, decentralization, accountability, media freedom and reforms and independence of the judiciary. A number of civil and military intelligence agencies have masterminded political alliances and counter alliances known as the 'secret band' or 'invisible government'. They do not allow the maturing of political process at democratic institutions.<sup>3</sup>

There are a variety of other factors as well. The religious dogma the people has been taught and which the religious outfits in the country continue to dish out to the people is also anti-democracy. It is not religion that is anti-democracy but religious dogma is also anti-liberal because it does not accept new ideas or modern thinking. This is an impediment in the way of the development of a modern democratic polity.

As far as the relation between the state and the civil society is concerned, the state is an important prerequisite for any civil society and more so in the case of post-colonial societies, but centralization, monopolistic elitism and unrepresentative institutes and erode nationhood. As a perceptive scholar comments.

Ideologically and organizationally weak political parties in Pakistan have received vulnerable to official manipulation and the centralized organs of the state routinely and them of impotence and corruption. Rather than consolidating political and constitution norms, through dialogue and consensus, Pakistani politicians frivolously consume that energies on internecine dissensions, occasionally resorting to populist political approach for street agitation or succumbing to horse-trading and trespassing all the parliamentary norms. Such behaviour suits the centralist forces within the state and is amply used to discredit both politicians and democracy itself.<sup>4</sup>

The awakening of civic institutions, namely, an empowered parliament, a free press and public opinion, an independent judiciary and energetic judiciary and energetic non-governmental organizations, provides institutional restraints on a growing oligarchic or elitist state and adds to the forces of despair or defection in various cross-sections of the society.<sup>5</sup>

In Pakistan, economic development has been viewed as a process that is initiated and controlled by the state to improve the economy and the state and the elite groups have been the major beneficiaries of this development. Samuel P. Huntington has hypothesized that economic development, incremental or detrimental, has a positive influence on the process of democratization. Slow development, he believes, will result in slow transition to democracy, whereas rapid development creates tensions in a society that often unsettle or force liberalization on the authoritarian regimes and, hence, lead to broader political participation.<sup>6</sup>

Economic growth has failed to produce a strong, large middle-class in Pakistan; instead, it has created and strengthened only the elite groups. Significant foreign interest and interference has culminated in external manipulation of the nation's policies.

Elections and other democratic institutions do not create democracy in the absence of social and political consensus. They have plunged Pakistan into paralyzing cycles of polarization and confrontation, reversals of economic policy and constitutional crises. Pakistan's fickle, fractious and short-lived experiments in restoration of democracy (1988-1999) has established 'the need for policies that link gradual social and political change to broad economic improvement. With the simultaneous expansion of civil society, economic growth by itself cannot be counted on to bring about democracy in Pakistan.<sup>7</sup> The restoration of democracy began in 1988 had little contend itself for, yet it has a process that reflected and articulated the concerns, needs and aspirations of certain economic and social groups and classes. Perhaps the main feature of this period has been the rise of a large middle class, which has found democracy quite lucrative, Nevertheless, while a middle class may have consolidated itself economically in terms of the development of its politics, it still has far to go.



Pakistan has to choose between a healthy democratic polity economic growth and prosperity for its people on the one hand and an exaggerated self-perception of its strategic importance and power on the the other. General Parvez Musharraf has thus far shown neither the wisdom nor the sagacity to understand and accept this reality.

Continuing imbalances within the state structures and also between them and civil society foreclose the possibility of a significant reaproaching of political power and economic resources in the very near future.<sup>8</sup>

The only solution to get rid of the cycle of coups in Pakistan for in the development of civilian institutions which will function smoothly, negating the necessity for a military takeover. Only then will the military take its proper place by playing a constructive role in the protection and strengthening of the nation-state, within the range of the legitimates institutional pressure-groups role. But the task of civilian institution building can be undertaken only by the retune to civilian rule through a strong, national grassroots, based political leadership.

Therefore, Pakistan in the near foreseeable future is not likely to transform itself into a moderate Islamic democratic society. At least in the near future, democracy in Pakistan, it and when it is restored, will remain a puppet democracy. General Musharraf has asserted in an unambiguous manner that notwithstanding the promised October, 2002 ballot activity, he is not walking away into the sunset. On the country, he plans continue in office till 2007. In sum, the military will continue to remain central to the power structure of the country.

The future of democracy in Pakistan is not fruitful there is still highly complex situation. The country has complex socio-political environment and the military continued influence in national and regional politics. Pakistan ruling elite has not been after to defuse ethnic conflicts, sub national loyalty and identities. Hantigtonian development process is not applicable in present Pakistan though has decay concept is completely applied in Pakistan. Democracy and development from so, Pakistan current political process is going towards decay path.

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